

Special Collections & Archives in Academic & Research Libraries

Introduction

This OCLC Research survey explores the state of special collections and archives in academic and research libraries in the United States and Canada. We seek to identify norms across the community and thereby help define needs for community action and research.

Only one response per institution is permitted. If you have more than one special collections or archives unit, *please combine data from all units*. We recognize that surveying all units may not be feasible for some respondents. Supplying the broadest possible data will, however, make clear your institution's overall level of distinction and add to our view of the rare and unique materials held across the community.

The survey may take from one to several hours to complete depending on the availability of statistical data and/or whether or not you'll be combining data from multiple units. You may wish to print the [PDF version](#) as a working copy for data gathering.

Your responses on a particular page are saved each time you click on a "forward" or "back" button. Do not use your browser's navigation arrows. You need not complete the survey in one sitting; you can re-enter to update or correct your data at any time until the survey closes on December 18th. Always enter using the URL in the survey invitation that we sent to your director by email.

If your institution has no special collections, please provide your contact information and respond to the yes/no question that follows. Your response will help complete our overall view of academic and research library collections.

Please submit your completed response by December 18, 2009.

OCLC Research will publish the survey results in mid-2010. Participating institutions will be identified, but no data will be associated with individual respondents. Contact information will be held confidential.

Address questions to Jackie Dooley, Consulting Archivist, OCLC Research (dooleyj@oclc.org or 949.492.5060).

For technical problems of any kind, contact Jeanette McNicol (mcnicolj@oclc.org or 650.287.2133).



Respondent Information

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* 1. Contact Information

Name	<input type="text"/>
Title	<input type="text"/>
Institution	<input type="text"/>
Country	<input type="text"/>
E-mail	<input type="text"/>
Telephone	<input type="text"/>

* 2. How would you prefer to be contacted if we have any follow-up questions?

- E-mail
- I prefer not to be contacted
- Telephone

* 3. Consortial memberships (check all that apply)

- ARL
- CARL (Canada)
- IRLA
- Oberlin
- RLG Partnership

* 4. Type of institution

- University
- College
- Independent research library
- Museum
- Other (please specify)
- National library
- Historical society
- Governmental library
- Public library

* 5. Public or private institution

- Public (base funding source is governmental)
- Private (base funding is from a non-governmental source)
- Both/Hybrid

Definition of Special Collections

Special collections are library and archival materials in any format (e.g., rare books, manuscripts,

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photographs, institutional archives) that are generally characterized by their artifactual or monetary value, physical format, uniqueness or rarity, and/or an institutional commitment to long-term preservation and access. They generally are housed in a separate unit with specialized security and user services. Circulation of materials usually is restricted.

The term "special collections" is used throughout to refer to all such types of materials.

This definition excludes general collections characterized by format or subject specialization (e.g., published audiovisual materials, general library strength in Asian history), as well as materials managed as museum objects.

* 6. Does your institution have special collections?

Yes

No

Instructions

Please respond with regard to materials held in special collections and archives units only. If your library consists primarily of special collections (i.e., you have no "general" collections or reading room), respond with regard to the entire library. Exclude other organizational units (e.g., museum curatorial units; research or fellowship programs) that do not report under a library or archives in your institution.

Use your institution's latest twelve-month "statistical year" that ended prior to July 1, 2009 for statistical questions. (In cases where you do not have formal statistics, we encourage reasonable estimates to minimize the time you will spend.) Respond to all other questions based on your current practices.

Practices vary across institutions, which may render some questions ambiguous for a particular respondent. Use your best judgment to interpret each question for your circumstances.

Text boxes have no word limit; you may exceed the size of any box. Each page concludes with an open comment box for any additional thoughts or details.

Please submit the survey online to avoid inadvertent data input errors on our part. If you prefer to respond on paper, please print the [PDF version](#), clearly enter all data, and mail to:

Special Collections and Archives Survey
OCLC Research
777 Mariners Island Blvd., Suite 550
San Mateo, CA 94404
USA

Collections

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7. Indicate the total number of *printed volumes* (refer to [Appendix A](#) for definition of scope) in your institution's overall library collections, both general and special. (For libraries that report [annual statistics to ARL](#), this is your total "Volumes in library.")

No printed volumes

Fewer than 1 million volumes

1 to 3 million volumes

3 to 6 million volumes

More than 6 million volumes

8. Information about your institution's separate special collections libraries and archives will help us understand the scope of your data. Units may be separate administratively and/or physically.

Total separate units across the institution

Number of separate units included in your response

9. Name the special collections unit(s) for which you *are* reporting data.

10. Name any special collections units for which you are *not* reporting data.

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11. Estimate the size of your special collections by physical unit (except where indicated below) for each format of material as of 2008/2009.

Important: Consult [Appendix A](#) to determine in which category to report formats more specific than those listed below (e.g., count pamphlets as volumes, postcards as visual materials).

Special collections and archives often manage materials in certain formats as integral parts of archival or manuscript collections. When this is the case, 1) include them in the linear foot count for archival and manuscript collections, *and* 2) enter "0" on the line for the specific format (you may optionally report item counts for such formats in Question 12).

Conversely, enter below the counts for any special formats that you manage as items.

Printed volumes	<input type="text"/>
Archives and manuscripts (managed as collections--count linear ft.)	<input type="text"/>
Manuscripts (managed as items--count physical units)	<input type="text"/>
Cartographic materials	<input type="text"/>
Visual materials	<input type="text"/>
Audio materials	<input type="text"/>
Moving image materials	<input type="text"/>
Born-digital materials (gigabytes)	<input type="text"/>
Microforms	<input type="text"/>
Artifacts	<input type="text"/>

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12. This *optional* question is for item-level counts of materials included within archival and manuscript collections (counted in Question 11)--for example, to report how many photographs your institution manages within archival collections. Leave blank for any formats already counted as *items* in Question 11.

Cartographic materials	<input type="text"/>
Visual materials	<input type="text"/>
Audio materials	<input type="text"/>
Moving image materials	<input type="text"/>
Born-digital materials (gigabytes)	<input type="text"/>
Microforms	<input type="text"/>
Artifacts	<input type="text"/>

13. Have you *established* any significant new collecting areas within special collections since 2000?

No

Yes (Describe briefly and note impetus; e.g., a major gift, curator's decision, faculty suggestion, new institutional direction.)

14. Have you *discontinued new acquisitions* in any collecting areas within special collections since 2000?

No

Yes (Describe briefly and note impetus as above.)

15. Have you *deaccessioned* any significant bodies of special collections materials since 2000? (Deaccessioning is physical withdrawal of cataloged or processed materials. It does not include weeding during processing.)

No

Yes (Describe briefly and note impetus as above.)

16. Any additional comments about this page?

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Collections (continued)

17. Estimate the *percentage of printed volumes* in special collections acquired by each of the following methods during 2008/2009. Enter "0" where appropriate.

Purchase (Institutional funds)	<input type="text"/>
Purchase (Special funds)	<input type="text"/>
Gifts-in-kind	<input type="text"/>
Transfer from elsewhere in your institution	<input type="text"/>

18. Estimate the *percentage of materials other than printed volumes* (e.g., archives and manuscripts, visual materials) in special collections acquired by each of the following methods during 2008/2009. Enter "0" where appropriate.

Purchase (Institutional funds)	<input type="text"/>
Purchase (Special funds)	<input type="text"/>
Gifts-in-kind	<input type="text"/>
Transfer from elsewhere in your institution	<input type="text"/>

19. Did the amount of acquisitions funding that you had for purchasing special collections materials in 2008/2009 differ relative to that you had in 2000?

Less funding in 2008

More funding in 2008

No change

Not sure

20. Do special collections units participate in any cooperative collection development arrangements?

	No arrangements	Informal arrangements	Formal arrangements
Local/Regional institutions	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Members of your consortium	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other institutions in your nation	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Institutions in other nations	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

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21. Are any special collections materials housed in off-site or other secondary storage?

No

In planning stages

Yes

22. Indicate the relative extent of preservation needs across your special collections in the following formats.

	No problems	Low	Medium	High	Not Sure	No materials of this type
Printed volumes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Archives and manuscripts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visual materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Audiovisual materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

23. Any additional comments about this page?

User Services

24. State the number of onsite visits (the "gate count" or "reader days") by special collections users during 2008/2009. If you do not use a category, leave it blank.

Affiliated faculty and staff	<input type="text"/>
Affiliated graduate students	<input type="text"/>
Affiliated undergraduate students	<input type="text"/>
Visiting scholars and researchers	<input type="text"/>
Local community	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>

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25. Has the level of use of your special collections changed since 2000?

	Decreased	No change	Increased	Not Sure	This user category not used
Affiliated faculty and staff	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Affiliated graduate students	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Affiliated undergraduate students	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Visiting scholars and researchers	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Local community	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Other	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

26. Have users' methods of contacting your special collections changed since 2000?

	Decreased	No change	Increased	Not Sure	This method not used
Onsite	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
E-mail	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Website comment feature	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Interactive chat reference	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Telephone	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Mail	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

27. Has use of the following types of special collections materials changed since 2000?

	Decreased	No change	Increased	Not Sure	No materials of this type
Books printed before 1801	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Books printed 1801 or later	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Archives and manuscripts	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Visual materials	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Audiovisual materials	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Born-digital materials	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

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28. Does special collections permit use of uncataloged and/or unprocessed materials? Select "yes" even if requests are approved selectively.

	Yes	No	No uncat/unproc materials of this type	No materials of this type
Printed volumes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Archives and manuscripts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visual materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Audiovisual materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Born-digital materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

29. If special collections does not permit use of uncataloged and/or unprocessed materials in certain formats, why not? Check all that apply.

	Descriptions incomplete	Descriptions below standards	Insufficiently processed to be usable	Preservation	Security	Privacy and confidentiality
Printed volumes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Archives and manuscripts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visual materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Audiovisual materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Born-digital materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other reason(s):

30. Do you permit interlibrary loan of original special collections materials? Answer "yes" even if requests are approved selectively. Check all that apply.

- Yes, printed volumes
- Yes, materials in other formats
- Yes, only to institutions within our parent institution or consortium
- Yes, but only reproductions/copies
- No

31. Any additional comments about this page?

User services (continued)

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32. Does special collections allow the use of digital cameras in the reading room by users for copying collection materials?

- Yes
- Considering it
- No

33. If you do not permit use of digital cameras in the reading room, please state your reasons.

- Concern about inappropriate use of the digital files (e.g., copyright violations)
- Concern about potential loss of revenue from reproduction services
- Concern about improper handling of materials
- Concern about disruption in the reading room
- Existing reproductive services (e.g., photocopying, microfilming, scanning done by staff) are sufficient
- Other (please describe)

34. How much does special collections charge, on average, for a digital scan of a collection item?

- We provide scans at no charge
- \$0-\$5
- \$5.01-\$10
- \$10.01-\$20
- More than \$20
- We do not offer this service

35. Does special collections retain copies of images scanned by and/or for users for potential inclusion in your digital library? (This does not include retention for internal purposes only.)

- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

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36. By which method(s) do you make archival finding aids Internet-accessible? Check all that apply.

- On a local website
- Available to web crawlers for use by search engines (files are available on a local web server)
- Contributed to ArchiveGrid (formerly RLG Archival Resources)
- Contributed to Archive Finder (formerly ArchivesUSA)
- Contributed to a consortial database or catalog (e.g., Online Archive of California)
- Our finding aids are not Internet-accessible
- Other method (please describe)

37. Indicate which web-based communication methods special collections uses for outreach or to gather feedback. Limit your response to communications intended to promote or raise awareness of your institution's activities and collections; do not include uses by individuals, such as via personal blogs or Twitter accounts.

	Using now	Will implement within a year	No current plans to implement
Institutional blog	jn	jn	jn
Flickr	jn	jn	jn
YouTube	jn	jn	jn
Podcasting	jn	jn	jn
Wikipedia links	jn	jn	jn
Institutional wiki	jn	jn	jn
Applications for mobile devices	jn	jn	jn
User-contributed feedback (e.g., social tagging)	jn	jn	jn
Social networking presence (e.g., Facebook page)	jn	jn	jn
Twitter	jn	jn	jn

Other (please describe)

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38. Estimate how many presentations (e.g., course sessions, public lectures, tours) special collections staff made during the 2008-2009 year.

College/university courses	<input type="text"/>
Non-course groups affiliated with your institution	<input type="text"/>
Visitors from your local community	<input type="text"/>
Visitors from elsewhere	<input type="text"/>

39. Do you have a program (e.g., fellowships or grants) for awarding funds to users to visit your special collections?

Yes

No

40. Any additional comments about this page?

Cataloging and Metadata

Estimate the *percentage* of special collections material that has each type of library catalog record (e.g., MARC records) for materials in the following formats. Refer to [Appendix A](#) for the scope of materials within each format.

41. Printed volumes

No catalog record of any kind	<input type="text"/>
Print catalog record only	<input type="text"/>
Online catalog record	<input type="text"/>

42. Archives and manuscripts (managed as collections)

No catalog record of any kind	<input type="text"/>
Print catalog record only	<input type="text"/>
Online catalog record	<input type="text"/>

43. Manuscripts (managed as items)

No catalog record of any kind	<input type="text"/>
Print catalog record only	<input type="text"/>
Online catalog record	<input type="text"/>

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44. Cartographic materials

- No catalog record of any kind
- Print catalog record only
- Online catalog record
- Cataloged as part of archival and manuscript collections

45. Visual materials

- No catalog record of any kind
- Print catalog record only
- Online catalog record
- Cataloged as part of archival and manuscript collections

46. Audiovisual materials

- No catalog record of any kind
- Print catalog record only
- Online catalog record
- Cataloged as part of archival and manuscript collections

47. Born-digital materials

- No catalog record of any kind
- Print catalog record only
- Online catalog record
- Cataloged as part of archival and manuscript collections

48. Estimate the percentage of archival and manuscript collections for which each type of archival finding aid exists.

- No finding aid
- Not Internet-accessible finding aid
- Internet-accessible finding aid

49. Has the size of your special collections uncataloged/unprocessed backlogs changed since 2000?

	Decreased	No change	Increased	Not sure	No materials of this type
Printed volumes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Materials in other formats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

50. Any additional comments about this page?

Archival Collections Management

51. Have you implemented a simplified approach to archival processing, such as that advocated in Greene and Meissner's article "[More product, less process](#)," in *The American Archivist*, to facilitate backlog reduction, higher rates of production, and/or more timely access to collections?

Yes, for all processing

Yes, for some processing

No

52. Do you create and/or maintain archival finding aids using an encoding scheme? Check all that apply.

EAD

No encoding scheme used

HTML

Other (please describe)

53. Indicate which of the following software tools you currently use, or plan to use in the near future, for creating archival finding aids. Check all that apply.

Word processing software (of any type)

Archivists' Toolkit

Database software (of any type)

EAD Cookbook

Archon

XML markup tool (e.g., XMetal)

Other (please describe)

54. Does your institutional archives report within the library or to another administrative unit?

Library

Chief information officer

Chief executive officer (e.g., president, chancellor)

We have no institutional archives

Other (describe below)

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55. Is a library or archives unit responsible for records management for your institution?

Yes, sole responsibility

Yes, informally, because no other unit takes responsibility

Yes, responsibility is shared with other institutional unit(s)

No

56. Any additional comments about this page?

Digital Special Collections

57. Describe the nature of your digitization program (i.e., digital reproduction of original physical materials) for special collections materials. Check all that apply.

We have completed one or more projects

We have an active digitization program within special collections

We have an active library-wide digitization program that includes special collections materials

We can undertake projects only when we secure special funding

We have not yet undertaken any projects

58. In which ways are special collections staff involved in digitization projects? Check all that apply.

Project management

Cataloging/metadata creation

Selection of materials

Digital image production

Other (please describe)

59. Indicate whether you are considering large-scale digitization of special collections materials. (This generally involves a systematic effort to convert entire collections--rather than being selective at the item level--using streamlined digitization methods.)

We have already done such projects

We have no plans to do this

We intend to do this in future

Not sure

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60. Do you have any licensing contracts in place, or being negotiated, to give commercial firms the right to digitize materials from your special collections and sell access?

Yes

No

61. Where within your institution is responsibility assigned for management and preservation of born-digital archival materials?

Responsibility is assigned to special collections and/or the institutional archives

Responsibility is decentralized

Responsibility is at the library-wide level

Responsibility has not been formally determined

Responsibility is at the institutional level

This issue has not yet been addressed

Other (please describe)

62. Which types of born-digital archival material does your special collections and/or institutional archives *currently* "collect" or manage? Check all that apply.

Institutional archival records

Websites

Other archives and manuscripts

Audio

Publications and reports

Video

Serials

Data sets

Photographs

None

Other (please describe)

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63. Which of the following are impediments to implementing management and preservation of born-digital archival materials in your institution? Check all that apply.

- Lack of expertise
- Lack of time for planning
- Lack of funding
- Lack of administrative support within the library
- Other (please describe)
- Lack of administrative support elsewhere in the institution
- This is not the library's responsibility
- We do not expect to acquire any such materials
- No known impediments

64. How is special collections involved in implementation of your library's [institutional repository](#)? Check all that apply.

- We contribute metadata
- We contribute collections content
- We contribute to project management
- We participate in other ways
- We are not involved with the repository
- We have no institutional repository

65. Any additional comments about this page?

Staffing

66. How many *permanent* staff positions were focused on special collections-related functions during 2008/2009? Use your local job classifications to differentiate categories. Report in FTE (full-time equivalents), either whole or decimal numbers.

Professional/Exempt

Paraprofessional/Non-exempt

Student/Volunteer/Intern

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67. How many *temporary* staff positions (e.g., grant funded) were focused on special collections-related functions during 2008/2009? Use your local job classifications to differentiate categories. Report in FTE (full-time equivalents), either whole or decimal numbers.

Professional/Exempt

Paraprofessional/Non-exempt

Student/Volunteer/Intern

68. How many special collections staff are likely to retire in the next five years?

69. Improving the demographic diversity of staff has been a key focus of the special collections and archives communities in recent years. Which population groups currently are represented among your special collections staff? Check all that apply.

Asian

Native American

Black or African American

Pacific Islander

Hispanic or Latino

White

Other (please state)

70. Have your staffing levels changed for the following activities in special collections since 2000?

	Decreased	No change	Increased	No staff in this area
Administrative	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Curatorial	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Public services	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Technical services (print materials)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Technical services (other materials)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Technology and/or digital services	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

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71. In which areas do special collections staff particularly need education or training in order to meet the institution's needs? Check all that apply.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archival processing | <input type="checkbox"/> Intellectual property |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Born-digital records | <input type="checkbox"/> Management/supervision |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cataloging and metadata | <input type="checkbox"/> Outreach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collection development | <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign languages | <input type="checkbox"/> Public relations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising | <input type="checkbox"/> Public services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> History of the book | <input type="checkbox"/> Records management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe) | |

72. Have any separate special collections units within your institution been integrated since 2000?

- Yes
- All units were integrated before 2000
- We have always had only one special collections unit
- We have multiple special collections units and all remain separate
- Our entire institution is solely or primarily special collections

73. Any additional comments about this page?

Funding

Please estimate your library's expenditures for special collections during 2008/2009.

74. Indicate the monetary unit in which you are reporting.

- U.S. dollars
- Canadian dollars

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75. Institutional funds

Collection materials

Salaries/wages

Other

76. Special funds (e.g., endowments, gifts, grants)

Collection materials

Salaries/wages

Other

77. Has overall funding for your library and/or archives changed in the context of the current global economic crisis?

- Decreased 1-5% Decreased more than 20%
- Decreased 6-10% No change
- Decreased 11-15% Increased
- Decreased 16-20%

78. Any additional comments about this page?

Reflections

79. Please state what you consider the three most challenging issues currently facing your special collections, *not including staffing or funding.*

1.
2.
3.

80. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

End of Survey



Thank you!!

We appreciate your participation in this survey.