



Archives & Special Collections

Elizabeth M. Cudahy Memorial Library

Arrangement & Description Policy

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Overview

The Loyola University Chicago Archives & Special Collections (LUCASC) serves researchers from the University community as well as researchers from the general public. The Arrangement & Description Policy provides an overview of how LUCASC carries out the fundamental work of processing, arrangement, and description in order to provide access to the collections. The department seeks to use inclusive and respectful language in all its archival description.

LUCASC follows [Describing Archives: A Content Standard \(DACS\)](#) for archival description.

Processing

LUCASC refers to its holdings as [collections](#), defined as a set of archival or manuscript materials; materials assembled by a person, organization, or repository from a variety of sources; or the holdings of a repository, taken as a whole. These collections can be processed or unprocessed. [Processed collections](#) are prepared for use through arranging, describing, and performing limited preservation measures. [Unprocessed collections](#) are materials that have not yet been arranged and described for research use.

LUCASC endeavors to provide access to collections as quickly as possible, however some collections take more time to process than others. Factors such as size and condition of collections, as well as limited staff, contribute to the length of time it takes for collections to be processed. Unprocessed collections are not available for research use due to institutional policies, legal and privacy concerns, and donor restrictions.

Arrangement

[Arrangement](#) is the process by which physical control is established over the materials in a collection. LUCASC endeavors to maintain the original order in which a collection is received, unless it is determined that there is no discernable order or that the original order does not assist researchers in accessing materials.

Description

[Description](#) is the process archivists use to establish intellectual control of collections and to create discovery tools such as finding aids, catalog records, inventories, etc., to assist researchers in discovering, accessing, and using materials. Most of the tools produced through description work are published online in a variety of ways to facilitate access to archival materials.

LUCASC endeavors to utilize inclusive and respectful language in all descriptions. A Loyola University Chicago taxonomy based on inclusive and diverse terminology is used for descriptive work. This taxonomy is in continual development.

Existing archival descriptions, including finding aids and catalog records, may include outdated, offensive, and harmful language. Legacy descriptions undergo continual review to identify outdated/offensive/harmful language and to replace this language with diverse and inclusive language to more accurately identify the contents of the collections.

Descriptive tools must be continually reviewed to identify and correct errors or update information. Researchers encountering factual or typographical errors, or outdated, offensive, or harmful language in descriptions are requested to contact LUCASC staff with suggested corrections or additions.

Access & Use Restrictions

LUCASC provides information regarding access and use restrictions in its public descriptive information such as finding aids and catalog regards. This information can be found under the following sections: Restrictions, Copyright, and Notes.