Beyond Efficiency: An Impact Assessment of the UC Guidelines for Efficient Processing

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Guidelines for Efficient Archival Processing in the University of California Libraries

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* Revised in 2020
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Research Questions

Which elements of the Guidelines were successfully adopted?

Did the Guidelines help us reduce our backlog?

If not, what are the barriers to implementing efficient processing and collection management?
Research Methodology

- Quantitative survey (numbers)
- Qualitative focus groups (attitudes and perspectives)
Key Findings: what did we adopt?

Core principle #1: Aim to provide access to all holdings

Core principle #2: Look for the “golden minimum” (with some exceptions)
Key Findings: what did we NOT adopt?

Core principle #5: Measure and compare processing rates to ensure processing is carried out efficiently.
Key Findings: did the Guidelines help UC reduce the backlog?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total collection footprint</th>
<th>Estimated unprocessed backlog</th>
<th>Percentage of footprint that is unprocessed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>247,346 linear feet</td>
<td>71,605 linear feet</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021-2022</td>
<td>484,228 linear feet</td>
<td>54,713 linear feet</td>
<td>11% of physical 17% of digital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81.4 TB</td>
<td>13.7 TB</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Findings: barriers to implementing efficient processing and collection management

1. 25% reduction in employees responsible for processing
2. Culture that favors acquisitions over access
3. Capacity gap for developing and sustaining collection management infrastructure
Implications: University of California Libraries

- Not all of the elements of the Guidelines were adopted statewide
- Data collection, value scores, and appraisal are areas of opportunity
- Accessioning backlogs are a critical issue
Implications: Profession-wide

Efficient processing alone cannot solve the backlog problem
Sharing results

- Internal UC conversations
- Article in *Journal of Western Archives* (forthcoming)
- Presentations
Thank you!

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