



# Functional Analysis Approach to Appraisal

Presented by  
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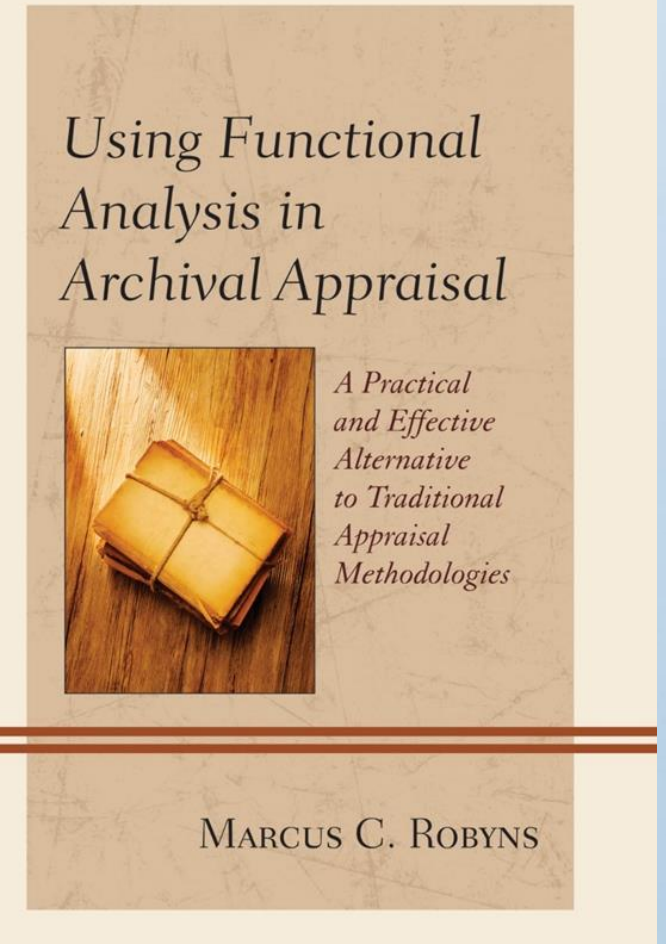
Midwest Archives Conference – May 9, 2015

# Records Management at NMU

- Northern Michigan University (Marquette, MI)
  - Enrollment of less than 10,000 (small to mid-size)
  - University Archivist (manuscripts) / Records Analyst (institutional records)
  - University Records Center (roughly 10,000 cubic feet of storage)
  - Records management program began in the mid-1990's
- Last appraisal of institutional records – 2008 (average)
  - Some offices were last appraised in 2003, some offices didn't exist yet/were combined, and some offices were never appraised to begin with
- Prior to July 2014, the University Archivist was in charge of both manuscript collections and institutional records
  - This caused some disrepair to the records management program

# Methodology

- Taking a direct but non-invasive approach to record appraisal.
- Determining historical value by examining mission and duties of an office.
- The office functions determined to be most important for completing the institution's mission are likely to produce records with the greatest historical value.
- Macro level approach allows for viewing records as they are actually used, rather than how traditional appraisal purports them to be.



# Timeline

## (Sept. 2015 – June 2015)

September 16 <sup>th</sup>	Memo sent out to V.P.'s and other Admins.
September 26 <sup>th</sup>	Requested Liaisons
October 1 <sup>st</sup>	Started contacting Dept. Heads directly
October 13 <sup>th</sup> -17 <sup>th</sup> and 27 <sup>th</sup> -31 <sup>st</sup>	Liaison Training [6 sessions, MWF.]
Week of October 27 <sup>th</sup>	Student training with Marcus
Week of November 10 <sup>th</sup>	Student practice in Payroll
January 2015	Official Start of CRS
January 5, 2015	Sent out Phase One Meeting List
January 19, 2015	Phase One - Academic Departments
Week of February 9 <sup>th</sup>	Sent out Phase Two Meeting List
May – June 2015	Last office visits and sending out Appraisal Reports

# Comprehensive Records Survey Objectives

- 1) Develop institutional support
- 2) Select and train project staff
- 3) Complete information collection for roughly 75 offices, departments, and programs
- 4) Publish appraisal reports online

# Records Survey Technicians

- **Morgan Paavola**, University Records Center Coordinator and Senior Survey Technician
- **Stefan Nelson**, Records Survey Technician
- **Prince Parker**, Records Survey Technician



History  
(Senior)

Fisheries and  
Wildlife  
Management  
(Freshman)



Psychology  
(Freshman)

# RST Training

- Developed interview script, studied term definitions, and practiced answering questions
- Mock interview with Marcus Robyns - University Archivist
  - Subsequent practice interviews with Sara
- Professionalism workshop with Jill Compton - University Auditor
- Mock Interview with Lindsey Butorac - Payroll, Human Resources
- Review session and analysis with Marcus, Sara, Jill, and Lindsey
  - Led to the suggestion to use team interview tactics – one asks questions while the other enters data into the collection database

# Office Liaisons

## Assigning Liaisons (Began September, 2014)

- Initial email went out from the Dean of Academic Information Services supporting the project to Vice Presidents
- Stressed the importance of a liaison who worked with the records (vast majority of liaisons were secretaries)
- Issues
  - Memos not being passed on to staff and some push back.
  - Reiterating the project to department heads and secretaries
  - Secretaries moving offices/leaving
  - Still trying to establish liaisons for some offices to this day...

## Training (October, 2014)

- Mandatory training sessions were held for assigned liaisons.
- Presentation by Marcus or Sara.
  - Included an introduction to the project, what to expect, what we will be looking for, and an opportunity to ask questions
- Handouts were provided to help liaisons prepare and to share the project with other office staff



# Collection Database

- Created by librarian Douglas Black using Access
  - Sara and Morgan helped design and tweak the functionality of the database
- Database is stored on secure server with password protection/limited access
  - John Hambleton helped set up network access
- Sara, Morgan, Prince, and Stefan have the ability to access the database and make changes to it – accessible via VPN connection anywhere on campus

The screenshot displays a web-based form titled "Records Management". The form is used for entering and managing record information. It includes several sections:

- Record Title:** "University Record Center (URC)- Records Destruction".
- Record Series:** Two empty dropdown menus.
- Search Records:** A blue button.
- Purpose:** "This series includes the pull list, signed destruction authorization forms, correspondence, receipt from Waste Management Authority destruction request".
- Content:** "and secure handling. Keeping track of held destructions."
- Notes:** "These records are vital in case of audit and other legal reasons concerning the secure destructions and proof of destruction. Safety check for all offices the university".
- Start (yyyy):** "2009".
- Volume:** "6".
- Folder(s):** A dropdown menu.
- End (yyyy):** "Per".
- Vital Record:** Checked.
- Confidential Record:** Checked.
- Date Transferred to Record Center:** An empty text box.
- Disposition Date:** "ermane".
- Usage Frequency:** "Annually".
- Related to other records in this office:** An unchecked checkbox.
- Related to records in other offices:** An unchecked checkbox.
- Other Record 1-4:** Four empty dropdown menus.
- Other Office 1-4:** Four empty text boxes.
- Record Type 1-4:** Four dropdown menus. The first is "Correspondence - Ex", the second is "Forms".
- Record Format 1-4:** Four dropdown menus. The first is "Paper".
- Go to Record Types:** A blue button.
- Go to Record Formats:** A blue button.
- Filing System 1-3:** Three text boxes. The first is "Fiscal Year".

# Interview – Raw Data Collected

- Record Description
- Record Type (memos, forms, reports...)
- Record Format (Paper or Electronic)
- Inclusive Dates (oldest and most recent)
- Volume (number of files, drawers or cabinets)
- File Arrangement
- Frequency of Use
- Confidential / Vital
- Federal, State and University Statutes or Policies
- Record Disposition
- Office Practice

# Office Visit Timeline

- Office visits: January 19<sup>th</sup> to present
- Set a meeting time at least two weeks in advance using Doodle
- Prepare an office history which includes current and possibly new record series
  - Sent out one week before visit
- Meet with liaison(s)
  - meeting length depends on office size, preparedness, and liaison (30 – 90 minutes +)
- RST enters/completes data entry into database
- Sara sends out CRS satisfaction survey and thank you note
- Sara/Morgan contact additional record holders
  - Through email, phone, or visit
- Sara/Morgan assign functions
- Sara writes the Appraisal Report

# Lessons Learned

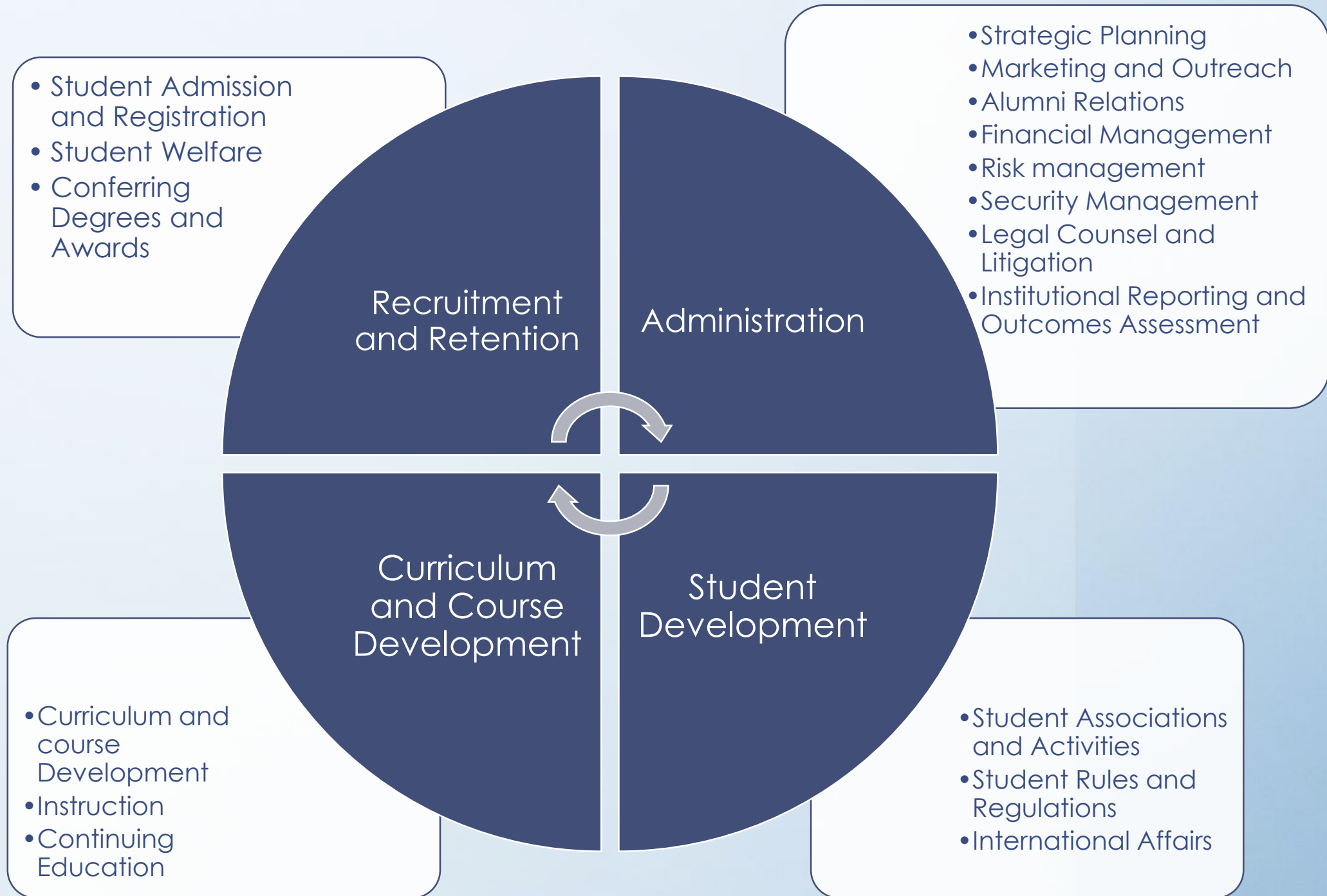
- Very time intensive – hundreds of emails, scheduling nightmares, writing office histories, preparing record series lists, etc.
- Meetings were taking too long
  - 90 minutes or more
- Liaisons were either overwhelmed by prep materials or felt they weren't prepared enough
- Majority of the records are kept the same
- Tracking down other record keepers in the department
  - Department heads, other secretaries, faculty, etc.
- Tracking committee records

# Data Analysis

- Four main functions based on Marcus's book
  - Functions and Sub-functions were reorganized and renamed
- Assigned functions after the office interview
  - We had a better understanding of the record, how it was used, and how it related to other similar university records
  - This differs from Marcus's original approach of assigning functions prior to the office visit
  - Easier for office visit/staff
- Majority of records created and maintained by academic offices are general records – no need to assign a function
- Records are assigned to a function in clusters
  - Offices/departments are assigned to a function based on organizational hierarchy
  - 4 main functions
  - 18 sub-functions
  - 35 general record schedules

All functions fall under the university mission statement, department mission statements and office mission statements.

## Tentative Functions



# General Schedules

All offices and departments share a number of general functions, and therefore create similar records.

We have combined these general records under a general schedule.

They are then further broken down to; General Personnel, General Financial, General Files and General Academic.

## General Files

- General Subject and Project Files
- Boards, Commissions, and Committee Records
- Contracts and Agreements
- University Publications

## General Financial

- Accounts Payable and Receivable
- Budget Records
- Funding Request Forms
- Vendor Records

## General Personnel

- Faculty Personnel Records
- Recruitment File
- Evaluation, Promotion and Tenure Records
- Student Time Cards and Reports

## General Administration

- Academic Program and Course Records
- New Course/Degree Program Proposal Records
- Scholarship Files
- Course Syllabi and Handouts

# Functional Analysis Example

## Traditional Series Arrangement

- Series: 0505-01 *Alumni Board File*
- Vice President for Advancement (0500)
  - Alumni Relations Office (0505)
  - *Alumni Board File* (01)

## Functional Analysis

- Series: 4/3/1 *Alumni Board File*
- Administration (4/?/?)
  - Alumni Relations (4/3/?)
  - *Alumni Board File* (4/3/1)
- Function #4, Sub-Function #3, and record series #1

- **Even if the *Alumni Board File* was moved to another office, it would still serve the function of Alumni Relations. This is what makes a function based approach practical, efficient, and concise.**



# Appraisal Reports

- Updated office history
- Office functions and sub-functions and who is responsible for them
- List of records they have transferred previously
- New disposition schedule list
  - Which includes links to associated record series
- Federal and state statutes / university policies and definitions
- Archival policies and authority statement

# Electronic Records

## **Electronic Record Use**

- Cloud Computing (Purchasing)
- Dropbox
- Shared Servers
- Concur and Banner Databases  
(No Printing)
- None: printing emails, Concur reports, etc.

## **Types of Records Stored Electronically**

- Emails
- Photographs
- Admission records
- All Reporting
- Printing Services
- Newsletters
- Financial records

We found some extreme offices: everything was kept in hardcopy OR everything was electronic. However, this really does depend on the person, and not really office/record practice.

# Liaison Satisfaction Survey

- Not apart of Marcus's original method – unique to our project
- Wanted to determine survey effectiveness and satisfaction
- Wanted to know if offices were aware of what we did
- Wanted to determine future interest in training
- Wanted to receive immediate feedback we could apply moving forward
- Wanted to determine how the students were doing:
  - Respectful, efficient, answering questions adequately, etc.

# Statistics and Outcomes

- 67 of 75 (89%) offices have participated so far
- **Average satisfaction of the Survey is 3.4 out of 4 with an 85% satisfaction rate.**
- 56% of liaisons are interested in additional workshops/training
  - File arrangement, electronic records management, etc.
- Roughly 75% of offices said they were familiar with our services
  - However, they didn't really know the services we provided: destruction, record retrieval, training assistance, etc.
  - These facts had to be reiterated many times to several different offices
- Vast majority of participating offices were happy with our record retrieval services
  - We promote this service heavily to encourage record transfer

# Project Comments

“I thought the process was good and I liked that I was able to update what our office handled.”

“It was organized so all went well and smoothly.”

“I offer no advice right now. I'm just happy they are helping me out with old files we have had for years. This is an excellent start.”

# A Modern Approach to Archival Appraisal: A Case Study Using Functional Analysis at Northern Michigan University

<http://www.nmu.edu/archives/node/1>

