SCHOOL OF INFORMATION
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

RISK ASSESSMENT AND COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT

INF 392F  Spring 2015      Unique # 27920

Instructor:  Karen L. Pavelka
Class location:  UTA 1.506B
Date and time:  Thursday 9:00 - 11:45

Instructor Information
Email:  pavelka@utexas.edu
Office:  UTA 5.422  phone: 512-471-8286
Lab:  UTA 1.506B  phone:  512-471-8269 (Most likely to be here.)
Office hours:  Held in lab; will be announced and posted on lab doors.

Course description:  Assessing risks in cultural heritage collections with an emphasis on library and archival collections; developing strategies to manage risks; learning practical techniques to reduce risk.

Learning objectives
Students will learn to:
• Assess risks within collections
• Compare the relative probability and magnitude of various risks
• Select and apply mitigation strategies
• Evaluate the effectiveness of mitigation strategies
• Identify the difference between symbolic and useful plans

Academic Integrity
The University of Texas policies on academic integrity can be found at http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php
If you have not read the section on plagiarism recently, it is worth a review. Plagiarism and academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.

Students with disabilities
Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services ofr Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259.

Assignment guidelines
• Assignments are due at midnight on the due date. Unless otherwise instructed, please submit assignments on Canvas. All assignments must be submitted as a Word doc and the document should be titled as follows:
studentlastname_assignmentname
• Late assignments will be penalized by lowering the earned grade one level for each day it is late.
• Exceptions to these penalties may be granted if you make arrangements with me at least 48 hours before the assignment is due.
• If the assignment directions are not clear, or if you are having a problem with an assignment, please let me know as early as possible.

All writing exercises:
• Should have a bibliography.
• Should be well written.
• Should be reviewed by a peer before being turned in.

Assignments
T&RH Monitoring exercise
Begin January 22; due February 12
Repeat dates to be decided Omitted
(Group exercise; summaries will be written individually.)
• Collect all T & RH monitoring devices.
• Calibrate instruments or record error.
• Place all instruments in one location for one week.
• Calibrate instruments or record error.
• Place devices around building with the goal of getting as much fluctuation as possible while still mimicking realistic collection spaces. For instance, placing a device on a shelf a foot away from a window is reasonable, placing it against the glass not.
• Calibrate instruments or record error.
• Compare readings initially, after 24 hours, at the end of the week.
• Write a summary of the results.
• This exercise will be repeated at the end of the semester when weather conditions have changed.

Threats exercise
Due February 26
• Visit a collection; consider the materials on display and in the catalogue.
• Describe the most prominent materials.
• Describe the less prominent materials.
• Rank the threats to the collection according to the 10 agents of deterioration.

Storage and housing exercise
Due February March 5
Write a cost comparison between types of high end and low end storage systems listed below. Consider the effect on deterioration and handling. Suggest any solutions to improve the poor storage other than purchasing all new materials.
• Powder coated steel flat files vs. maps rolled in cardboard tubes.
• Archival quality document boxes and folders, stored at no more than 20 per folder vs. Bankers boxes and cheap folders holding 100 documents per folder.

Microclimate exercise  This will be combined with the lighting exercise.
Implementation due March 12
Assessment due April 16
• Construct a microclimate; install an object; install a duplicate object outside the microclimate; compare by monitoring and by observation. The microclimate can be designed to reduce any type of threat; it is not limited to T, RH and light.
• Write a brief assessment of the value of the microclimate.

IPM exercise
Due March 26  Changed to due April 30
(Group exercise; summaries will be written individually.)
• Research pests likely to be found in Austin and the damage they do to collections.
• Develop a hierarchy of most to least threatening insects according to types of materials.
• Split class into: Books and paper; textiles; paintings and objects.
• Each group will track their most damaging pest.
• Write a plan for IPM according to the information you have found.

Security exercise
Due April 9
• Identify the most obvious security flaws in an institution related to theft or vandalism. (The specific institution will be discussed in class.)
• Identify the possible methods for theft or vandalism.
• Identify the methods that could be employed to reduce threats.
• Write a persuasive memo to have the improvements considered or adopted.

Lighting exercise  Combined with microclimate exercise.
Due April 16
• Examine the fading sample presented in class.
• Design and construct a fade test to address a specific problem.

Climate debate essay
Due April 16
• Review the literature and write a short paper in which you take a stand about how stringent controls should be. Essays will be judged on specificity and rational. Avoid "it depends" statements.

Events essay  This will be changed to class discussion and graded on participation.
Students will have the option of turning in a written assignment in lieu of participation.
Due April 23
• Receptions are often held in collection display areas such as galleries even though the risks from such events are high.
• Describe the risks of holding a reception in a gallery. The specific venue will be discussed in class.
• Describe steps you might take to reduce risks.
• Prioritize the risks according to the level of protection.
• Prioritize the risks according to disruption to the event.

Class attendance and participation
• Students are expected to attend all classes. If you need to miss a class, if possible let me know before class begins.
• All readings should be done before the class meets.
• Class participation is 20% of your grade and is measured by contributions to discussions, enthusiastic participation in class exercises, and anything the student can bring to make the class a richer experience for everyone.
• If you are having trouble participating in class, please come and talk to me. We may be able to find strategies to help you.

Grading
Grade points will be distributed as follows:
• T&RH exercise, phase 1 15%
• T&RH exercise, phase 2 5%
• Threats exercise 10%
• Microclimate exercise 5%
• IPM exercise 10%
• Light fading exercise 5%
• Security exercise 5%
• Storage and housing exercise 5%
• Climate debate essay 10%
• Events essay 5%
• Quizzes 5%
• Attendance and participation 20%

Suggested texts
Please do not purchase the texts before the class meets. We will be taking a somewhat different approach to the readings and not everyone will be reading the same text. Students will be asked to contribute to the reading list.


Miller, M. S. (2002). *Protecting museum exhibits from their environments (and vice versa)*. Seaford, DE: NoUVIR.


**Schedule**

**January 22, Week 1**

**Introduction: Course objectives**

**Readings**


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**January 29, Week 2**

**Temperature and relative humidity**

**Readings**

Boersma, F., Brokerhof, A., van den Berg, S., & Tegelaers, J. pp. 31-45.

Harvey, R., & Mahard, M. R. pp. 85-105.

Padfield, T., & Borchersen, K. pp. 11-17.

Person-Harm, A., & Cooper, J. pp. 13-42.

Thomson, G. pp. 66-127; 210-269.

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**February 5, Week 3**

**Agents of deterioration: Background and use**

**Readings**


Read the following sections:

- Deterioration by Light, UV and IR (Read to “Control of Light”) [http://www.cci-icc.gc.ca/resources-ressources/agentsofdeterioration-agentsdedeterioration/chap08-eng.aspx](http://www.cci-icc.gc.ca/resources-ressources/agentsofdeterioration-agentsdedeterioration/chap08-eng.aspx)

Person-Harm, A., & Cooper, J. pp. 1-11; 43-75.

Williams, E. pp. 149-155; 257-261.
Readings


Harvey, R., & Mahard, M. R. pp. 31-58.


Padfield, T., & Borchersen, K. pp. 107-114; 115-121.

Person-Harm, A., & Cooper, J. pp. 77-125; 199-217.


Padfield, T., & Borchersen, K. pp. 63-65; 67-72; 135-144; 229-235; 237-243.

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**February 26, Week 6**

*Understanding and implementing microclimates*  
*Outreach, Setting agendas*

**Readings**

Padfield, T., & Borchersen, K. pp. 27-35; 191-198; 199-206; 253-260; 261-266.  
Williams, E. pp. 33-36; 37-44; 121-130; 205-211; 212-221; 232-243.

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**March 5, Week 7**

*Snow Day. Was supposed to be IPM*

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**March 12, Week 8**

*Guest speaker: Joe Reyes*

**Readings**

Harvey, R., & Mahard, M. R. pp. 147-181; 183-222; 223-253; 255-291; 317-325; 327-341.

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**March 19, SPRING BREAK**

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**March 26, Week 9**
Lighting

Readings
Padfield, T., & Borchersen, K. pp. 51-56.

April 2, Week 10
Security, transport and events
Exhibits

Readings
Harvey, R., & Mahard, M. R. pp. 133-146.
Person-Harm, A., & Cooper, J. pp. 219-247.
Williams, E. 57-65; 66-75.

April 9, Week 11
Environmental standards debate

Readings
Person-Harm, A., & Cooper, J. pp. 151-197.

**April 16, Week 12**
*Defining preventive conservation*

**Readings**
Padfield, T., & Borchersen, K. pp. 123-128.

**April 23, Week 13**
*Integrated pest management*

**Readings**
Padfield, T., & Borchersen, K. pp. 57-60.
April 30, Week 14
Mold prevention and removal
Disaster recovery

Readings (Disasters)
Will be given during class.

Readings (Mold)
Padfield, T., & Borchersen, K. pp. 185-189.
How are paper and book conservators dealing with it? An international survey.

May 7, Week 15
Review