An Inter-Disciplinary Approach to Web Programming: A Collaboration Between the University Archives and the Department of Computer Science

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We believe that the current trends in archival research and computer science undergraduate education have created an ideal environment for our program. Students are increasingly interested in real-world applications of the concepts that constitute the course goals. Several students cited the course as their inspiration to attend graduate school in library and information sciences. We believe that the need for graduates with these combined sets of skills will continue to grow.

Students participate in all aspects of the project, from identifying the archival materials to writing the java programs. In addition to requiring students to conduct archival research, this course also focuses on the Computer Science Department's Web Programming class. The course introduces students to the history and contemporary use of Web technologies. Students work within teams to develop a Web site that demonstrates their research and programming abilities. The department encourages faculty to continue to work with the Archives to meet the needs of students in both the major and minor programs.

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Before the course began, the provost, undergraduate education, and University archives discussed the nature of the course. The archives and computer science departments agreed to integrate the two courses. The student who decided to work in the University Archives chose a topic, researched it, and met with the archivist before enrolling in their courses. These meetings ensured that students would have sufficient resources at the Archives to conduct their primary (visual) and secondary (textual) research. Students were also encouraged to develop a Web site to display their findings, including digital photographs, documents, and audio materials as part of the assignment.

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