

## **NIAUSI Initial Library Organization Project Assessment and Recommendations**

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### **Overall notes & notifications on the work we've done**

1. We did finish cataloging the books, and are putting together a user's manual and visual guide.
2. We did not get to catalogue the periodicals in the Studio, or the Latvian collection in the bedroom, and there are a few oversized/art books in the Studio that were not finished either.
3. (for Cory, re: the eventual website interface): ideally, user searching shouldn't be affected by punctuation, capitalization, & would be able to search partial as well as full words
4. We had an issue with the "copyright" date on the records saving into the "links" field for a week or two, so there are a fair number of books for which this is still the case.
5. We used English in most instances as the default language; however, at the very end we realized Lazio in English is actually Latium. This may not need to be adjusted, but I wanted to let you know about the inconsistency.
6. There are a number of extra periodicals downstairs under Tony's kitchen; after speaking with Tony and getting his opinion, we decided not to catalogue them—both for reasons of time, and because he felt they weren't as important as the material upstairs. There are also several sets of old encyclopedias, with the same assessment.

### **Recommendations for next steps**

#### **1. New labels?**

The board can decide how they feel about this, and we can forward a copy of the labels we used if desired. I also went through after we placed them and made notes for where I would recommend changes; I can type this up and send it if necessary, as well.

#### **2. Expansion?**

There is some extra room left on the hanging shelves in the studio; it's mostly full of old architectural drawing equipment, which Tony said no one uses anymore. We didn't clear it off because we didn't need the space, and I figured if it were cleared it would only get something else put on it in the meantime.

#### **3. Shelves!**

The orange shelving in the studio feels fairly unstable; there is no cross-bracing and it is not secured to the walls or the ceiling. The shelves sway back and forth merely from being touched; I recommend replacing them with something much sturdier.

The hanging shelves in the studio are attached to the walls, but I'm not sure by what device, or how secure they are.

In the Sala Grande and spare bedroom, the shelves are made of sturdier material, but again, not attached to walls or ceiling. Additionally, the horizontal

portion of the shelves rest on little metal studs, with no fastening; this makes them adjustable, but if too many books are removed from a shelf, that portion tends to fall off.

#### 4. Housing Conditions for Collections

High heat and humidity are very damaging to books and paper, but the worst environmental condition is frequent changes in temperature and humidity. Light also damages collections. The house is not ideal for storing a library, but this is partly unavoidable. I think for the main part of the collection, which is mostly intended for research purposes, regular dusting might be sufficient. For the Old/Rare/Fragile books, however, you may want to get some sort of accessible storage that protects them from the elements, store them away from light, &c. Some are quite fragile; their condition is noted in the online database under “comments.”

#### 5. Other Materials

We didn't catalog or organize the maps in the studio, but they will probably need some new housing—drawers or archival folders/boxes. As I mentioned previously in an email (attached in full below), the slides, architectural drawings, & student projects will probably each be their own discrete organization project. I am planning to meet with someone from UW's special collections to hear what they have done with their newly-acquired architectural drawing acquisition, and will let you know what I gather from that.

#### 5. Collections/Weeding

I don't know what provisions you want to make for expansion, especially since most of the books seem to have been gifted during the hilltop program, but I would recommend going through and weeding some of the multiple copies (noted in the database), outdated travel literature, and old periodicals and reference (especially those downstairs).

#### **Other documents I have which may be useful**

- Labels (those we used, and recommendations for adjustments)
- Cataloguing guide (in progress; for more in-depth explanation of our decisions, and/or adding future acquisitions in a consistent fashion—UPDATE:attached)
- NIAUSI Library user guide (in progress:UPDATE: on its way)

#### PREVIOUS EMAIL QUESTIONS/ANSWERS

(I don't want to wax long-winded, but as to Lauris' points, read on if you're interested):

#### **1- do you see the slides being incorporated into the organizational framework as well?**

I think it makes sense to conceptualize the slides (and drawings, and student projects) as being part of the Civita NIAUSI Big-L Library--resources which both communicate the history and personality of the programs, and can be documented and made available for research.

Given the difference between published books and the other media, however, I would consider each of these mediums a special collection unto itself (more below). Whether the metadata (information about the items) that you would want to collect and record could fit into the library form on the web site, or whether you would need different

options, is difficult to say at this point. Many small private libraries are fairly ad hoc, so it depends a lot on figuring out the theory of what you want to do, and then working with the materials to see how you can accommodate those ideas.

## 2- Can there be a subsection for student projects? - Rome and Civita.

Again, I think this would be a special collection that could fit well into the library--it is nice for a search engine to be able to work across multiple collections at once. It would probably be another full project to figure out a good system and put it into place (especially considering the advent of digital records), though I have to say, a clear chronological order sounds so nice and straightforward at this point...

## 3- How are drawings categorized?

I actually spoke with Special Collections at UW before leaving, as they recently acquired an accession of architectural drawings. Basically, there are best practices but no standard; each institution decides what will work best for them, and customizes accordingly.