ArchivesSpace Training Exercise:
Create Your Own Record

This hands-on exercise is intended to help you become more familiar with the ArchivesSpace application, and to start thinking about how archivists describe materials in collections. We’ve found that working with fake records feels more comfortable because there is no concern about disrupting “real” data.

For this exercise, you will create descriptive records for your own hypothetical archival collection. Think of the things you have at home that document your life and your interests (e.g. undergraduate coursework, cards from friends and family you’ve saved over the years, photographs stored on your computer, your collection of rare science fiction magazines from the 1950s). Now imagine these being donated to the archives. Using the Local Usage Manual on our ArchivesSpace Guide and advice on archival description from DACS, create the following records in the ArchivesSpace training sandbox.

Login Information:

- Training Sandbox: http://aspace-training.dlts.org/
- Username and Password provided during training

Part 1: Create an Accession Record
Create an accession record for your collection to document what is known about it at the time that it arrives at the archives. It should be robust enough that someone looking at the record months or years later has a solid understanding of what the materials are, how much there is, and the conditions that govern our stewardship of the collection. During accessioning, we refer to documentation like the deed and donor correspondence; imagine what this documentation might be like.

Add the following information to your record:

1. **Identifier**: Create an identifier in the following format: 2016.XXX (2016 in the first entry box, followed by a three digit number that is not already in use in the system in the second entry box)
2. **Accession date**: date the materials arrived at the archives
3. **Title**: Title your collection using some variation of your name, plus the nature of the archival unit (usually “Papers”), plus an optional phrase describing the
content. For example, a general collection of your materials could be called the Jane Doe Papers; a collection that contains just one type of material on a very specific topic could be the Jane Doe Collection of *Ghostbusters* Fan Fiction.

4. **Date(s):** Enter a Date range for the collection. Inclusive Date fields are mandatory; Bulk Dates are to be used as appropriate.

5. **Description:** Describe the contents and the context of the materials, taking into consideration the types of materials (e.g. correspondence, video cassettes), the activities or functions reflected in them, and the subject matter to which the materials pertain.

6. **Creator:**
   a. Navigate to Agent Links
   b. Select “Add Agent Link”
   c. Select “Role → Creator”
   d. In the Agents field, add your name. If you already have an Agent record in the system, type ahead or browse for it. If not, create an Agent record for yourself by selecting “Create → Person.” Enter your last name in the “Primary Part of Name” field and your first name in the “Rest of Name” field. Select “Create and Link to Agent.”

7. **Source:** Add an Agent link to identify who donated the materials (it might be different from the creator). Use the same process outlined above, selecting “Role → Source.”

8. **Subject(s):** Add 1-2 subject terms that help describe what the collection is about.
   a. Select “Add Subject”
   b. Type ahead, browse for, or create a subject record

9. **Other Fields as Appropriate:** Other fields typically used when accessioning include Disposition, Provenance, Retention Rule, Access Restrictions Note, and Use Restrictions Note.

10. **Spawn Accession Record Into Resource Record:** After saving the record, navigate to the top of the record and select “Spawn → Resource” from the menu bar. This will automatically create a resource record for the materials, using information from the accession record as a foundation for further description.
   a. Assign your Resource Record an identifier (call number) TEST.xxx (i.e. use TEST as the prefix in the first entry box, followed by a three-digit number that is not already in use in the system in the second entry box).
   b. Assign your Resource Record a Level of Description (e.g. collection).
   c. Save record

**Part 2: Complete a Resource Record**

*Navigate to the Resource Record you’ve just created via spawning from the Accession Record. You will now edit and add to the record to ensure that it has robust description compliant with our local standards.*
1. Refer to the ACM Required Elements for Archival Description to see what notes and other fields you need to add to the resource record.

2. Try to incorporate the following scenarios or operations to give you a broader familiarity of the application:
   a. A collection with multiple series.
   b. A collection that contains multiple formats, including audiovisual and/or born-digital.
   c. For the container list, imagine how the materials might be housed in individual boxes and/or folders. Add container instances for these materials, experimenting with describing some things at the box level (e.g. Box 2 - Yearbooks) and others at the folder level (e.g. Box 3, Folder 1 - Advanced American Literature Syllabus).

3. Using the Rapid Data Entry tool, add at least 5 file components in the same box, or 5 consecutive boxes within a series.

4. Export your record in XML.

Reflection:
Reflect on how these types of records are related in terms of the stages that a collection goes through before it is made available to researchers. How might the information in these records be used by researchers in order to find and use archival materials? Or how archivists and managers might use these kinds of records - on their own or in combination - to prioritize work, plan for future projects, and understand their holdings on a broad scale? When looking at these kinds of records, what do you know or not know about the materials?