

FONDREN FELLOWS PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES

Summer 2019

1. “A Time of Protest at Rice”: Part 2

Project summary

The Fellow will create an online exhibit about the [Abbie Hoffman Incident](#). This project complements another project under development that focuses on the Masterson Crisis, a student protest at Rice in the 1960s. The Fellow will have a chance to analyze Rice's unique protests that were in sympathy to--but also ran counter to--the Vietnam protests held at other universities across the country.

Key tasks

- Creating a timeline of the events
- Identifying the key players
- Interviewing those involved, which could include Dr. Allen Matusow and Jerlyn Mardis, the Student Center Board President who booked Abbie Hoffman
- Synthesizing audio, written documents, photographs, and ephemera to tell a story
- Presenting research via an online exhibit that is connected to the larger “A Time of Protest at Rice” OMEKA exhibit.

Qualifications needed for this position

- Looking for a Humanities major with an interest in history or experience working on archival research
- A strong writer and visual communicator
- An individual who can work independently

Learning outcomes

- Fellows will learn how to create a digital humanities project from the research to the presentation stage.
- They will learn how to synthesize information and present it within a multi-media format.

2. Toward a more environmentally sustainable vendor/publisher packaging global practice

Project summary

As the end point of the acquisition of library materials (print journals, newspapers, books, etc.), libraries are increasingly becoming a repository of a large amount of packaging on a daily basis, some of it recyclable, and some not. This ongoing influx of packaging materials represents an

opportunity and invitation for further investigation and research into what current regulations and best practices exist with regard to their actual recyclability and/or disposal, both locally and across various regions nationally and internationally, as well as an examination of the effectiveness of their efforts. The findings and recommendations of this research project may lead to a more informed understanding of the complexity of issues with which to mediate a more substantive response in dealing with this problem. The workflow will be divided into thirds: Exploration/Discovery, Research, Synthesis of Findings and Recommendations over the project schedule, with strong emphasis placed upon research.

Key Tasks

- Define and identify packaging waste problems both locally and globally among stakeholders
- Research current practices and policies/laws/regulations governing its use and disposal.
- Synthesize solution including determining the best strategy for reducing packaging.
- Author and submit a written report to the committee on project findings/recommendations.
- Give a presentation and share final report with community stakeholders and the public at the conclusion of the project.

Qualifications

- A demonstrated ability to conduct attributable research, formulate workable solutions and prepare written papers with regards to findings/recommendations in a timely manner.
- A demonstrated interest in working to create a more environmentally sustainable ecology (i.e. Rice Environmental Club).

Learning Outcomes

- Gain first-hand insight into the methodology necessary for conducting accurate, effective research and analysis and its applications to strategic problem-solving.

3. Developing a Sustainability and Resilience Plan for Fondren Library

Project Summary

According to the American Library Association, “libraries that demonstrate leadership in making sustainable decisions that positively address climate change, respect and use natural resources, and create healthy indoor and outdoor environments will stabilize and reduce their long-term energy costs, help build more sustainable communities, and thereby increase community support for the library.” In support of Rice’s overall commitment to environmental sustainability, Fondren Library seeks to become more sustainable, such as by reducing resource consumption, facilitating the sharing and re-use of materials, creating collections that reflect sustainability concerns, fostering resilience, and incorporating environmental concerns into potential renovation plans. The Fondren Fellow would lay the groundwork for developing the library’s sustainability plan by consulting with stakeholders, identifying key elements of the plan, researching how similar organizations approach sustainability, and preparing a brief report and presentation to share findings. It is envisioned that this will be a multi-phase project, likely involving multiple Fellows.

Key tasks

- Conduct background research on sustainability planning

- Consult with stakeholders on needs and goals for a sustainability plan
- Sketch a process for creating a sustainability and resilience plan
- Develop an initial framework for a sustainability and resilience plan
- Write a report synthesizing findings and outlining next steps

Qualifications

- Strong research skills
- Experience conducting interviews
- Excellent analytical skills
- Interest in sustainability, resilience, and libraries
- Strong writing skills
- Ability to keep a research project on track

Learning Outcomes

Students would gain a practical understanding of how to help an organization achieve sustainability goals. They would also hone their research and communication skills.

4. Cataloging paranormal studies collections

Project Summary

For “Cataloging paranormal studies collections,” the Fellow would assist the staff of the Woodson Research Center with the processing and description of the recently acquired archival materials relating to new religious movements and the paranormal. The archive is the focus of the Archives of the Impossible seminar presently taught by Prof. Jeffrey Kripal of the Religion department.

This project would benefit a number of Rice stakeholders, specifically the Woodson Research Center, the department of Religion, and individual graduate students and undergraduate majors in the department, and also the broader scholarly community. The WRC is working to process a large number of diverse collections and lacks sufficient staff to prioritize the materials in question, especially since acquisition is ongoing and is expected to continue over the next several years. The project would also benefit the participating graduate/undergraduate students by allowing them to broaden their archival research skills and familiarity with the collections in question.

The timely completion of the project and creation of finding aids would enable both Rice and outside scholars to conduct research in the archive. It would also serve to demonstrate our commitment to other potential donors to hopefully spur more acquisition in this growing field.

Key Tasks

Assess and organize a portion of the newly acquired Edwin C. May materials in The Archive of the Paranormal collections. The Fellow would collaborate with Director of Special Collections and (to a lesser extent) library subject specialist to identify any original order; determine order through series and subseries; provide descriptive identifiers and provide complete archival descriptions; rebox and refolder; identify duplicate materials; and handle preservation concerns within the assigned collection; input data into Woodson's database ArchivesSpace to provide access through TARO (Texas Archival Resources Online). If time allows, the Fellow could identify and begin a finding aid for UFOlogy-related items that comprise a separate collection.

Qualifications

The preferred qualifications are: a major in a Humanities discipline (such as Religion), detailed oriented, organized, and familiarity with archival work. Both undergraduate and graduate students are welcome to apply.

Learning outcomes

Students would deepen their familiarity with these collections, which would be very helpful to comparing and contrasting existing similar collections that exist in a small number of repositories. A number of graduate students in the Religion department already expect to rely on these archives for their dissertation research and would welcome the opportunity to examine and explore content. In addition, they would gain valuable experience in organizing and documenting a research collection.