

MAC Educational Needs Survey Report

Created by the Midwest Archives Conference Education Committee, March 16, 2018

Project Background

In the summer of 2017, a subcommittee of the MAC Education Committee was created to develop a survey to be distributed to the MAC membership to identify the professional development needs of archivists in the MAC region. Subcommittee members included Amy Bishop, Sally Conkright, Chad Conrady, and Carrie Schwier. At an Education Committee member's suggestion, the subcommittee looked at the Educopia Institute's report, [Self-Identified Library, Archives, and Museum Professional Development Needs 2016 Edition](#), from a similar, but more complex and national-level survey. The Educopia Institute structured its survey around six main "competency areas" under which were listed several individual competencies. Our subcommittee collapsed the six competency areas into three: Collections, Institutional Management, and Public Services and Outreach. Under these competencies we listed many of the competencies included in the Educopia survey, changing some wording to clarify the meaning, and adding some new ones. After the initial drafting of the survey, it was reviewed by the committee as a whole. After final updates were made, a survey using Qualtrics was made available to the public for the entire month of February 2018. The survey was advertised through emails sent to MAC members via MAC's Public Information Officer, and reminders were posted to MAC's Facebook page. The survey received 198 total responses, 194 of which were mostly or totally complete (i.e., they answered at least one competency area question).

Survey limitations

No consistent effort was made to target state and local groups to capture responses from individuals who may not be MAC members, but who might benefit from some of MAC's educational offerings, particularly Speakers Bureau, which aims to provide low-cost educational programming to those who might not be able to attend conferences or other professional development programming. Some individual committee members advertised the survey to their state or local archives groups, but this was not consistently done for the states across the MAC region.

Questions 5 and 6, which asked in which of the three competency areas the survey participants saw the greatest need for professional development for themselves (question 5) and at their institution (question 6), were formatted as free-text questions. When analyzing the data, it became clear that these should have been formatted as multiple choice. As a result, people entered a range of responses, ranging broadly from one of the three competency areas to specific individual competencies previously listed in the survey to an entirely new topic. In order to make some sense of the data, the results were manually coded to one of five categories (Collections, Public Services and Outreach, Institutional Management, Other, or None). This data was then used to create graphs. The free-text responses that fell into the "other" category are included in the report.

Demographic information

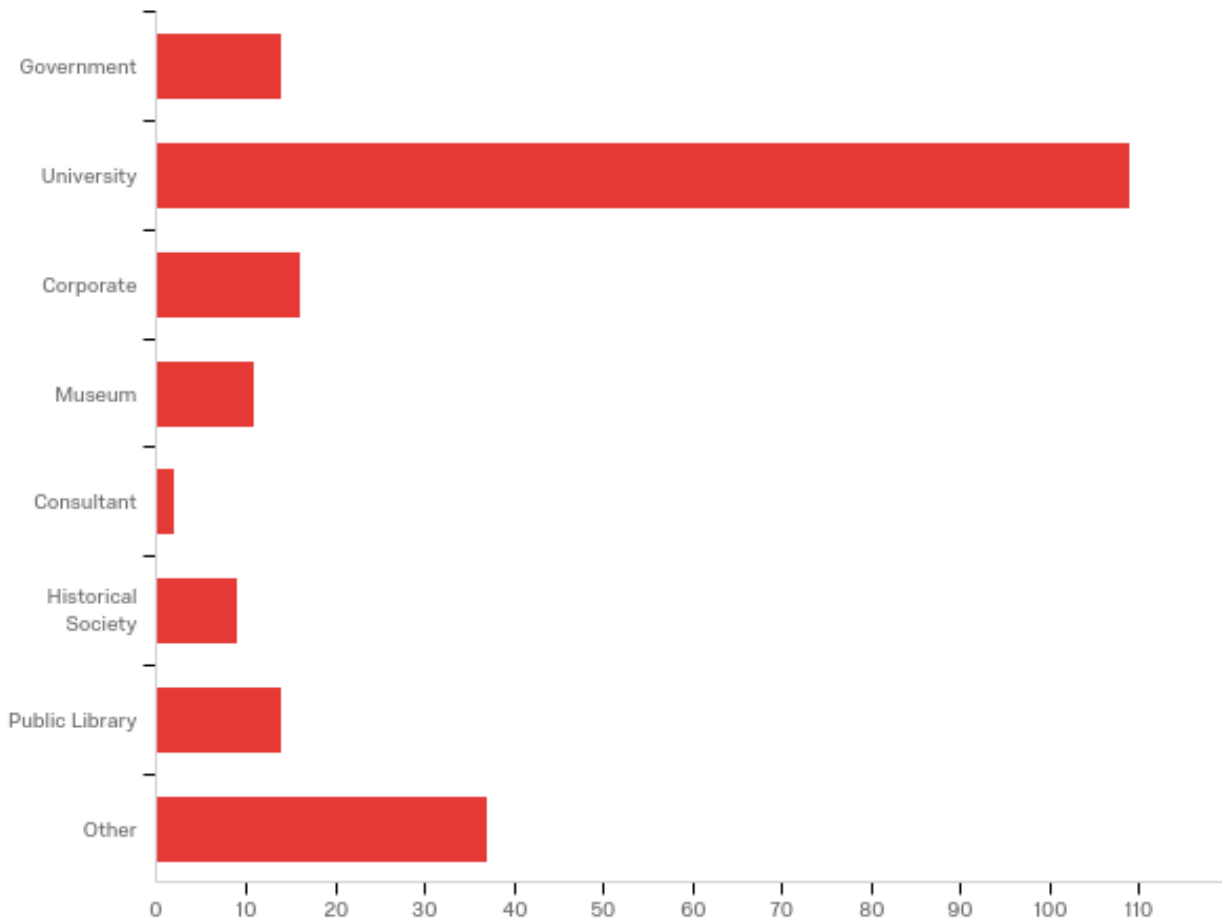
Just over half (51.42%) of the survey respondents work at universities. The next highest category at 17.45% was the "other" category. No free-text field was provided for those who selected "other" to determine at what kind of institution they work. There were small numbers of archivists represented who work at government, corporate, museum, historical society, or public library archives, or who work as consultants.

Approximately 33% of the respondents work at institutions with 2-5 full-time professional and para-professional staff that work with archival materials. Approximately 21% work in institutions with 1 FTE staff member, followed by 19% at institutions with 11 or more staff members, 15% with 6-10 staff members, and 11% with less than 1 FTE. Together, the respondents that work at institutions with 1 FTE or less make up approximately 32% of the

respondents—a significant population that have few resources and the most needs for quality and affordable professional development opportunities.

Geographically, the highest number of respondents came from Illinois at 20%, followed by Ohio at approximately 15%. Several states, including Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin, had respondents in a middle range of numbers, from 5-11%; while Kansas, Nebraska, and North and South Dakota had much smaller numbers of respondents, fewer than 3%. Eleven respondents were from states outside the MAC region: Colorado (1), Georgia (2), New Mexico (1), New York (2), North Carolina (1), Pennsylvania (2), Tennessee (1), and Washington, D.C. (1).

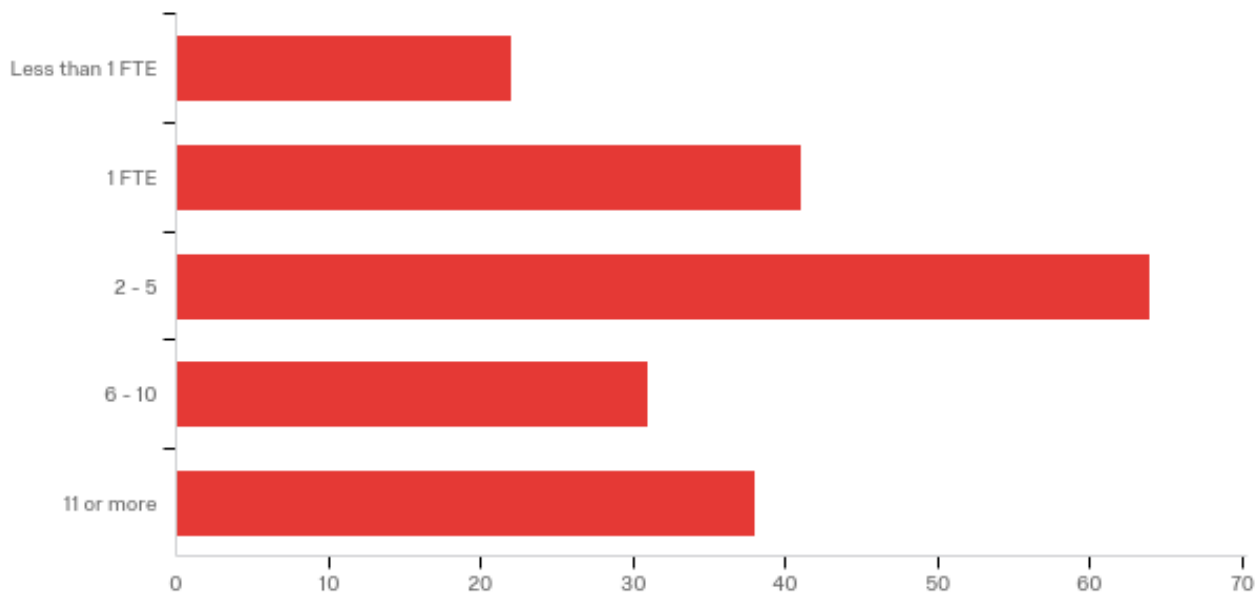
Please report the type of archives you work for and select all those that apply.



#	Answer	%	Count
1	Government	6.60%	14
2	University	51.42%	109
3	Corporate	7.55%	16
4	Museum	5.19%	11

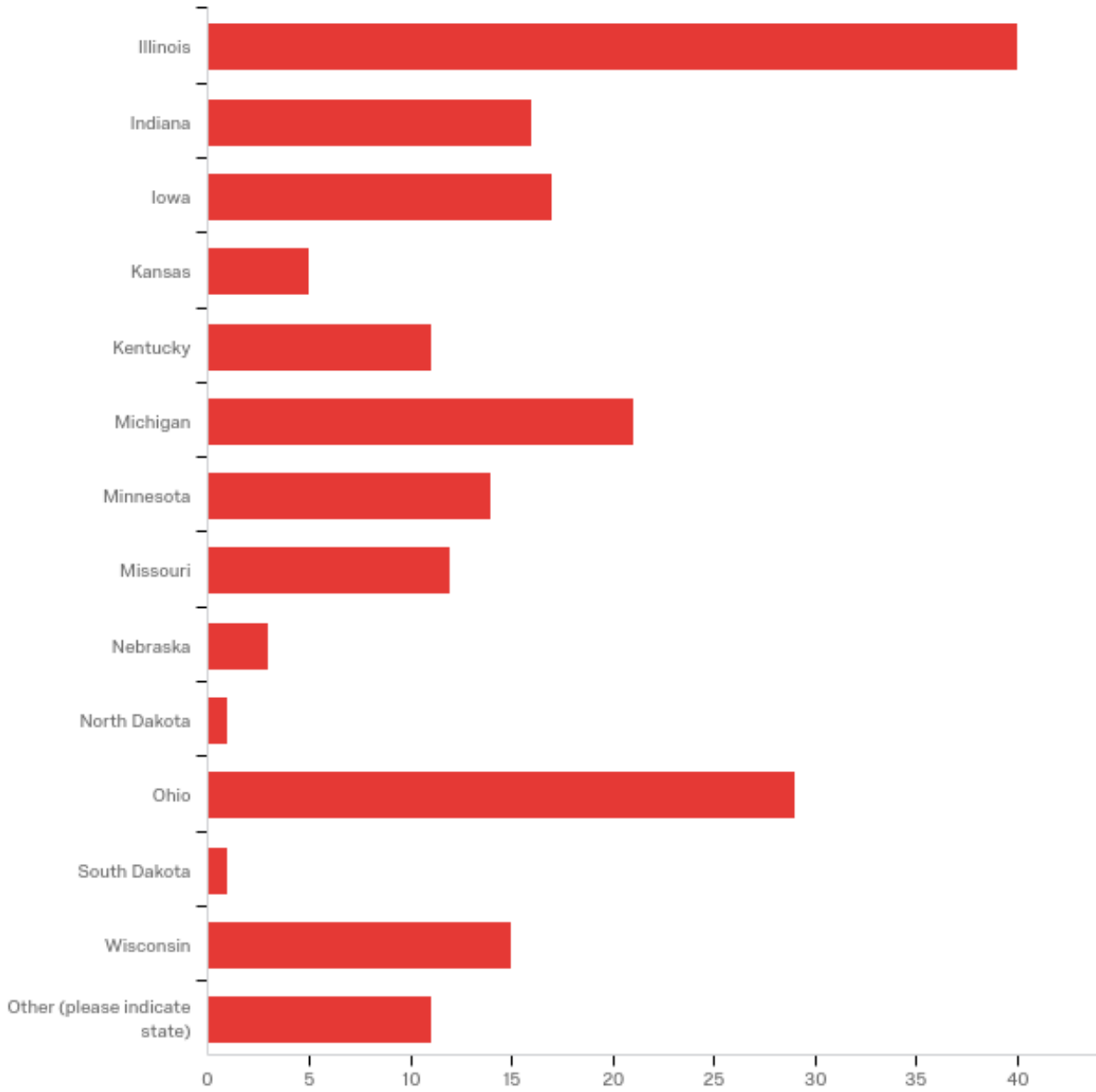
5	Consultant	0.94%	2
6	Historical Society	4.25%	9
7	Public Library	6.60%	14
8	Other	17.45%	37
	Total	100%	212

Please select the number of full-time professional and para-professional staff (not including students) who work with archival materials in your institution.



#	Answer	%	Count
1	Less than 1 FTE	11.22%	22
2	1 FTE	20.92%	41
3	2 - 5	32.65%	64
4	6 - 10	15.82%	31
5	11 or more	19.39%	38
	Total	100%	196

Which state do you work in?



#	Answer	%	Count
1	Illinois	20.41%	40
2	Indiana	8.16%	16
3	Iowa	8.67%	17
4	Kansas	2.55%	5
5	Kentucky	5.61%	11

6	Michigan	10.71%	21
7	Minnesota	7.14%	14
8	Missouri	6.12%	12
9	Nebraska	1.53%	3
10	North Dakota	0.51%	1
11	Ohio	14.80%	29
12	South Dakota	0.51%	1
13	Wisconsin	7.65%	15
14	Other (please indicate state)	5.61%	11
	Total	100%	196

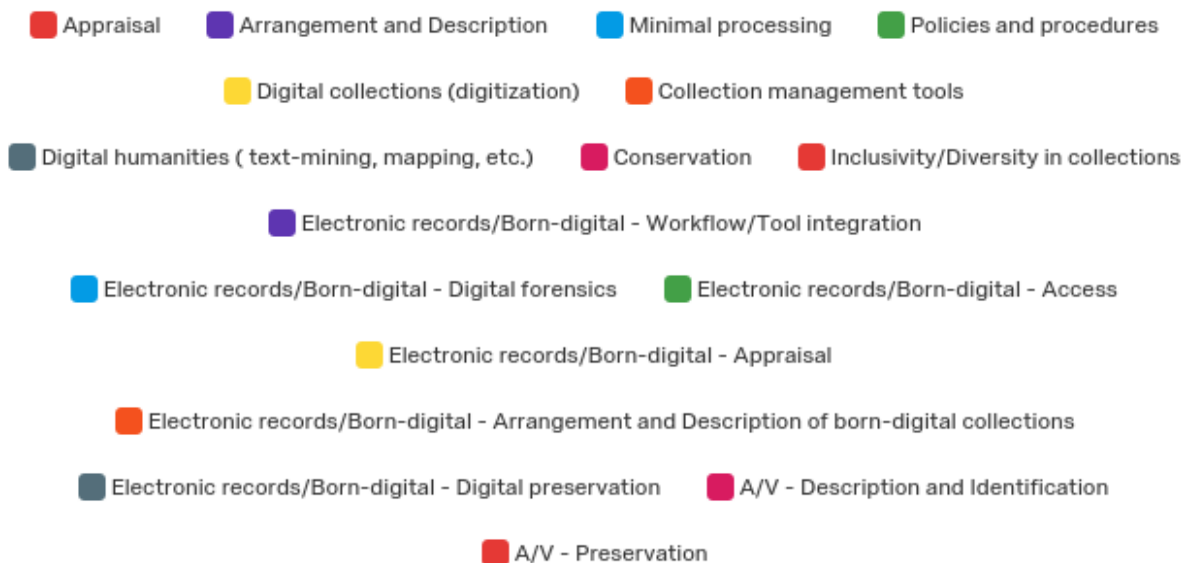
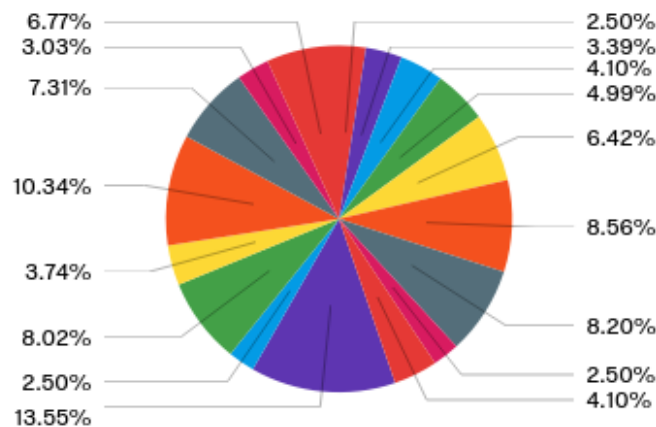
Competency areas

Collections

This question asked respondents to “select up to 3 of the following topics according to your immediate need for professional development.” The top 5 topics showed a need for more opportunities to develop technical skills, particularly related to electronic records:

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 1. Electronic records/Born digital – Workflow/Tool integration | 13.62% |
| 2. Electronic records/Born digital – Arrangement and Description of born-digital collections | 10.39% |
| 3. Collection management tools | 8.60% |
| 4. Digital Humanities AND Electronic Records/Born digital – Access (tied) | 8.06% |
| 5. Electronic records/Born digital – Digital preservation | 7.35% |

Question 1: Competency Area: Collections Please select up to 3 of the following topics according to y



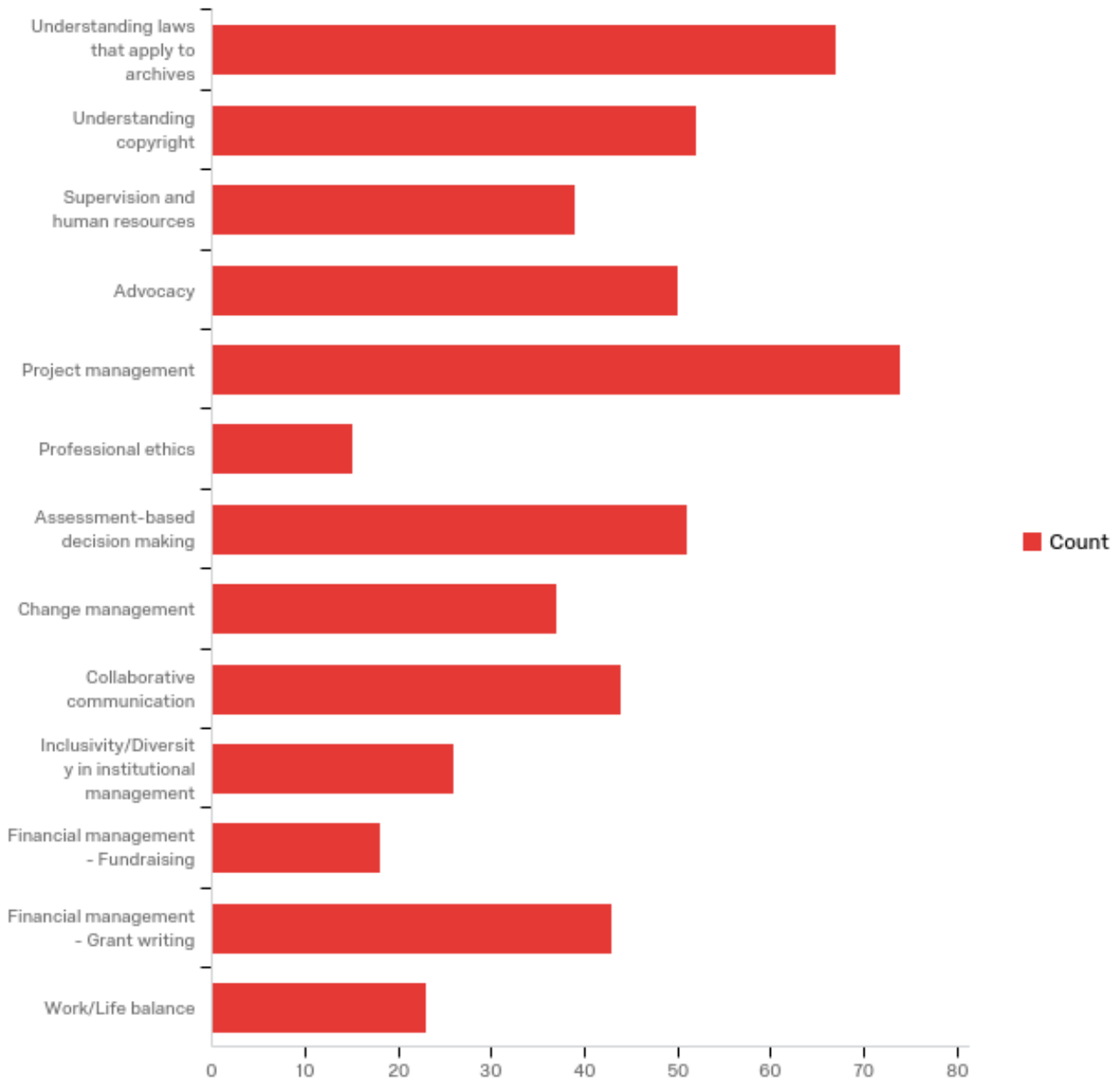
#	Answer	%	Count
1	Appraisal	2.50%	14
2	Arrangement and Description	3.39%	19
3	Minimal processing	4.10%	23
4	Policies and procedures	4.99%	28
5	Digital collections (digitization)	6.42%	36
6	Collection management tools	8.56%	48
7	Digital humanities (text-mining, mapping, etc.)	8.20%	46
8	Conservation	2.50%	14
9	Inclusivity/Diversity in collections	4.10%	23
10	Electronic records/Born-digital - Workflow/Tool integration	13.55%	76
11	Electronic records/Born-digital - Digital forensics	2.50%	14
12	Electronic records/Born-digital - Access	8.02%	45
13	Electronic records/Born-digital - Appraisal	3.74%	21
14	Electronic records/Born-digital - Arrangement and Description of born-digital collections	10.34%	58
15	Electronic records/Born-digital - Digital preservation	7.31%	41
16	A/V - Description and Identification	3.03%	17
17	A/V - Preservation	6.77%	38
	Total	100%	561

Institutional Management

This question asked respondents to “select up to 3 of the following topics according to your immediate need for professional development.” The top 5 topics were:

- 1. Project management 13.73%
- 2. Understanding laws that apply to archives 12.43%
- 3. Understanding copyright 9.65%
- 4. Assessment-based decision making 9.46%
- 5. Advocacy 9.28%

Question 2: Competency Area: Institutional Management Please select up to 3 of the following topics according to your immediate need for professional development related to Institutional Management:



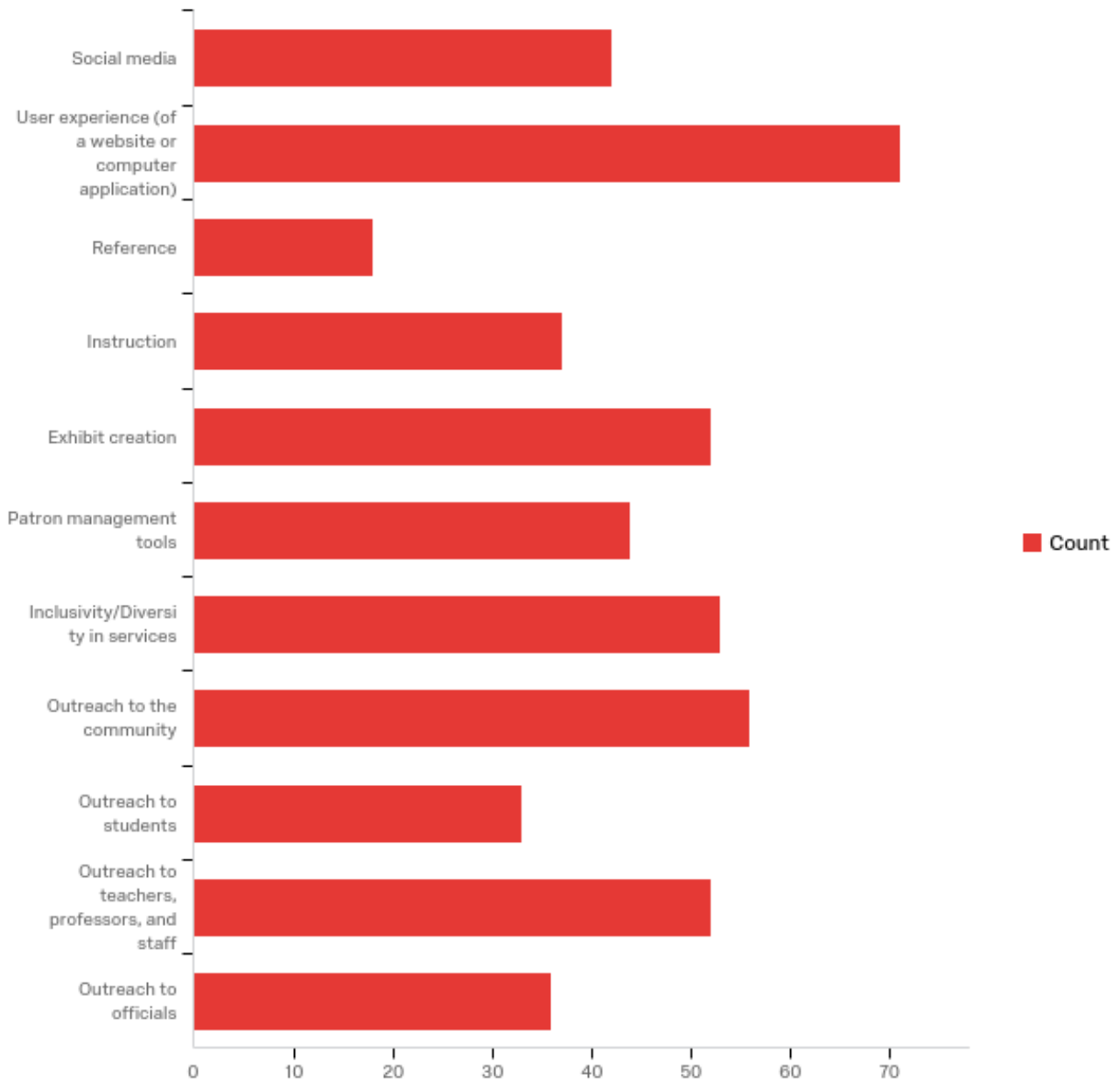
#	Answer	%	Count
1	Understanding laws that apply to archives	12.43%	67
2	Understanding copyright	9.65%	52
3	Supervision and human resources	7.24%	39
4	Advocacy	9.28%	50
5	Project management	13.73%	74
6	Professional ethics	2.78%	15
7	Assessment-based decision making	9.46%	51
8	Change management	6.86%	37
9	Collaborative communication	8.16%	44
10	Inclusivity/Diversity in institutional management	4.82%	26
11	Financial management - Fundraising	3.34%	18
12	Financial management - Grant writing	7.98%	43
13	Work/Life balance	4.27%	23
	Total	100%	539

Public Services and Outreach

This question asked respondents to “select up to 3 of the following topics according to your immediate need for professional development.” In this category, there seemed to be a more even distribution of interest across many of the categories. The top five are

- 1. User experience (of a website or computer application) 14.26%
- 2. Outreach to the community 11.41%
- 3. Inclusivity/Diversity in services 10.79%
- 4. Outreach to teachers, professors, and staff AND Exhibit creation (tied) 10.59%
- 5. Patron management tools 8.96%

Question 3: Competency Area: Public Services and Outreach Please select up to 3 of the following topics according to your immediate need for professional development related to Public Services and Outreach:



#	Answer	%	Count
1	Social media	8.50%	42
2	User experience (of a website or computer application)	14.37%	71
3	Reference	3.64%	18
4	Instruction	7.49%	37
5	Exhibit creation	10.53%	52
6	Patron management tools	8.91%	44
7	Inclusivity/Diversity in services	10.73%	53
8	Outreach to the community	11.34%	56
9	Outreach to students	6.68%	33
10	Outreach to teachers, professors, and staff	10.53%	52
11	Outreach to officials	7.29%	36
	Total	100%	494

Cross-tabulated results

Results for questions 1-3 were cross-tabulated by type of archives and by staff size in order to tease out if there were any significant differences in responses from archivists at different types of institutions or with differing staffing levels. Overall, the top responses are fairly consistent when broken down in these ways. There is often a shift in emphasis by type of institution or number of staff, yet in each case the highest-ranked topic falls within the overall top-ranked topics, indicating these educational needs are truly the most significant for the profession in the MAC region.

Other topics

One question gave participants the opportunity to indicate other areas not previously listed in which they had an immediate need for professional development. There were multiple requests for records management (7 responses), internal outreach (3 responses), and donor relations (3 responses). A number of responses repeated topics that had been listed earlier in the survey. Free text responses to this question are included below.

Question 4: In what other areas not previously listed do you have an immediate need for professional development?

Value of Archives (promotion to internal and external entities); History Relevance

Hoping I didn't miss facilities in previous list - I would benefit from hearing other strategies for creatively working with retrofitted spaces

Donor relations/ solicitation

job searching

copyright laws and archives

Metrics (measuring impact and use of archives and collections)

developing programs for small archives with limited budgets

Record management

Conservation

policy development

Managing all responsibilities on 20 hrs/week and no budget

Research (tools available to do history-based research)

Processing management

Ethics is our biggest concern

Inclusivity/diversity in descriptive practices

Diversity-oriented description

I don't know that I can think of anything....

Inventorying collections

Anything is born digital materials

Fluency in technical skills including EAD, MARC and XML for using e.g. ArchivesSpace most efficiently

none

None

none

Access and Use, Communication and building work relationships, cataloging/description.

n/a

Records Management

Records management

digital archiving basics

N/A

records management

Collaborating with faculty on assignment development. Archival/information literacy.

Collaborating across institutions and multi-institution projects

I can't think of any.

none

Supervision and leadership

Advocating parent institution for hiring of more staff

Reviewing the strengths and shortcomings of various content management systems, e.g., Past Perfect, Archives Space, etc.

end of career planning

Conflict Resolution

Applying metadata and metadata schema

How to be a good manager

Connecting UX to collections (not just to websites and databases)

This was mentioned, but would like to emphasize the need for project management for archivists!

Career development trajectories, guidelines, goals, mapping, etc.

records management

Leadership

intellectual property management, which includes issues related to privacy and access.

Managing processing / Extensive processing

Maybe something focused on student/medical records

Lone archivists need to have all hats (with minimal help)

understanding most updated version of EAD

Organization, description and preservation of architectural records.

Records management

job hunting

Anything digital! Especially digital preservation, conveying the importance of digital preservation to administrators, selecting vendors to assist with digital preservation and digital asset management

Records Management

Culture shifting - dealing with difficult employees

Volunteer and Intern Management

I think you've covered it.

advocacy within an institution; worth-proving strategies for communicating with administration

Retirement and transitioning to new archivist

Donor relations

I'm not sure if time management is distinct from project management, but if it is, learning how to manage time is important.

understanding platforms for delivering digital archival collections (Hydra, CONTENTdm, etc)

how to do professional development; i.e., how to advance in my career

Security / Preservation (I don't have a need, but I noted it was not listed)

donor relations/negotiations

Outreach for internal audiences in corporate settings, your options assume that members of the public are seeking out the archives, which isn't the case in corporations or closed archives.

Advocacy to stakeholders within a corporate archives

Transferring/moving collections to another institution

Metadata, coding

Outreach to internal users

Open source software/coding

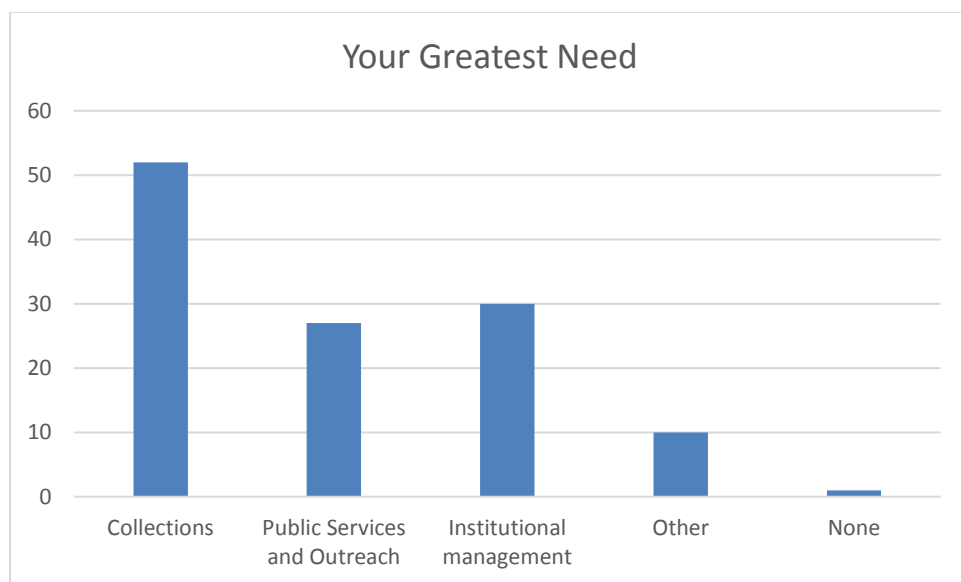
Areas of greatest need

In the survey, the following two questions were formatted as free-answer questions, when our intention was for the participants to choose one of three responses. The results were manually coded to one of five categories (Collections, Public Services and Outreach, Institutional Management, Other, or None); this data was used to create bar graphs. The free-text responses that fell into the “other” category are included. Many of these responses emphasize a particular competency, rather than a competency area.

In Question 5, (In which competency area do **you** have the greatest immediate need?) 43% selected Collections, and many responses indicated some area related to electronic or born-digital records.

Responses to Question 6 (In which competency area do you see the greatest need **at your institution**?) also indicated a need for electronic records topics, but the highest response rate was for Institutional management at 37%.

Question 5: In which competency area (Collections, Institutional Management, or Public Services and Outreach) do you have the greatest immediate need for professional development?



Collections: 52 (43.33%)

Public Services and Outreach: 27 (22.5%)

Institutional Management: 30 (25%)

Other: 10 (8.33%)

None: 1 (0.83%)

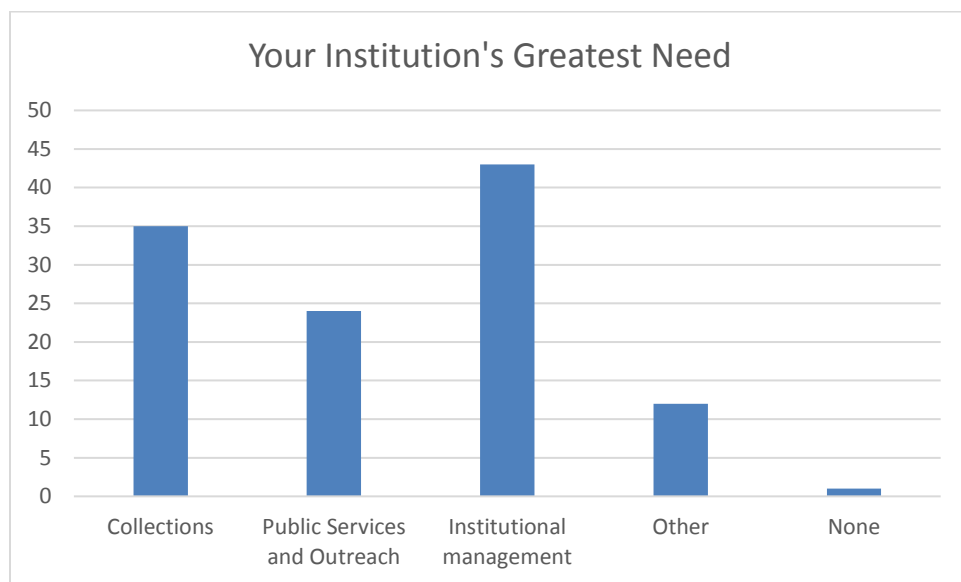
Total: 120

Responses for Other:

- None of these in the area of archives. We all have recent master's degrees and lots of experience in archives management.
- Cultural competency

- Collections - E-records
- Outreach--particularly to faculty.
- Collections, especially digital/electronic
- Collections--dealing with born digital material
- Collection and schema for organizing collections is probably most urgent for me.
- Digital
- Design Thinking/UX in archives
- community outreach to underserved/undocumented communities
- collections management software applications for an archives.
- Electronic records/born digital--all areas
- My greatest immediate needs are split in two areas: Collections (workflows for born-digital materials) and Institutional Management (supervision and human resources)
- Collections & Outreach

Question 6: In which competency area (Collections, Institutional Management, or Public Services and Outreach) do you see the greatest need for professional development at your institution?



Collections: 35 (30.43%)

Public Services and Outreach: 24 (20.86%)

Institutional management: 43 (37.39%)

Other: 12 (10.43%)

None: 1 (0.86%)

Total: 115

Responses for Other:

- Ethics
- Exhibit Creation/Public Service & Outreach
- E-records management
- Collections. DIGITAL COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT. And not just the mechanics of saving the stuff. How to systematically collect it.
- Collections and Institutional Management both (particularly in electronic records and change management)
- Human Resources
- All areas needed
- faculty/student outreach
- collections management software applications for an archives.
- Your section on Outreach only included Public Outreach. You did not include any options for Outreach within an institutional setting, such as to management/ administration, or other areas that would benefit those working within for-profit (corporate) or closed collections.
- Electronic records/born digital--all areas
- Collaboration

Conclusions and next steps

The survey data gives the Education Committee a better understanding of the needs of archivists in the MAC region from which to move forward, both to better market the professional development opportunities it already offers and to grow to meet the region's current needs even more. The survey indicates a great interest in certain areas in which Speakers Bureau already offers workshops, including in the areas of copyright and law, and to a certain extent electronic records management. Free text answers in the survey indicate that perhaps not enough of the membership is aware that MAC has some of these topics already available for workshops. A next step the Committee plans to take is to identify a more user-friendly way to present the Speakers Bureau list of available workshops online so that users can more easily browse by topic and understand right away which topics are available.

The survey also identifies a number of "hot topics" for which the Education Committee can work with the MAC membership to develop additional workshop offerings. These include a wider range of offerings related to electronic records, project management, user experience, records management, and inclusivity and diversity, among others. The final survey question was an optional opportunity to suggest speakers that might address a particular topic. These provide a useful starting point for reaching out to potential workshop leaders. The committee may also issue open calls for Speakers Bureau workshop proposals in particular topical areas.

Finally, the survey gives useful data to guide partnerships with other education-focused groups inside and outside of MAC. The Committee has already had the opportunity to share findings informally with the MAC Symposium Committee and looks forward to future discussions to strategize the most effective ways to target educational offerings in order to benefit the widest audience.