Collections Management Policies 101

Welcome!

The webinar will begin at 10:00 a.m. C.T.

- **The Museum Services Program provides support, resources, and training to museums in Texas.**
  - *Consultations*
  - *Webinars and workshops*
  - *Resources*

THC Museum Services

www.thc.texas.gov/museum-services

- On our webpage:
  - *Webinars*
  - *Workshops*
  - *Grants and Fundraising*
  - *Helpful Resources*
  - *Connect and Learn*

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Real Places Conference 2020

- January 29-31, 2020 in Austin

- Keynote: Elizabeth Merritt, Center for the Future of Museums

- Museum-focused sessions include:

  - *Minimizing Impact on Visitors and Staff During Construction Projects*

  - *Fund Development and Successful Storytelling*

  - *Math & History Programming*

  - *Podcasting*

  - *Programs and Exhibits in Response to Current Events*

- Register at www.realplaces.us

THE ROAD TO GREAT EXHIBITS

Explore effective and affordable uses of technology within exhibits at this day-long workshop.

OCTOBER 7 THROUGH NOVEMBER 8
EL PASO • CANYON • WICHITA FALLS • NACOGDOCHES • FREDERICKSBURG • SAN BENITO

THC.TEXAS.GOV/GREATEXHIBITS

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
REAL PLACES TELLING REAL STORIES

BEYOND THE ROAD
TxDOT

BULLOCK TEXAS STATE HISTORY MUSEUM

TAM

- **Engaging the Public through Content Marketing**
  - *Tuesday, November 12, 2:00 p.m. CT*

- **Incorporating Transportation History into Exhibits**
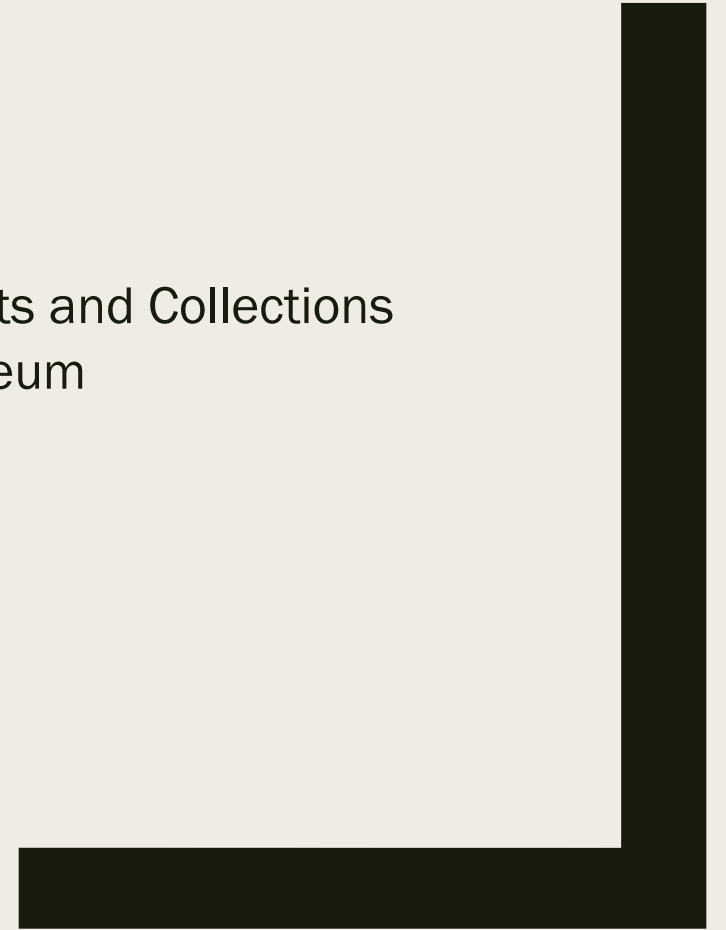 - *Thursday, December 5, 2:00 p.m. CT*

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICIES 101

Mikaela Young
Curator of Exhibits and Collections
Bell County Museum
Belton, Texas

"A policy is useless if it is outdated, ignored, too complex to be followed, to simplistic to be useful, or does not serve the museum's mission...Good policies help the museum achieve its mission and demonstrate its commitment to professional standard and best practices."

John E. Simmons, Things Great and Small: Collection Management Policies, 2006

Photo by Maisie Duncan, 2019

POLL: What size is your institution?

Volunteer run

1-2 full-time staff members

3-5 full-time staff members

6-10 full-time staff members

11+ staff members

POLL: Does your institution currently have a Collections Management Policy?

Yes

No

Bell County Museum

- Belton, Texas
- Historic Carnegie Library

- Approximately 17,000 artifacts
- Collections Management Policy Revision Project

What is a Collections Management Policy?

- A detailed written statement that addresses the museum's collections stewardship responsibilities

- Defines:
    - the scope of the museum's collection
    - how the museum cares for its collections and makes them available to the public
    - who is responsible for managing the museum's collections

- Is support for your institution's collections staff!

AAM Core Document

- One of the five **Core Documents** designated by the American Alliance of Museums
  - *Mission Statement*
  - *Institutional Code of Ethics*
  - *Strategic Institutional Plan*
  - *Disaster Preparedness & Emergency Response Plan*
  - *Collections Management Policy*

American Alliance of Museums

Elements of a Collections Management Policy

- Statement of Purpose

- Scope of Collections

- Acquisitions/Accessions

- Deaccessions/Disposal

- Loans

Photo by Maisie Duncan, 2019

Elements of a Collections Management Policy

- Objects Placed in the Custody of the Museum

- Care of the Collection

- Records & Inventories

- Insurance

- Access to the Collections

Photo by Maisie Duncan, 2019

Elements of a Collections Management Policy

Photo by Maisie Duncan, 2019

- Review/Revision Schedule
- Date approved by governing authority

Elements of a Collections Management Policy

Dependent on the needs of the institution...

■ Appraisals

■ Intellectual Property

■ Legal and Ethical Issues

Photo by Maisie Duncan, 2019

Other Things to Consider

■ Include definitions when needed

■ Use simple, clear language

■ Consider who will be referring to the Collection Management Policy—future staff, Board members, Collections Committee members

■ Don't:
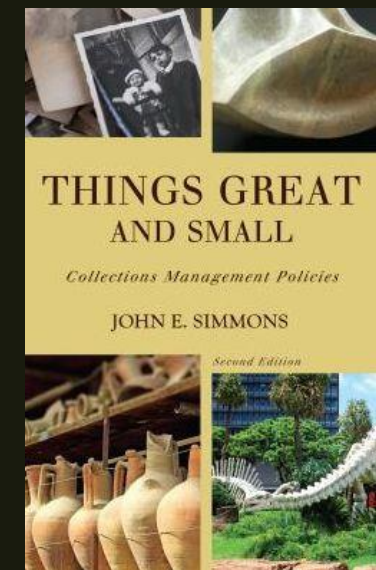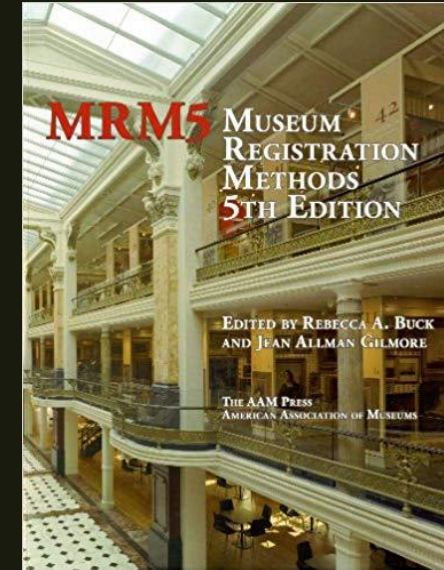
– *Use ambiguous language*

– *Don't be verbose*

Resources

Developing a Collections Management Policy, American Alliance of Museums

Museum Registration Methods, 5th Edition, edited by Rebecca Buck and Jean Allman Gilmore

Things Great and Small: Collections Management Policies by John E. Simmons

National Standards and Best Practices for U.S. Museums by Elizabeth E. Merritt

Developing/Updating a Collections Management Policy

1. Assemble the writing/review team

   – *Staff, Board Members, Collections Committee Members*

2. Review current professional standards & CMPs from other institutions

3. Draft/review policy

4. Get feedback

5. Edit as needed

6. Approval from governing authority

Other Documents

- CMP vs. Collection Plan

- CMP vs. Collections Procedures

- What does this mean for small museums?

Photo by Maisie Duncan, 2019

Tips for Small Museums

- Reach out to museum colleagues

- Schedule time for the project

- Take your time!

Questions?

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