

Alison Clemens

Education

University of Texas at Austin

School of Information

M.S.I.S. Archives & Special Collections

Portfolio Museum Studies

Scripps College

B.A. Politics and International Relations

Minor English Literature

Magna cum laude

Experience

2024– Director of Access Services and Operations, Beinecke Library, Yale University

- ✓ Develop vision, strategy, service offerings, and policies and practices pertaining to providing seamless, equitable access to special collections materials
- ✓ Lead the Access Services and Operations Department within the Beinecke, comprising ~29 FTE responsible for reading room operations and services, circulation and stacks management, reference quality reprographics services, strategic projects, organizational operations, and organizational development
- ✓ Direct the operational effectiveness of the Beinecke Library and its work to deepen collaboration and harmonize practices within the Beinecke and across Yale Library's six special collections repositories
- ✓ Exercise programmatic leadership for the Beinecke's public research spaces, onsite stacks, and related areas; lead the development of a cohesive vision for these spaces and coordinate with stakeholders for the variety of uses and services in these spaces relating to collections, security, facilities, information technology, events, exhibits, instruction, preservation, and other programs
- ✓ Develop and administer budgets consistent with university policies and procedures
- ✓ Work across Yale Library on shared strategies, initiatives, and issues relating to physical and online access to special collections, as well as on shared initiatives, programs, or issues relating to administration, security, finances, human resources, physical infrastructure, and technical infrastructure
- ✓ Build partnerships and professional relationships across Yale Library and Yale's other cultural and heritage institutions to deliver services that are proactive and responsive to community needs.

2022–24 Access Strategist, Beinecke Library, Yale University

- ✓ Initiated and implemented projects to improve user experience in special collections
- ✓ Provided data and analysis to inform prioritization and decision making for platform improvements, tool development, online pathfinders or guides, new or enhanced digital collections, descriptive remediation, etc.
- ✓ Cultivated relationships across special collections to learn about diverse user communities; used this information to inform the development of digital collections systems and to help colleagues identify, evaluate, and prioritize user-focused projects across special collections

- ✓ Identified and built internal and external access-focused partnerships
- ✓ Led initiatives to improve access to born-digital collections
- ✓ Supported students and library users through reference services and instruction

2023– Instructor, Rare Book School

- ✓ Co-teach weeklong course on Introduction to Archives for Special Collections Librarians, Booksellers & Collectors, including planning, developing, and delivering curriculum

2017–22 Head of Processing, Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University

- ✓ Lead and manage accessioning and processing of archival collections; collaboratively set processing priorities and track and report progress
- ✓ Directly supervise paraprofessional and professional staff members devoted chiefly to archival processing; provide leadership and guidance for processing projects carried out by other unit staff
- ✓ Assess resources needed for existing and potential projects
- ✓ Coordinate and participate in the representation of the department in library, university, and professional groups in technical services and descriptive standards
- ✓ Collaboratively develop department's processing policies and procedures and Yale-wide tools to support description and access; guide and assist staff in other university departments with archival work, as needed
- ✓ Serve on department administrative leadership team; contribute to the administration of the department, including long range planning, formulation of policy, and resource development and allocation
- ✓ Provide regular reference, instruction, and outreach services

2013–16 Archivist, Beinecke Library, Yale University

- ✓ Arranged, described, and cataloged materials in the Yale Collection of Western Americana, the Yale Collection of American Literature, and the General Collection; processed over 340 linear feet of archival collections and cataloged more than 320 small collections and single items
- ✓ Taught more than 40 instruction sessions on accessing and interpreting Beinecke collections
- ✓ Provided reference support to in-person and remote researchers
- ✓ Hired, trained, and supervised project archivist and student workers

2012–13 Assistant Librarian: Houston and Texas Archives Fellow, University of Houston

- ✓ Arranged and described collections pertaining to Houston and Texas history and Houston hip hop, including born-digital material
- ✓ Drafted and implemented processing policies and procedures
- ✓ Provided special collections reference service and directed work of student workers

2011–12 Archives Intern, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas

- ✓ Arranged, described, and cataloged personal and historical papers at various levels, from file- to box-level control, totaling approximately 100 linear feet

2012 Teaching Assistant, School of Information, University of Texas

- ✓ Assessed and planned curriculum for course in rare books and special collections
- ✓ Supported students with bibliographic and manuscript description

2011–12 Library Assistant I, Scarborough-Phillips Library, St. Edward's University

- ✓ Weekend manager for reference and circulation desk; directed team of ~15 students
- ✓ Created digital learning objects and library instructional tools
- ✓ Provided in-person and virtual reference services

2011 Curatorial Intern, The Morgan Library & Museum

- ✓ Processed materials in the Literary and Historical Manuscripts Department, including the Paris Review Archive and the Man Booker Prize Archive
- ✓ Completed exhibition preparation and research for the Literary and Historical Manuscript Department curators, including text writing and editing

2010–11 Library Assistant I, Tarlton Law Library, University of Texas

- ✓ Served as evening facilitator for circulation functions
- ✓ Directed work of temporary staff and student workers

2010–12 Project Intern, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas

- ✓ Processed the papers of the novelist and short story writer Daniel Stern
- ✓ Curated reading room exhibition for the Daniel Stern Papers
- ✓ Completed processing, exhibition research, and digitization projects for the film department

Professional Leadership & Service

Yale University Library

2024– Special Collections Steering Committee

2024– Special Collections Leadership Team

2024– Beinecke Library Operations Group (sponsor)

2024– Special Collections LSP Migration Task Force

2024 Search committee for Head of Digital Preservation, Yale Library

2023– Responsible Metadata Operations Framework Implementation Task Force

2023– Web Advisory Group

2023– Unified Discovery Advisory Group

2022– Beinecke Library Website Redesign Task Force (chair)

2019– Reparative Archival Description Working Group

2019– Digital Collections Systems Advisory Group

2014–	Personal Librarian for students in Silliman College
2017–23	Yale Archival Management Systems Committee
2023	Search committee for Archivist positions, Beinecke Library
2023	Search committee for Reference Librarian, Beinecke Library
2022	Archives at Yale Quicksearch Integration Task Force
2021–23	Sensitive Materials Review Task Force
2020–22	Metadata Strategy and Policy Steering Committee
2017–22	Yale Archival & Manuscript Description Committee (chair)
2021–22	Digital Collections System Phase 2 Working Group
2018	Search committee for Project Processing Archivist, Beinecke Library
2018	Search committee for Software Preservation Analyst, Yale University Library
2017–20	Yale Cataloging Coordinating Council
2018–20	Born Digital Description Task Force (chair) of the Yale Archival & Manuscript Description Committee
2018–20	Linked Data for Production Phase 2 (LD4P2) Project Advisory Group
2017–19	History Keepers Project mentor
2017–18	PUI Settings & Enhancements Workgroup (team leader) for the ArchivesSpace Public User Interface Implementation Project
2017	Search committee for Research Services Librarian, Beinecke Library
2017	Search committee for Processing Archivist, Beinecke Library
2016–17	Supervisory Discussion Group, Beinecke Library
2016	Assessment Task Force, Beinecke Library
2015–17	Standing Committee on Professional Awareness (chair 2016–2017)
2015–16	User Experience Committee, Beinecke Library
2015–16	Workplace Survey Committee (chair), Beinecke Library
2015–16	Contribute to social media outlets, Beinecke Library
2015–16	Classroom Technology Committee, Beinecke Library
2015–16	Workplace Culture Group for Technical Services, Beinecke Library
2013–15	Library Staff Association Committee

Yale University

2020–	Bias Awareness and Responsibility for Cultural Heritage Committee, member
2019–	Metadata, rights statements, and search and discovery (chair 2022–) working groups member, Cultural Heritage-IT Collaboration, a Yale-wide project for shared discovery across Yale libraries and museums
2018–	First-year and sophomore college adviser, Silliman College
2014–	Fellow, Silliman College

United States, Connecticut, and New Haven

2016–	Connecticut State Library Board (vice chair 2021–2023)
2020–	Abolition in Special Collections working group (co-founder and co-coordinator) of the Abolitionist Library Association (member)
2021–	University of Texas iSchool Alumni Scholarship for BIPOC Students, scholarship creator co-lead (scholarship successfully funded March 2022)

2015–	DLF-affiliated Born-Digital Access Group (coordinator 2019)
2014–22	Tutor, New Haven Reads
2010s, 2020s	Grant application reviewer, National Historical Publications and Records Commission
2019–20	Search committee for Connecticut State Librarian (chair)
2010s	Grant application reviewer, Institute of Museum and Library Services

Society of American Archivists

2023–	Council member
2022	SAA Foundation Grant award, “Collective Leadership and Anti-Oppressive Facilitation Training for SAA Education”
2020–22	Archival Workers Emergency Fund Organizing Committee
2017–22	Membership Committee (chair 2020–22) and Mentoring Program Subcommittee (chair 2017–20)
2015–19	Manuscript Repositories Section Steering Committee (chair 2018–19)
2013–17	Committee on Education (chair 2016–17)
2015–16	Awards Committee, Pease Award Subcommittee
2015–16	Archival History Roundtable (chair)

Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS) of the American Library Association

2018–22	Diversity Committee
2020–22	Controlled Vocabularies for Prejudicial Materials Working Group
2015–17	2017 Conference Planning Committee
2014–17	Web Editor
2014–17	Publications Committee
2014–17	Task Force on Core Competencies in Special Collections Librarianship
2013–17	Membership & Professional Development Committee

Presentations & Publications

2024	“Together We Lead: An Overview of Collective Leadership” and “Together We Lead: From Theory to Practice,” Society of American Archivists Education sessions.
2023	“Reducing Harm With (Digital) Content Mediation,” Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting.
	“Centering Users: Developing a Community of Practice for User Experience & Archival Description,” Digital Library Federation.
	Japanese American Day of Remembrance panel presentation on reparative description, University of Connecticut.
2022	“Centering Users: Developing a Community of Practice for User Experience & Archival Description” (presenter). Society of American Archivists Research Forum.
	“Imagining Otherwise: Reflecting on what the Abolition in Special Collections Survey Data Can Teach Us About the Harms Enacted by Security Policies and Procedures” (presenter). Rare Books and Manuscripts Section Conference.

“Alumni Fund Scholarship for BIPOC Students at the University of Texas iSchool,” *Archival Outlook*, May/June 2022.

“Best Practices for Archival Term Positions” (<https://osf.io/a4zc8/>)

“A Framework for Access Systems for Born-Digital Archival Materials” (osf.io/kecs8/), March 2022.

“Say My Name, Say My Name: Addressing Missing Name Information for Women in Yale Special Collections,” *Descriptive Notes*, the newsletter of the Description Section of the Society of American Archivists, March 2022.

2021 “A Call to Action: User Experience and Inclusive Description” white paper in *The Lighting the Way Handbook: Case Studies, Guidelines, and Emergent Futures for Archival Discovery and Delivery*.

“Putting Collective Leadership in Action” (facilitator). Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting.

“Assessing Power Dynamics in Multigenerational Archives,” *Archival Outlook*, Society of American Archivists, January/February.

2020 “Libraries, Archives and Museums Are Not Neutral: Working Toward Eliminating Systemic Bias and Racism in Cultural Heritage Information Systems,” with Robert Sanderson, keynote, International Conference on Digital Heritage, November 2020.

“Access Values for the Digital Library Federation Born-Digital Access Working Group” (osf.io/ed7vk/), September 2020.

“Community at Work: LAM Mutual Aid and Solidarity,” moderator for panel discussion for the Archival Workers Emergency Fund, July 2020.

“Participatory Archival Research and Development: The Born-Digital Access Initiative,” *Provenance*, Society of Georgia Archivists, April 2020.

“Collecting User Experiences, Needs, and Desires for Accessing Born-Digital Archival Collections” white paper (osf.io/wd29k/), March 2020.

2019 “Levels and Practices of Born-Digital Access: Reports from the DLF Born-Digital Access Group.” BitCurator Users Forum. New Haven, CT.

“Young, Old, Seasoned, Green: Assessing Power Dynamics in Multigenerational Archives” (facilitator). Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting. Austin, TX.

“Development and Archival Work” (moderator for panel). Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting. Austin, TX.

2018 “Get Mentored: San Jose State University Society of American Archivists Student Chapter webinar” (invited speaker).

“Born Digital Access Bootcamp” (facilitator). Digital Library Federation. Henderson, NV.

“Meaning-making and Building Relationships” (invited interviewee). *An Archivist’s Tale* podcast.

“Asking the User: Incorporating user-centered customizations and features into Yale’s ArchivesSpace PUI” (presenter). ArchivesSpace Member Forum. Washington, D.C.

2017 “Born Digital Access Bootcamp” (facilitator). Digital Archivists of Philadelphia. Philadelphia, PA.

“Stories We Tell with Students: Pedagogy and Process” (moderator). Rare Books and Manuscripts Section Conference. Iowa City, IA.

“Providing Access to Born-Digital Cultural Heritage” (invited speaker). Rare Book School. New Haven, CT.

“Complicating the Canon” (invited speaker). Yale Club of New York City.

“Collaborative Education for Providing Access to Born-Digital Cultural Heritage Material” (invited speaker). New England Technical Services Librarians Annual Conference. Worcester, MA.

“Born Digital Access Bootcamp: A Collaborative Learning Forum” (facilitator). New England Archivists Spring Meeting. Hyannis, MA.

2016 “From Papyri to Penguin Books,” *Collaborating for Impact: Special Collections and Subject Librarian Partnerships*, The Association of College & Research Libraries, 2016.

“Born-Digital Access: Mapping the Current Landscape.” [Preliminary report](#).

“From Survey Design to Hackfest: Reflections on Research-in-Practice for Born-Digital Access.” Society of American Archivists Research Forum. Atlanta, GA.

“What Do Students and New Professionals Want? Assessing Informal Educational Needs,” *Archival Outlook*, Society of American Archivists, May/June.

“Music Archives IV: DJ Screw” (invited interviewee). *Lost in the Stacks* podcast.

2015 “Born-Digital Access Hackfest: Collaborative Solution-Building for Current Challenges.” Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting. Cleveland, OH.

“A Balancing Act: Collaborative Instruction in the 21st Century Special Collection.” Rare Books and Manuscripts Section Conference. Oakland, CA.

2014 “Career Development for New Professionals: Fellowships and Internships as Alternative Sites of Education.” Rare Books and Manuscripts Section Preconference. Las Vegas, NV.

2013 “From Flows to Finding Aids: Processing the Houston Hip Hop Collections at the University of Houston.” Society of Southwest Archivists Annual Meeting. Austin, TX.

2011 “The Woman Behind the Curtain: Winnie Allen as Archivist.” Preserving Our Cultural Heritage. Bloomington, IL.

Skills

- Expertise in managing archival processing programs; expertise in processing techniques and data content and structure standards, including MPLP, DACS, EAD, and MARC
- Experience and training in book history, bibliography, and special collections pedagogy

- Expertise in archival and manuscript description and metadata, particularly using ArchivesSpace, Voyager, oXygen XML editor, OpenRefine, BitCurator, and MarcEdit
- Experience with HTML, CSS, WordPress, Camtasia Studio, and audio editors
- Reading knowledge of Spanish; basic reading knowledge of French and Italian; beginning reading knowledge of Slovak