

Short-Term Staffing in Special Collections

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The Benefits of Short-Term Staff

- Adapting to budgetary constraints
- Balancing new initiatives with basic processing and backlogs
- Expanding the department's capacity for outreach and collection expansion
- Adding a diverse range of skills—potentially outside the archival field.



Building and Sustaining a Program

- Committing to community engagement and life-long learning
- Advocating for institutional support – communicating current staffing needs and departmental priorities
- Gaining departmental support – creating a strong staffing plan, goals, and guidelines
- Aligning HR policies and procedures to new part-time staffing initiatives



Making the Perfect Match: Recruit, Interview, Place, and Retain

- Implementing targeted recruitment of temporary staff, student workers, internship/practicums students, and volunteers to find the right fit
- Conducting face-to-face interviews to assess the candidates' skill level, competencies, and potential placement within the department
- Placing temporary staff with an appropriate project, yet remaining flexible to possible adjustments and changes
- Retain short-term staff through successful project assignment and active supervision and mentoring



Managing and Mentoring

- Ensuring departmental staff have time to supervise short-term staff
- Establishing lines of communication between the department head, supervisors, and temporary staff
- Orienting and training new staff (welcome tour, assignment of space, supervisor meeting, and project review)
- Providing mentoring and encouragement to workers, and assistance and support to supervisors



Practicality of Short-Term Staff

- **Concerns:** Are temporary staff a practical short-term solution or a threat to permanent staff
- **Compromise:** Show that temporary workers demonstrate dept growth
- **Solution:** Ultimately, full-time staff would be maintained, new trained professionals would be hired, and temporary workers would return to special project support