Written in The Rock: Engaging Student Organizations at Slippery Rock University
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Research Question
Throughout my two years as a student worker at the University Archives, I thought about how to attract more records and more patrons. How could the University Archives engage student organizations to both use and contribute to the archives, especially when the majority of records are born-digital? This question was further compounded by the misconceptions that both students and faculty have about the purpose of the University Archives.

Promotion
- Met personally with student leaders during Spring Organization Fair to increase awareness of archives.
- Created display (right) in high-traffic area of library to inform students about types of records held in archives.
- Created physical flyer advertising information session to post on bulletin boards of classroom buildings.
- Partnered with Center for Student Involvement and Leadership (CSIL) to inform all student organizations.
- Used Twitter and Facebook to directly contact organizations’ leaders or advisors about informational meeting.

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Presentation
- Based on test case information, revised focus from records solicitation to general information session about University Archives.
- Explained importance of archive to university history and potential uses by organizations.
- Dispelled myths about accessibility and “only keeping old stuff” (records 50+ years old).
- Listed types of records held and gave information about accession process.
- Stressed willingness to work with students and availability of archives faculty and staff.

Test Case
- Enlisted assistance from student president of Gamers’ Guild to determine issues with accessions.
- Lack of knowledge about the accession process.
- Determined that closed Facebook groups and other private social media accounts were not able to be archived through web crawls.
- Photos emailed from organizations often lost their original metadata and context.

Conclusions and Suggestions
- Increase cooperation with CSIL to reintroduce archives as new students enter leadership roles.
- Revise presentation for faculty and staff to increase departmental accessions and research opportunities.
- Purchase portable hard drives for direct file transfers to preserve metadata of born-digital records.
- Create University Archives social media accounts to promote usefulness of existing holdings.

Selected References
Brodt, Zachary. Student Organization Records Toolkit (SORT) @ Pitt Archives. December 5, 2015.

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