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USFT Services Assessment Special Collections 2019AY

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Special Collections Assessments, AY2019

Submitted by Tomaro Taylor, 4 October 2019

I. Researcher Exit Form

Beginning mid-January 2019 and occurring on 3-4 week cycles, Special Collections distributes researcher exit forms to patrons who have conducted in-house research using Special Collections resources. The survey instrument was developed with the goal of garnering a more holistic understanding of how Special Collections researchers identify, interact with, and subsequently use our resources.

Since mid-January, 59 responses have been captured.

- Not surprisingly, the greatest majority of researchers hail from USF Tampa. Other, named institutions include Boston University, Rutgers, University of California San Diego, and Yale University.
- Most researchers identify as “Independent Researchers.” Faculty members and graduate students make up the second and third largest demographics, respectively.
- Researchers use a range of material types (archives, monographs, sheet music), and often use more than one item or collection at a time. Regardless of material type, most researchers use resources from the Florida studies collection. The Anthony P. “Tony” Pizzo collection predominates as the collection most often used by researchers.
- More than half of respondents identified the resources they needed by using the USF Libraries website. Identifying collections via references/suggestions by colleagues and references/suggestions by Special Collections personnel were tied as the second most common means of discovery.
- Responses are split between using and not using special equipment, such as the KIC-Scanner and microfilm reader. Either way, researchers overwhelmingly find their research and equipment needs met during their visits.
- Lastly, researchers visit the USF Libraries Special Collections for a wide range of needs. Roughly 60% of respondents conduct research to support scholarly publications and presentations. A lesser majority, approximately 35%, conduct research for non-scholarly publications and presentations. Remaining respondents use their research for such activities as course assignments, developing grants, creating documentaries, probate and family history, and supporting dissertation work.

II. Instruction Survey

In September 2019, a survey instrument was implemented for use with all instruction sessions conducted using Special Collections resources. The survey was developed to help Special Collections personnel demonstrate the impact of using primary source materials on student success.

To date, the survey has been distributed to one class - AFA6355 African American Community Research.

Of the 8 respondents from AFA6355:

- Nearly 90% were aware of Special Collections before their instruction session.
- Approximately 63% anticipate conducting historic research using primary sources.
- The majority identified “Investigating and discovering new information” as an advantage of using primary sources .
- Although a significant number of respondents indicated that they would have been *less likely* to use primary source materials for their research **prior to** the instruction session, 100% indicated they would be *more likely* to use special collections resources **after** the instruction session.