

The First Year of the First Archival Science Course in Japan



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Introduction

A student of Japan's first graduate school for archival science, I present an outline of the course. In particular, I describe the lectures, practice sessions, and events such as study tours included in the course. Many academics and archivists have long sought the establishment of the archival profession, and the launch of this course signifies the materialization of this hope. I enjoy peer activities organized in the course as well as the course offerings. I also benefitted from other divisions' or schools' discipline. Now I am working on my master's thesis about Athenian archival system.

A Brief History of Archives in Japan

- * Foundation of Famous Repositories
 - 756 Shosoin Repository
 - 1801 Historiographical Institution (now in the University of Tokyo)
 - 1948 National Diet Library (1872/90)
 - 1951 Ministry of Education Historical Archives (→NIJL)
 - 1959 Yamaguchi Prefectural Archives
 - 1971 National Archives of Japan
- * History of Education
 - 1952~ "Archives College" at the National Institute of Japanese Literature
 - 1988~ Training Course and Research Seminar for Professional Staff of Archives held by the National Archives of Japan
 - 2008~ Archival Science Course at the Graduate School of Humanities, Gakushuin University
- * LAWS
 - 1987 Public Archives Law
 - 1999 National Archives Law
 - 2009 Public Records Management Law

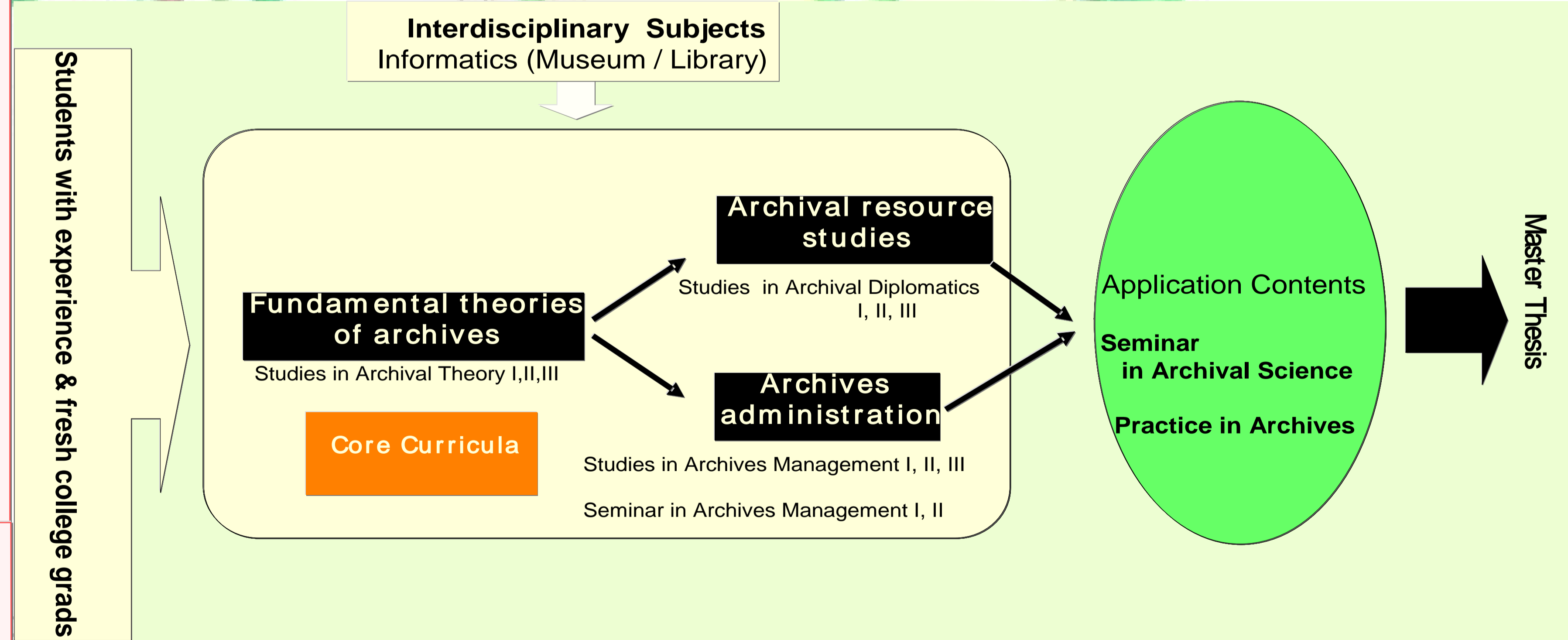
Gakushuin

Gakushuin's origins lie in the "Old Gakushuin," which was established in 1847 in Kyoto as the educational institution of the Imperial Court. It was named after the Analects of Confucius, which stated thus: "To be taught and to learn the truth is such a precious thing."
 In 1877, funds for a new set of school buildings was donated by the Imperial Household. In 1884, Gakushuin became a government school. The move to the present site at Mejiro took place in 1908. The site covered a vast area of 200,000 square meters.
 After World War II, Gakushuin became a purely private school.
 In 1949, Gakushuin established a university, by launching a Faculty of Letters and Politics. This has evolved into the present day university, which has 14 departments in four separate faculties, a fully equipped graduate school comprising six separate schools and a law school. The university also offers 19 specialist courses.
 The renowned author Nanami Shiono is an alumina and has mentioned in her essay that she had received authentic liberal arts education.

Tuition: ¥854,200 in the first year and ¥704,200 in the second year
 Number of Professors: 5, Assistant Professor: 1, Assistant: 1 Instructors: 10,
 Students: 8 (M1), 8(M2), 4(D2), + α

Design of the Archival Science Course

The master's course is designed for those who wish to become qualified archivists. Archiving is expected to become a recognized profession in Japan. The course is systematic and has a well-balanced combination of theoretical and practical programs.
 The aim of the doctoral course is to train researchers and educators in the field of archival science.



Discussions

In June 24, a law for the management of public records was enacted. A newspaper column once stated as follows: "The National Archives of Japan preserves official documents and, in principle, makes them available to the public. But this institution doesn't offer much help for research because only a fraction of the total records are transferred to the archives. This is the grim reality of the government's record-keeping." The new law will change the situation because it provides unified rules under which all ministries and agencies are required to adequately document their decision-making and other activities for record management. The law also prohibits the disposal of records without the permission of the prime minister, which actually means the National Archives of Japan. Therefore, the National Archives of Japan faces the necessity of preparing for an onslaught of work with a staff of only 42 members. At the moment, Gakushuin is the only academic authority on archiving and the main source of personnel. Can Gakushuin fulfill this expectation?

My Schedule

Spring Term 2008

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:00-10:30						Archival Theory (Reading in English)
2 10:40-12:10	Musology (Curator's course)					Seminar Archival Informatics
3 13:00-14:30	Philosophy "Plato's Psyche"	Studies on Art Museum	(Gen Ed) Records Retention & Today	Academic Writing in English		Seminar
4 14:40-16:10	Classical Literature Epics & Tragedy		Archival History		Ancient History (Reading in Latin)	Practice
5 16:20-17:50	Seminar Archival Arrangement	Archival Preservation	Record Management	Archival Study on East Asia	Premodern Constitution and Records	
6 18:00-19:30	Modern Archival Management	Modern Constitution and Records	Information Resource Library Science	Fundamentals on Archival Theory		

Events & News

- Sep 2007
Entrance exam for the master's course
- Oct 2007
Lecture by Bruno Delmas
- Jan 2008
Entrance exams for the master's & doctor's courses
- Apr 2008
Health check for all students at campus
Opening and Entrance Ceremony
Starting of classes
Annual Meeting of the Japan Society for Archival Science
- May 2008
Observation tour for the Broadcasting Library
- Jun 2008
Observation tour for Saitama Pref Archives
Annual Meeting of the Records Management Society of Japan
Symposium of the Japanese Historical Council
- Jul 2008
Visit to Tokyo Restoration and Conservation Center
End-of-term party
Students' reading session during summer vacation
- Sep 2008
One-week practical training seminar at a repository (National Archives of Japan)
Resumption of classes
- Oct 2008
Lectures by Dr. David B. Gracy II
Visit by a missionary from the National Archives and Records of Oman
Due date for creating personal homepages
- Nov 2008
Study tour for Okinawa
Visit to the conservation division of NAJ
End-of-year parties
- Jan 2009
Exams and deadlines for papers
One more week of practical training
Students' study for the Korean language with Dr. Kim (6 sessions)
- Mar 2009
Study tour for Korea
Students' study group for reading *Keeping Archives 3rd ed.*
- Apr 2009
Start of the new academic year
Internship (Kagawa Archives and Resource Center)
Welcome lunch for new students
Commencement of classes
- May 2009
Students' evaluation meeting on the Korea tour
- Jun 2009
An interactive session with Guest Prof Kikuchi (President of NAJ) & Prof Takano
A selection of 4 students by the SAA Research Forum
Presentation on the progress of the master's thesis
- Jul 2009
Appointment of our Instructor Prof Takayama (Vice-President of NAJ) as president of NAJ
Overnight bus trip to Ibaraki and Tochigi Prefs
Workshop of restoration and conservation techniques by the NAJ staff
(Exams for the Library Science course)
Summer vacation
- Oct 2009
Visit by Dr Eric Ketelaar