

The Team Gibbons Project: Shrinking Down the Collection



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Weed On

According to the *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*, archivists must use their best judgment to decide items worth keeping and items worth weeding.

Archival weeding could potentially:

- *Save space
- *Reduce the maintenance cost of the collection
- *Cut out redundancy in the collection

What was weeded?

Certain items were weeded out due to lack of significant relevance for any kind of research, duplicity in the collection, and items that are easily accessible online or in other places within the library collection:

- *Reference materials unrelated to Gibbon's major focus
- * Congrats, birthday cards, visitor requests,
- * Declined appointments and declined invitations
- * Newsletters and multiple copies of the same item (>2)
- * Personal office secretarial items
- * Case files and academy files; (for military academies)
- * H.R. Bills and online accessible Congressional Reports

Playing with Numbers

The last official count in May 2009 reported that 615 boxes were able to be weeded down to 107 boxes.

Student Opinions related to Work and Experience

- Increased professional development of archival skills and knowledge.
- Gained new networking opportunities within Special Collections.
- It provided resume skill-building experience.
- Developed a sense of commitment to complete the project.

Other motivational factors included:

Enjoyable music, working with a fun group, supervisor participation and support, food incentives, creative trash tossing, recognition from the Special Collection staff, and overall team bonding.



Sam Gibbons (1920-) was born in Tampa, Florida. A life-long Democrat, in 1953, he began his political career in the Florida State Legislature. In 1963 he was elected into the United States House of Representatives and served until 1996. He was active in the areas of government spending, trade and trade.

In 1969 he was elected into, and later became chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. He also served on the Joint Committee on Taxation, worked as an advisor to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), was Chairman of the Trade Subcommittee, and was a member of the Budget Committee and the Education and Labor Committee. He sponsored the Trade Remedies Reform Act and the Caribbean Basin Initiative. He also helped develop private pension programs, helped strengthen social security and was the first member of Congress to propose Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs). He was a recognized expert on trade and international finance policy of the United States.

Gibbons was also interested in the development of his hometown. He was one the key players who helped found the University of South Florida, making this collection especially meaningful to the University.

The Gibbons Collection primarily highlights:

*Ways & Means *Trade *Tax

Collection Research Use: for Florida studies, Ways & Means, tax or trade, budget concerns, or any other overall political issue.

The Team Gibbons Timeline

Spring 2007: Tampa Library Special Collection's archivist, Andy Huse, accepted the archival project of former Representative Sam Gibbons.

Summer 2007: After finishing the planning stage, Huse began weeding through the collection at the document level.

2008: Huse began to weed at the box and folder level.

Summer 2009: A team of 3-4 graduate student volunteers and workers joined the project, weeding and taking inventory.

Winter 2009: Methods switched from document to folder-level.

Spring 2010: Team Gibbons is weeding through the last of the boxes; the acid-free folders will soon move into paige boxes.

Summer 2010: The Sam Gibbons Collection will be complete.

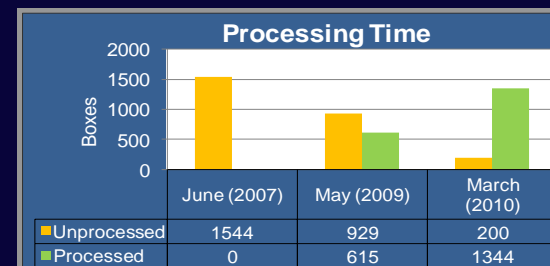
Return on Investment

Before the workers it took Huse 23 months to preliminarily weed **615 boxes** at the box and folder level. This averages to **26.7 boxes/month**.

4 graduate student volunteers and workers spent 3-4 hours/week on the collection. Once the graduate student workers were trained, **729 boxes** were weeded at the folder and individual level. This calculates to **72.9 boxes/month**.

Training averaged out to 8-10 hours before students felt capable of working independently, but most work was completed in groups.

Without any assistance, the storage cost and the cost of losing the archivist's time would have increased.



Date	Linear Feet	Storage Cost	Retrieval Cost	Total
2/2007	1,842	\$ 414	--	\$ 414
1/2008	1,842	\$ 433	--	\$ 433
1/2009	1,701	\$ 423	\$ 137 (37 ft)	\$ 560
1/2010	1,423	\$ 454	\$ 1,170 (96 ft)	\$ 1,624
3/2010	1,126	\$ 359	\$1,893 (202 ft)	\$ 2,252