

Manage the Archives

- **Plan the archives program.** Each chapter is unique, and so are its archival needs. A clear archival strategy is essential to creating and maintaining an archives program that meets the needs of your chapter and accurately preserves your chapter's history.
- **Garner alumnae support.** Caring for the archives is a cumulative function, so the active chapter needs the commitment and support of an alumna advisor.
- **Give the archives a home.** Provide proper housing for the collection, acknowledging preservation and security needs. Look for areas that are secure and provide consistent temperature and humidity.
- **Locate and survey the collection.** Starting a collection can be a bit like a game of hide-and-seek, searching for records, photos, and memorabilia scattered about the chapter house or in the possession of alumnae. An inventory of relevant materials should be collected and maintained as the collection expands. Chapters should keep minutes, roll books, bylaws, chapter histories, newsletters, officers' reports, photographs, scrapbooks, and materials about individual members' experiences while in the chapter.
- **Establish guidelines for the content, arrangement, and description of the collection.** When it comes to archives, consistency is key. A standardized method of creating, storing, and describing content is crucial to archival success.
- **Remember to capture both digital and paper records.** The chapter archives should include both paper records and digital materials. Digital records can be arranged using a file structure similar to what is established for the paper records. Plan for backing up the digital records, migrating digital materials on a regular basis, and letting other responsible parties know where the digital records are stored.
- **Expand the chapter collection.** The archivist should work with chapter officers to ensure that the collection houses all relevant materials to chapter history, collecting a wide range of materials documenting the life, achievements, deliberations, and decisions of the chapter.
- **Preserve and protect the collection.** Keep your records, photos, and keepsakes as good as new by following proper archival procedure.
- **Use the collection and build support for the archives function.** Archives are not just old stuff and are meant to be used to enrich the chapter experience for both collegians and alumnae. The more the collection is used, the more opportunities that exist to rally support around the role of the archivist in the chapter.