Arizona Archive Online (AAO)
EAD Finding Aids
"Helpme" Documentation

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EAD Best Practices

This document was designed to answer frequently asked questions concerning the creation and uploading of EAD finding aids. AAO Best Practices document is more comprehensive and available from the AAO public web site. Please refer to it when determining the appropriate use of specific EAD elements and attributes during markup. The table of contents outlines the location and structure of the documentation.

Where to customize the generic template to specific repository information

Each repository is encouraged to create new EAD finding aids using specific information that pertains to their institution. A copy of the generic template is available from the AAO public web site. *If the template is accidently overwritten, a copy of the generic template is available on the Arizona Archives Online (AAO) web site for download. Right-click and select "Save Link As" to save another copy.*

The generic template should be used to develop your repository template. It contains helpful directions for entering collection information based on the guidelines found in the Arizona Archives Online best practices documentation. The following is a list of elements and values that need further customization based on your repository's information:

- Enter your MARC repository code in the "mainagencycode" attribute in the **\<eadid>** element (see list of codes on pages 18-19 of best practice guidelines).

- Enter full name of repository within the "publicid" attribute in the **\<eadid>** element. For example:

  publicid="-//Northern Arizona University::Special Collections and Archives

- Enter full name of repository with the **\<publisher>** element located within the **\<frontmatter>** element. For example:

\<publisher encodinganalog="260$b">\<!—Enter full name of Repository name-->
\<lb/>\<!—repository address-->\</publisher>

- Repository name and subarea (if applicable), mailing address, phone and fax numbers, email address, and website URL within the **\<publicationstmt>** and **\<repository>** elements. For example:

Publication statement

```
<publicationstmt>
   <publisher encodinganalog="publisher">Cline Library. Special Collections and Archives
Department</publisher>
      <address>
         <addressline>P.O. Box 6022</addressline>
         <addressline>Flagstaff, AZ 86011-6022</addressline>
         <addressline>Phone: 928 523-5551</addressline>
         <addressline>Fax: 928 523-3770</addressline>
         <addressline>Email: special.collections@nau.edu</addressline>
         <addressline>http://library.nau.edu/speccoll/</addressline>
      </address>
      <date calendar="gregorian" encodinganalog="date" era="ce" certainty="approximate"
         normal="2011">©2011</date>
</publicationstmt>
```

Repository element

```
<repository>
      <corpname encodinganalog="852$b">Cline Library. Special Collections and Archives
Depart.</corpname>
            <address>
                  <addressline>P.O. Box 6022</addressline>
                  <addressline>Flagstaff, AZ 86011-6022</addressline>
                  <addressline>Phone: 928 523-5551</addressline>
                  <addressline>Fax: 928 523-3770</addressline>
                  <addressline>Email: special.collections@nau.edu</addressline>
                   <addressline>http://library.nau.edu/speccoll/</addressline>
```

```
        </address>
    </repository>
```

- Institutional reference information within the **<prefercite>** element. Institutional information (in bold below):

```
<prefercite encodinganalog="524">
    <p><!-- COLLECTION NAME AND DESCRIPTION (i.e. John S. Flannery papers) --> <!--
COLLECTION NUMBER -->,  Special Collections and Archives. Northern Arizona University.
Cline Library. Flagstaff, Arizona.</p>
    </prefercite>
```

** The overall structure of the templates, order of the elements, and application instructions/directions found within the EAD elements are identical to the other repository templates.

File naming convention

Before beginning to enter archival information into a new template, first use the "save as" command and save the file using the unique naming convention adopted by your repository, such as incorporating an institutional abbreviation (i.e. "UA") or implementing the MARC code as a prefix with an underscore to uniquely identify their files.

File naming rules

- o Filenames must end with an .xml extension
- o Filenames may include upper and lowercase letters, numbers, and underscores
- o **Filenames should contain no spaces or dashes**. Spaces and dashes will affect the AAO indexing functionality!

*Use of <**titleproper**> [filing title]*

In order to ensure that collection titles can be sorted and displayed alphabetically from the AAO web site, repositories are required to adopt the encoding practice of utilizing a second occurrence of the <**titleproper**> element in the EAD header to hold the filing title. See the <**eadheader**> Table (table 1 of the AAO best practice guidelines) under <**titleproper**> for details and examples of using the second <**titleproper**> [filing title] element. The <**titleproper**> used for filing title has been inserted into each repository's template.

Examples of filing title <**titleproper**> element:

- ➢ Personal name (invert last name and enclose first name in parenthesis):

    - ❖ <titleproper encodinganalog="title" altrender="nodisplay" type="filing">Udall (Morris K.) papers</titleproper>

Entering descriptive information into elements of template

<titleproper encodinganalog="title"><!-- COLLECTION NAME AND DESCRIPTION (i.e. John S. Flannery papers) --><date calendar="gregorian" encodinganalog="date" era="ce" certainty="approximate" normal="0000/0000"><!-- YYYY-YYYY --></date></titleproper>

The **green** text in this example is a "commented out" code containing a description and/or sample of the information that encoders should enter using xml editor software. To enter specific collection information into your repository template, simply delete or "type over" the commented out description. Remember to "type over" the commented code tag, as well as the description/sample text.

<titleproper encodinganalog="title">John Harvey Butchart Collection<date calendar="gregorian" encodinganalog="date" era="ce" certainty="approximate" normal="0000/0000">1944-2002</date></titleproper>

Entering attribute values in template

Certain attributes that have been added to the repository template need to be changed to reflect the characteristics of the archival materials being described. The most common attributes whose value will change per collection include:

- *unitdate/date* element(s) NORMAL (normal="0000/0000") change to the inclusive dates being described (or alter normal="yyyymmdd" to specific year, month, and day of guide creation/revision);
- *persname* element ENCODINGANALOG (encodinganalog="100|110" should be changed based on whether the creator of the materials is a person/family or a corporate body);
- *c0x* component element(s) LEVEL (level="[select from **pre-defined values** in EAD tag library]);
- *container* element TYPE (type attribute should contain term that best describes the physical characters of storage device).

<titleproper encodinganalog="title">John Harvey Butchart Collection<date calendar="gregorian" encodinganalog="date" era="ce" certainty="approximate" normal="**0000/0000**">1944-2002</date></titleproper>

<titleproper encodinganalog="title">John Harvey Butchart Collection<date calendar="gregorian" encodinganalog="date" era="ce" certainty="approximate" normal="**1944/2002**">1944-2002</date></titleproper>

or

<c01 level="**series|file**">

<c01 level="**series**">

Entering dates

All <**unitdate**> elements *above* the <**dsc**> Description of Subordinate Components element must contain a NORMAL attribute for encoding normalized dates. For those <**unitdate**> elements above the <dsc> Description of Subordinate Components element, but within the <**archdesc**> element, <u>use the four-digit year format ("YYYY") only</u>.

The <**date**> element found within the <**eadheader**> element (i.e. <**filedesc**>, <**publicationstmt**>, <**profiledesc**>, <**revisiondesc**>, and <**frontmatter**>) can be normalized according to the **International Standard Organization (ISO) 8601** standard to the year, month and day. Designating the time of day is not necessary and should not be included.

Example of encoded date(s):

Inclusive and Bulk dates – use TYPE attribute to distinguish between "inclusive" and "bulk" dates

<unitdate type="inclusive" normal="1992">1992</unitdate>

<unitdate type="inclusive" normal="1980/1983">1980-1983</unitdate>

<unitdate type="bulk" normal="1970/1985">(bulk 1970-1985)</unitdate>

Broken dates (e.g., "1900, 1905-1918") – use separate <unidate> elements

<unitdate type="inclusive" normal="1900">1900, </unitdate><unitdate type="inclusive" normal="1905/1918">1905-1918</unitdate>

Open date spans – set NORMAL attribute to 9999 for [ongoing]

<unitdate type="inclusive" normal="1962/9999">1962-[ongoing]</unitdate>

Approximate dates – use appropriate date span in the NORMAL attribute

<unitdate type="inclusive" normal="1915/1925">ca. 1920</unitdate>
<unitdate type="inclusive" normal="1920/1929">1920s</unitdate>
<unitdate type="inclusive" normal="1901/2000">20th century</unitdate>

Undated material – use approximate dates based on the earliest and latest dates the material was created

<unitdate normal="1888/1931">undated</unitdate>

Assignment of Sub-component <c0x> levels

The assignment of sub-component levels should be a reflection of the collection's arrangement. If the arrangement is <u>hierarchical</u>, then subsequent components will be smaller units of the preceding component – (ie. "series" then "subseries" then "file").

```
<c01 level="series">
  <c02 level="subseries">
      <c03 level="file">
      <c03 level="file">
      <c03 level="file">
```

If the arrangement is <u>flat</u>, then the use of a single component is all that is required.

```
<c01 level="file">
<c01 level="file">
<c01 level="file">
```

Empty elements

After completing the EAD markup process, but before loading finding aids to the AAO web site **-- empty elements (i.e. tags containing no data) should be deleted from the template.**

Punctuation

EAD markup should not <u>generally include punctuation between the</u> <unittitle> and <unitdate> elements. The style sheet will add punctuation in those cases. Punctuation is acceptable within any other given element.

Special character encoding

For all **special characters encoded in XML**, encode directly in UTF-8 Unicode, or use **Unicode decimal or hexadecimal character references**. Note that all decimal character references should begin with an ampersand (**&)** and/or pound sign (**#)**, and end with a semicolon (**;).** More commonly used characters found in EAD finding aids including the following:

&   &amp; (Ampersand)
<   &lt;   (Left angle bracket)
>   &gt;   (Right angle bracket)
©   &copy; (Copy right symbol)

Describing Archives: a Content Standard (DACS)

In order to promote interpretability within the AAO database of finding aids and beyond, AAO institutions are highly encouraged to observe the guidelines for describing archival materials regardless of format as provided for in **Describing Archives: a Content Standard**, particularly when supplying archival description above the <**dsc**> section   The standard provides guidance on describing the content and context of archival materials, as well as instructions on describing creators and forming names (controlled vocabulary).

Validating and creating well-formed guides in xml editor

To ensure compliance with the EAD.DTD and the AAO Best Practices, new and updated guides should be validated and checked that they are well-formed in an XML editor.

ASUrites account and ftp access

To be able to upload new and updated finding aids, as well as delete unwanted finding aids, you must have a current *ASUrites* account with a valid username and functional password. If you do not have a current *ASUrites* account, please contact the AAO Steering Committee email address.

 When setting up an account in your ftp software for the Arizona Archives Online server, please contact the AAO Steering Committee to obtain the specific ftp settings to access the AAO server.

Remember to load new and updated guides to your institutional subfolder (e.g. nau, phm, ahs) or they won't be indexed and searchable to the public.

Editing an existing finding aid file

If a finding aid file is edited or updated, do not assign a new filename *to the* updated file before re-submitting the file to the **Arizona Archives Online** (AAO) web site. *If the updated finding aid file is intended to replace the previous version of the file --* it must have exactly the same filename.

When uploading an edited guide with the ftp program, a dialog box should warn you that the existing file on the AAO web site will be overwritten. Click the 'yes' button to replace the original file residing on the AAO web site. The AAO index is updated automatically at night.