SOURCE minutes, 9/13/2005 – First meeting of Fall ’05 Semester

Committee members present:
Co-President – Helen Azar, hazar@eden.rutgers.edu
Co-President – Ingrid Williams, Iwill37512@aol.com
Treasurer – Emily Zervas, zemily6@eden.rutgers.edu
Secretary – John Beekman, jwbkmn@eden.rutgers.edu
Faculty Advisor – Marija Dalbello
Also present: Jared Ash, Peter Cutreva, Michael Ferrante, Romina Gutierrez, Scott Jobson, Allison Klein, Eric Lassen, Michael Maziekien, Arthur Merchant, Nomi Ron, Jackie Spritzer

Meeting came to order around 6:10 after pizza. Thanks to Helen for ordering.

The meeting was well attended, with many new students. Group structure, mission and activities were introduced and new members were encouraged to consider contributing in future meetings this semester and on into the future.

I – Officer Introductions:
Officers present introduced themselves briefly. Emily promoted upcoming bookmaking workshop and distributed flyers.

Sign up sheet with email column was circulated. John will look into setting up a “current membership” list, either by a “reply-all” message, or possibly a “real” list such as classes set up.

II – Field Trips:
Past practice of sponsoring trips to archival and rare collections institutions and facilities was reviewed, with mention of recent trips to. Current trip ideas include:

Ocker and Trapp – bookbinding & restoration company. This trip was originally going to be a joint project with the now-cancelled preservation class. The group is still interested in the trip. Ingrid will work on making contact.

Museum of Natural History (NYC) Library – Chris Murray has been working on setting up this tour as a joint LISSA-SOURCE activity. He could not make the SOURCE meeting; John will contact him for a progress report. A second NYC institution could be considered for a same-day visit. Some ideas were offered; we will pursue concretely once date/time for MNH visit is set.

Members are encouraged to think of institutions within reach of Rutgers for visits in future semesters, as advanced planning is required to coordinate tours well.

III – Colloquia:
Past practice of holding talks/colloquia was discussed. Current ideas include:

Disaster Recovery – have someone from University Archives/ Special Collections discuss the floods this past summer, and how they dealt with their aftermath. Ingrid also might know someone from a church that dealt with salvaging their records after a fire.
Rare Books Librarianship – John approached Michael Joseph, Rare Books Librarian at Rutgers, about speaking to us regarding his career – what it entails and what course of study/action led him to his current position, and of course a show-and-tell featuring some RUL holdings. He was very open to the idea. Prof. Varlejs said that a second speaker would be needed to qualify the event for 502 credit. Michael suggested some ideas for complementary speakers. John will attempt to line up a second speaker and look into reserving a space & time.

Again, new members are encouraged to think of potential topics of interest.

IV – Fifth Anniversary Party
SOURCE will celebrate its fifth anniversary with a potluck party on Nov. 11. Yea!

V – Bookmaking Workshop:
Bookmaking workshop will be held on Oct. 8. Attendance will be limited to 24 participants. It will be free of charge. Event was publicized first to new students at orientation, at this SOURCE meeting, and finally to full LISSA list.
Emily and past president Bill Walker will pick up materials in NYC on 9/16. Thanks!

VI – Cancellation of Preservation Class:
Jared brought up the last-minute cancellation of the Preservation class, pointing out that this is directly relevant to SOURCE’s mission to be an advocacy group for archival education within the SCILS MLIS program. Concern about what many felt was a cavalier attitude towards the search for an instructor and especially in notifying students of potential issues with the class. Lack of timely notification about the cancellation of the class was especially hard on new students, who already face a lack of direction in choosing their first schedule.

Some students expressed frustration that the internships that were mentioned at the class meeting when the cancellation was announced have failed to materialize. Some students have heard that Prof. Lesk may be developing a project. Mixed messages and lack of clarity at this point, two weeks into the semester, are troubling.

Broader concerns about the orientation of the class as it has been in the recent past were also discussed. The course has tended to focus on preservation concerns for public libraries, covering general issues and maintenance. As one of the few courses dealing with issues relevant to archival careers, which employers look for in new hires, a more hands on approach dealing with permanent preservation of rare and unique materials would be much more valuable.

Prof. Dalbello will communicate SOURCE concerns at the faculty meeting, but also encouraged SOURCE to write a letter expressing our concerns.

[Note: this subject was also discussed at the LISSA meeting the following night, particularly regarding upcoming new faculty hires, and Dr. Radford, who was in attendance, listened closely to the concerns of students interested in the growing field of archives, and seemed open to advocating for us in faculty meetings]

VII – Monmouth County Archives Day:
Monmouth County Archives Day will be Oct 15. Info will be emailed to current members.
VIII – General Discussion
Idea for time to be spent in sharing relevant experiences of interest was revisited. Helen spoke a bit about her recent internship in St. Petersburg, Russia.

IX – Set Date of Next Meeting:
Due to the cancellation of the Preservation class, Tuesday nights are free for many students interested in SOURCE. So, meeting days for this semester will be on Tuesdays at 6PM. The next meeting will be on Oct. 18. It will be held either in the Student Lounge or in classroom 303. An announcement will be made in the week or so prior to the meeting.