Required Fields in DACS (LTS Procedure #77)

Scope: *This document lists the fields that are required, or required if applicable, under the current rules for cataloging manuscript and archival collections, Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS).*
Because RMC is now doing its collection-level cataloging of these collections in ArchivesSpace, which does not use MARC, the MARC tags previously included in this Procedure have been deleted.

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Unit: LTS Special Materials

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Note:

DACS rules are intended to apply to finding aids as well as catalog records. Fields whose names are in boldface below are required in all DACS records.

> Name of creator (if known)
>
> Title
> Date(s); Extent; Administrative/biographical history
>> Scope and Content; Agents
>> Conditions governing access
>> Technical access element (required if applicable)
>> Conditions governing use (required if applicable)
>> Languages and scripts of the material; Subjects

Name of creator (if known): If the creator's name is not already established in ArchivesSpace, search in OCLC for an authority record for it. If there isn't an authority record, and it's not clear how best to formulate the name, look it up in reference sources to see how the person/organization is known. If the name isn't there, use the form of name given in the manuscript or collection itself. If it doesn't appear in the material, search in OCLC's WorldCat to see how it appears there. If it's not in any of those places, use your best judgment to formulate the name.

Title: creator's name + nature of the materials + (optionally) topic

Examples:

Alexander Gardner Civil War photographs

Willard Straight diaries on China

John Nolen papers

Note: Use "papers" (for an individual or family) or "records" (for an organization) only if the collection includes three or more forms of documents. If the collection consists of one or two forms of documents, include those forms in the title (see DACS 2019.0.3, rule 2.3.20).

Date(s): You can formulate the date(s) in the way that you think best, as long as you are consistent about it. For instance, expressions like "1890s," "probably 1834," or "before 1925" are OK. If you use "circa," spell it out; if the collection has no date, use "undated," not "n.d." Use of bulk dates is optional in DACS.

Extent: **RMC practice:** To help us gather sound estimates of the amount of space our collections are taking up, express the extent in cubic feet whenever practical**.**

Administrative/ biographical history (optimal, if applicable): Briefly describe enough of the creator's life history, or enough of the administrative history of the organization that created the collection, to help convey the nature and significance of the collection.

Scope and content: Describe the predominant forms of material in the collection, the nature and subject matter of the material, and the creator(s) if known, major correspondents, or other agents who helped create the material. **Note:** If the collection is incomplete for reasons other than appraisal decisions, describe the gaps here (DACS 3.1.5).

Conditions governing access: RMC uses this field only when access is restricted.

Examples:

Letters from Susie Bright are restricted until 2010.

Some letters are illegible due to water damage.

Conditions governing use (required if applicable), e.g. restrictions on reproduction due to copyright (DACS 4.4.6, 4.4.8-9)

Note: RMC uses this field if there is a restriction concerning use of the collection. This field may also be used to alert patrons that they need permission to quote materials, or to specify who owns the copyright, etc.

Language(s) and script(s) of the material (in local practice, sometimes required): In ArchivesSpace, RMC requires a note on the language of the material only if the collection material is in more than one language; otherwise it treats mention of the language as optional, although it's always useful to note the language if it is not English. You may also note the alphabet or script used (such as Cyrillic, Fraktur, etc.), if noteworthy. "Script" refers to a specific script or hand (such as Gothic script, or Secretary hand), not the quality or general characteristics of the handwriting such as the use of cursive vs. block letters or the like.

Examples:

Letters in German; Suetterlin script.

Early (16th-century) documents are in Secretary hand.

Other fields we routinely use: Add subject headings and/or form/genre terms to the resource record in ArchivesSpace as appropriate. Use authorized Library of Congress Subject Headings. RMC generally uses the Art and Architecture Thesaurus as the source of its form/genre terms.

Note: The absence of other fields from this list does not mean that you cannot use them in DACS. This list is meant to highlight the fields that are required, or required if applicable.