Using the OSU Folklore Archive Assignment
Instructions for Students

The following assignment centers on the Student Ethnographic Project Collection (SEPs). The SEPs form one of the Folklore Archives' most important collections, one that is also continually evolving. The earliest SEPS date from 1967 and contributions have been made almost every year since that date, thanks to OSU students who have – for decades – regularly completed fieldwork projects as part of folklore, writing, and other courses, and then submitted them to the archives. According to Moira Marsh of Indiana University who completed an assessment of the Folklore Archives in 2019, the SEPs "cover every aspect of folklore and folklife, including folk literature, song, folk belief (superstitions), rituals, and material culture … While some of the papers record fieldwork that students conducted among their fellow students, a significant amount comes from beyond the campus, from the surrounding community and from other Ohio counties."

The "Using the OSU Folklore Archive" module has been designed to help you learn about and explore the OSU Folklore Archives. It is intended to form part of your broader fieldwork-based semester project and consists of two steps, which are to be taken once you have settled on the subject of your own project (which will hopefully be submitted to the SEPs in due course).

Step One: Selecting Two Past Student Ethnographic Projects
Once you have decided on your final project topic, you will choose two student ethnographic projects about the same or a similar subject from our finding aid, which is an Excel spreadsheet that your instructor will share with you shortly. Alas, the SEPs are not [yet] available online. This spreadsheet may seem a little daunting when you first open it. However, it is fully searchable. In terms of finding useful information for this assignment, the two columns you should concentrate on are "Title of Collection" and "Keywords." You will be given further guidance on searching for past projects during class.

Once you have settled on the two projects you wish to review, submit the following information to your instructor by the given deadline so that the projects can be retrieved and ready for you to review in a timely manner.

- Your Name
- Accession #
- Collector Last Name
- Collector First Name
- Title of Project
- Year of Project

You *can* choose more than two past projects at this stage and then decide which to focus on in the second assignment step, but please do not request more than four.

Step Two: Summary and Review
Once you have the two projects that you have decided to use for this assignment, parse them both. You should then present a shortish paper (ask your instructor for parameters) which contains the following information, and submit to your instructor:

- A summary of the contents of the past projects
- A brief comparison of their contents
- A rationale for why you chose the past projects that you did.
- A reflection on how they are relevant to your own proposed project (or why they are not relevant)