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From Narrative to Data and Back: Archival Sources and the DRU

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Thursday, February 17, 2011

Workshop Session III

Time of Session: 3:30-5:00pm

Session Title: Beyond the Buildings

Speakers: **Suzanne M. Blake, Witt Associates**

Mikeal Blackford, Louisiana State University

Room: 204

Head Count:9

Note Taker: K. Brad Ott

Notes:

Speaker –

“Keeping Them Fed or Keeping Them Frozen:

Disaster Preparedness and Response for Laboratories and Research Animals”

Suzanne M. Blake, Witt Associates

[PowerPoint presentation]

Suzanne Blake self introduction

Research and disaster response – formative experience – laboratory: an electrical outlet failed on a refrigerator full of lab (dead) animals – in which she had to clean out

[From PowerPoint]:

Without university research –

- We'd be more itchy
 - We wouldn't be able to donate our kidney
 - We wouldn't be able to send emails
 - barcodes developed
 - CPR developed at Johns Hopkins
- question on surfing research – measuring swell in a wave .. etc

Outline

- The university mission

- Examples
 - Why we need to protect research
 - How to prepare and respond
 - Essential elements to protect research
 - planning processors/skye players
 - Dealing with faculty
- The University Mission

Examples

- 1994 Cal State Northridge – lost research ended careers
- 2001 University of Texas Health Science Center (Tropical Storm Alicia)
- University of Hawaii
- Post Katrina – research from 300 federally-funded projects at New Orleans colleges and universities was lost

Examples of other challenges (continued)

- community protest (PETA: People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals – HQ located by campus lab)

Why protect research?

- It is the law
- Retention of faculty
- Reputation
- “When researchers walk out the door, so does the money.” – Steve Chavet quote

Essential Elements

- Utilities (electricity / water protected)
- Resources (food, water, and care supplies; specialized equipment; specialized skill sets – only people available who know about research; Data management)
- Access (physical access; credentials needed)

Casey Levy commented – Security arguably would be the upmost issue – referenced post-Katrina attempted thefts of drugs

Suzanne Blake

Planning Process

- Vulnerability/Risk assessment (referenced Alessandra's presentation)
- Inventory (sensitive research/hazardous materials/specialized equipment/create a contact database (referenced UNCW experience)
- Capabilities – what is needed to support the laboratories
- Mitigation measures (hardening the structure / less vulnerable / backup supplies)

Planning (continued)

- functional annex or ESF tot he university EOP
- Format
 - 1Primary/supporting dept
 - 2purpose
 - 3scope
 - 4conceptual purpose
 - 5response steps (activation, precautions, ongoing responses, recovery actions)
- Roles and responsibilities

Planning Process (continued)

- Critical decisions (stay and play; load and go; stay and euthanize)
- Departmental Plans/Guidance/Checklist
- Coordinated with the COOP Plan
 - 1alternative locations and equipment
 - 2supplies
 - 3personnel (specialized skill sets)
 - 4getting researchers research access (credentials)
- Continuity planning is key

Recovery

Other (odd) considerations: animals can pull a fire alarm!

Planning continued

- Critical decisions ...
- The Planning process – template (contact information; location; what do you want us to check? //
- Location specific form // loss of power inventory checklist

Preparedness

- Stockpiling of supplies
- Vendor contracts
- Training and exercising of key personnel (multi-year training and exercise plan (HSEEP); involve the researchers is important – participate in exercise!
- Scenarios (lab fire; ...
- Assessment mapping of utilities, etc – consequences/benefits

Who needs to be a part of the process?

- Vice President/Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs / Provost
- Office of Research-Sponsored program
- Departmental Directors
- Facilities/Physical plant
- Institutional animal care and use committee (IACUC)
- Environmental health and safety

●external partners and vendors
Engaging Faculty – Challenges and benefits

- Make it required (top-down approach)
- Attend departmental meetings
- present examples of good reasons to participate (Katrina – life research is lost)
- get them to participate in exercises – buy-in for researchers
- listen – engage researchers in their research
- make yourself accessible – work with researchers to make plan
- make it easy for them
- work with Sponsored Programs
also graduate students – work

Questions of Suzanne Blake

Unidentified male question / would grant requirements require attention to mitigation? Would the university be responsible?

Suzanne Blake's response: this is a good question

Unidentified female comment / LSU – we have 800+ labs – university involvement / inventory of hazardous materials important

Unidentified male question / what was your experience with firefighters?

Suzanne Blake's response: (referencing her experience at UNC Wilmington): staged test for preparations; consulted for plan

Unidentified female Question/comment / issues of access – would you want outsiders?

Suzanne Blake's response: – university official present; specialist liaison presentation

(Good idea) / access remotely labs – local and regional assets key

Important to educate campus police about researchers

issues of jurisdiction between city/county/parish/campus authorities

Unidentified male comment and question / trouble about getting information from researchers – we had to do an end-run

Suzanne Blake's response: get acquainted with cleaning staff

Suzanne Blake is willing to share information

Mikeal Blackford, Louisiana State University

(pronounced Michael)

[PowerPoint presentation]

Why Archives are AWESOME

Mikeal Blackford's stated background: Has a BA in geology and biological studies ...

Why do we care –

- very limited spatial boundary – research
- historical record of “fear” hazards
- history of hazardous situations
- fosters community buy-in – people like to participate
- allays suspicions – functions as a 'lock-pick' – findings surface

Results of a survey given to students at LSU –

- Q1 – What hazards do you think the university needs to prepare for?
- The case of the one-eyed beauty queen from LSU-Eunice – LSU-E student lost an eye while in bow and archery class!

Referenced “the line” – suicide / help line ... origins in the 1970s – former LSU Student Body President who committed suicide (who had previously advocated the suicide line's creation)!

Archive advantage? Sometimes they do the work for you (collect from others)

When communicating hazards, keep in mind your audience – \$4500 fine could buy you a certain amount of boudin (!) -- sign

Bayesian Statistics, the black magic of risk analysis – combining qualitative and quantitative approaches

- Bayesian Statistics –use subjective probabilities (degree of belief)
- Brad cited CHART emergency manager study of probabilities of hurricane evacuation

Mikeal Blackford referenced a similar Western Carolina University study

Archives generate data valuable data of popular interest

Referenced LSU-Eunice: campus built on land that used to be a rice paddy! – leading to understanding of long-standing flooding issues

going through the archives – can measure mitigation impacts

Mikeal Blackford observes “Hazards used to be just a golf term”

He referenced “prosaic” events – students overturn canoe in race (wearing life jackets made it a better outcome); mosquito problems “nuisance” hazards (but could be heightened with West Nile virus)

Example: NORPLANT problems advertisement – why this ad in the campus newspaper?

“The Last Bash!” – Legal drinking on campus ended for students aged 18-20 ...

Tuchman's Law

•Pulitzer-Prize winning historian Barbara Tuchman state that – “The fact of being reported multiplies the apparent extent of any deployable development five to tenfold.” – qualitative part of Bayesian analysis

Dealing with fears real or not – signs of Satanism ... historical pattern in their worries – acknowledging fears key to successful mitigation

Perception is often reality – we must deal with what may happen whatever one believes

Social media already generate valuable archives a sophisticated analysis and they're being used for web comics ... earthquake detections

Archival work can have its own hazards --- (warning entering room with Halon gas)

Auburn oaks at LSU – protecting them against vandalism (in response to herbicides applied to Auburn oaks at University of Auburn by an upset University of Alabama football fan

Discussion: local examples where archival research for mitigation could be useful:

Flooding fears – archival records 1927 flood

Contrast of Lower Ninth Ward flooding, 1965 and 2005 – blowing up the levees?

Compare with weather statistics ...