

THE DAILY UTAH CHRONICLE ARCHIVES

PRESERVING STUDENT VOICES OF THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE



The team

The Chrony Archives



Josh Petersen

U Student Media Manager at the University of Utah; oversees the Daily Utah Chronicle



Josh and Haley

Josh and I when we worked together at the Chrony as Digital Managing Editor and Editor-in-Chief, respectively



Haley Oliphant

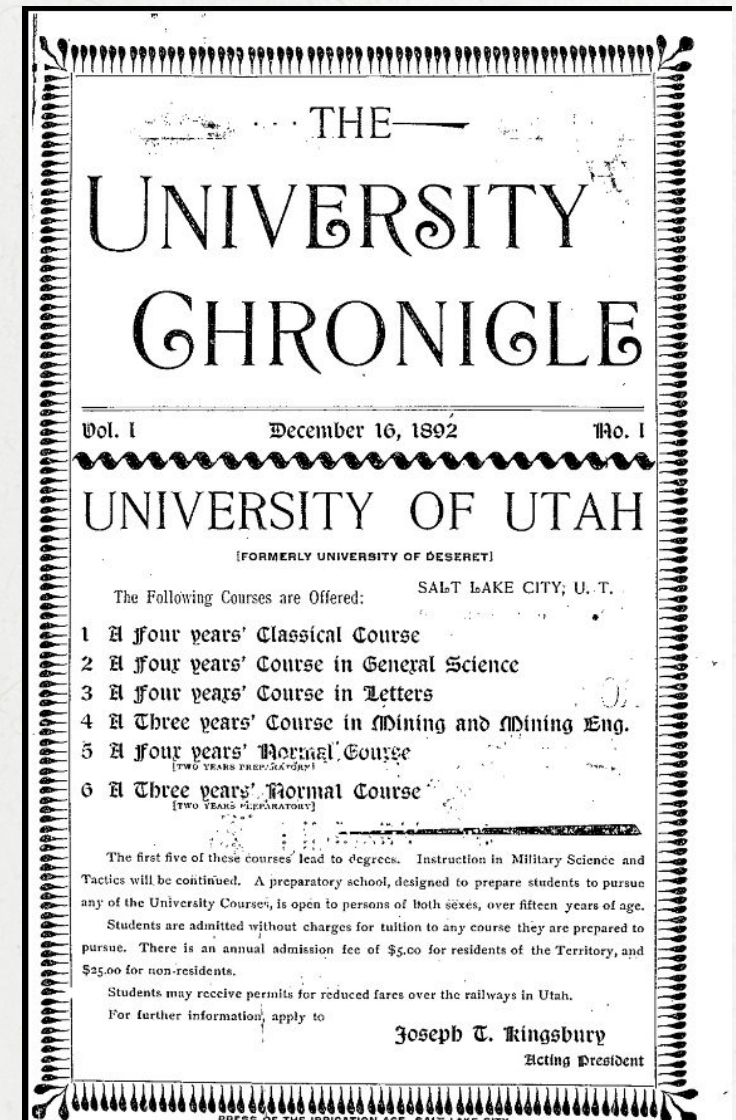
Creator, director, sponsor liaison, the big boss, and also the underling

DID YOU KNOW?

The Daily Utah Chronicle has been the independent student newspaper of the University of Utah since 1892.

Each year, the Chrony is devoted to capturing the unique voices of the students in the present moment – the focus now is preserving the voices of the past, present, and future.

As a student-run organization, the turnover of staff at the Chrony is staggering. No one has had the time or capacity to work on an archive, let alone establish best practices for archival.



ARCHIVE OUT-OF-DATE

The Chrony's archived material lives within a master archive called Utah Digital Newspapers (UDN), which is an expansive collection of all newspapers (past and present) in the state of Utah.

The University of Utah Marriott Library hosts and maintains UDN.

PROVIDE THE CHRONY WITH:

1 Analysis

A detailed analysis of the state of the archives, including the background of the archive platform and missing records.

2 Plan of Action

User-friendly and digestible instructions to bring the archive up-to-date that can be easily transferred between students.

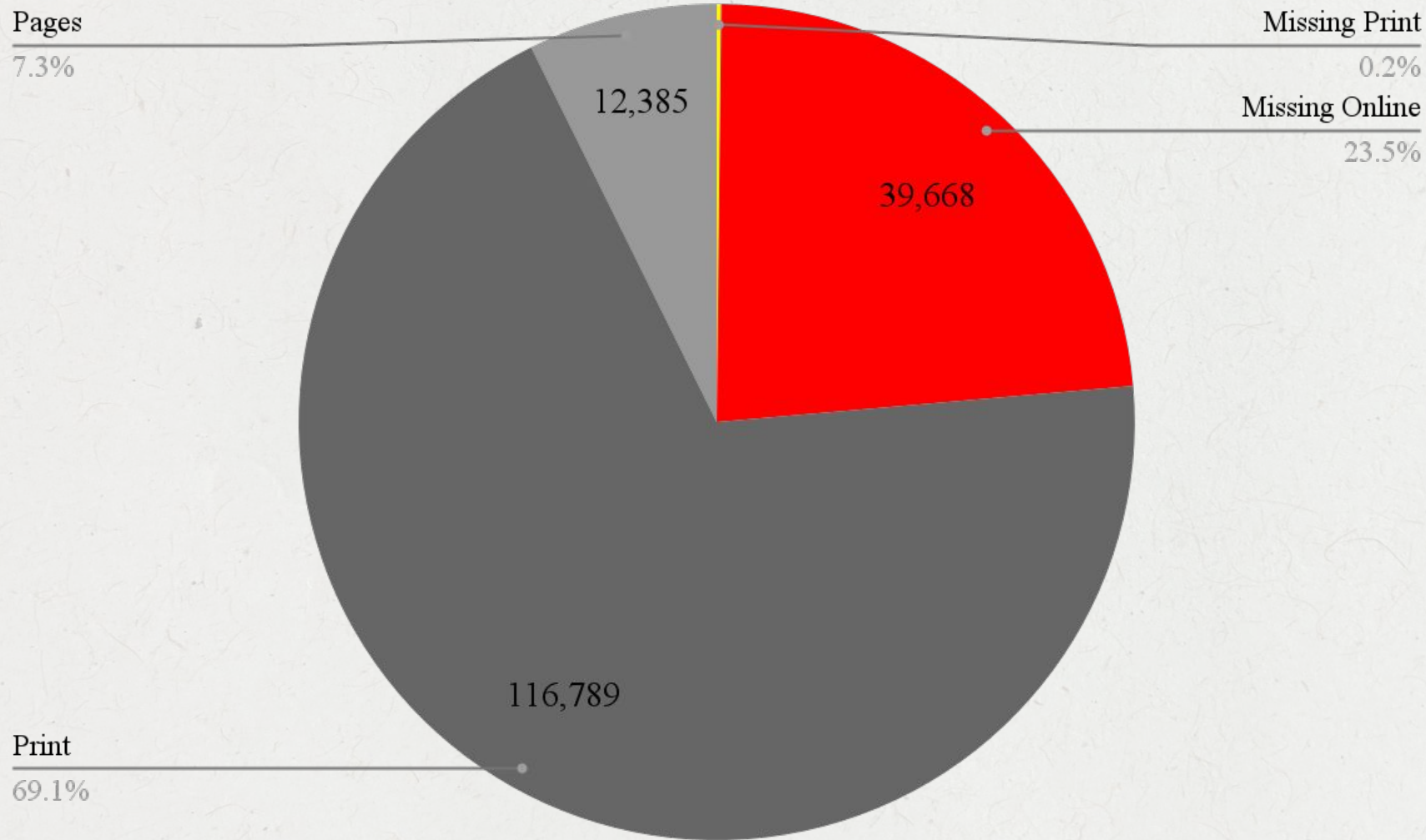
3 Standard Archival Process

A concrete archival process for continued maintenance, with recommendations for student leadership to keep the Chrony in line with the archive's needs.



Archive Stats

The Chrony Archives



Print

Print issues within the archive:
December 1892 - July 2004
November 2004 - April 2015

Pages

Each page of a print issue is present as its own file, in addition to the print issue file that contains it

Missing Print

Print issues missing from the archive:
July 2004 - November 2004
May 2015 - Present

Missing Online

None of the stories published online are present in the archive
December 2004 - Present (and counting)
Some of these have been published in print as well

A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

As I crafted processes for updating the archive, I found intense conflict between the rigidity of the archive, and the extreme inconsistency within the Chrony.

Even just looking at hard copies of the records that were missing revealed vast discrepancies in labeling, organization, design, and flow, and there was very little I could do about it since the records were what they were.

I also couldn't provide any concrete suggestions about the format or structure of the archive, because it hosts more papers than just the Chrony.

The print issues were easy to accommodate, since they were already pdfs, and the archive was designed for newspaper layouts. The online articles, however, proved to be difficult.

DID YOU KNOW?

I wasn't the only one facing problems with archiving digital journalism. Other newspapers hosted on UDN were struggling to determine how best to include online news in an archive designed for representations of physical media.

What I was doing with this project was somewhat of an experiment for UDN – and while the Chrony could consider an entirely separate archive for its online content, as of now it makes more sense to keep all material (print and online) in one place.



Finding a Solution

The Chrony Archives

My approach for this project was largely trial and error. I had strict systems set in place, which forced me to find creative solutions when an overhaul would have been cleaner.

— Haley Oliphant

Finding a Solution

The Chrony Archives

Updating the archives is a huge project, and with the regular turnover the Chrony faces, progress will change hands constantly.

Print issues just needed some slight formatting adjustments, a specific file name, and converting the PDF to PDF/A (easy!)

1

2

3

4

5

In mapping out the archive update and developing processes, my number one priority was effective user design.

The process needed to be something that any student could pick up easily, and so I limited my searches to software/tools students would already know.

For online stories, I found a plugin that allows users to convert individual stories to PDFs in large batches (theoretically, thousands!)

Finding a Solution

The Chrony Archives

EVERYTHING WAS FINE

I reviewed the plugin's features and functionality with several smaller tests before developing the true sample PDF batch for the archive, and everything was great and in place. I re-confirmed the organization plan with the archivist prior to putting together a sample, I entered in all of my settings to capture the stories of November 2015, I hit "generate" and...



UNTIL IT WASN'T

...it failed. I was receiving a 403 server error with any attempt to generate PDFs through the plugin. I submitted a support ticket through the website host, and the tech reported back that she couldn't provide any troubleshooting for third-party plugins. She reminded me that the website did allow you to convert stories to PDFs one at a time – a painstaking process, but at least I would've been able to submit something to the archivist. These efforts failed as well; I received 403 errors with about half of the stories, which would make my test submission pointless.

404 Error

*Capstone
not found*

SO IT'S KIND OF A MESS

With the school year wrapping up, Josh and the Chrony are swamped with graduation, awards, leadership changes, and the general chaos of end-of-semester. They don't have the bandwidth to address this website error right now, so this branch of my project is at a standstill.

Utilizing third-party websites for PDF conversions is more convoluted and less secure, and simply printing the web page itself shows large blocks of ads that distract from the story. The test needed to be the process I proposed, and the process simply broke.

The timeline needed to actually solve this issue extends far beyond my capstone, and that's frustrating. I don't have a neat bow to tie on the end of this project and I feel that in a lot of ways I've failed.

— Haley Oliphant

BUT AMIDST THE RUBBLE, I STILL

Outlined the needs of the archive

Neither the Chrony nor UDN truly knew the full extent of what was missing from the archive.

Developed a process for print issues

I identified the step-by-step procedure to convert each print issue file into the proper format for the archive.

Compiled A LOT of thoughts

Leadership can still encourage and celebrate innovation while keeping archival needs in mind, they just need some balance.

OTHER LESSONS LEARNED

1 About Myself

I hit a lot of walls, but (after crying a bit) I got back up and tried again.

2 Archiving

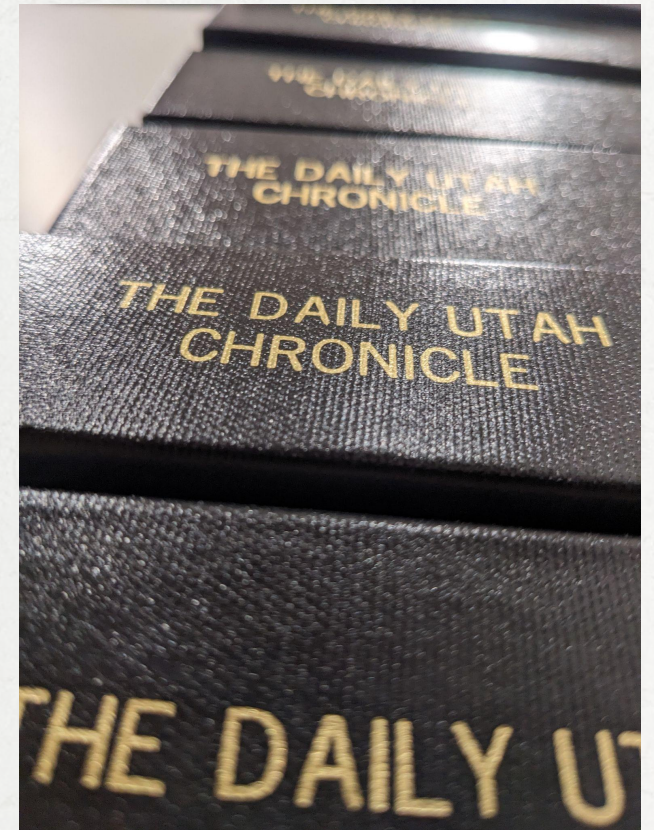
The intricate considerations when developing an archive can drive someone insane, but are insanely important.

3 Collaboration

Working within the constraints of two entities with opposing ideals is...hard.

4 101 Ways

That don't work.



A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE, AGAIN

My findings, recommendations, and drafted processes will be handed over to Josh, *The Daily Utah Chronicle*, and Utah Digital Newspapers in the form of a handbook. This should not only provide a clear path to updating the archive, but be a good compass for future archiving efforts on both sides.

I'd also like to assist in updating the archive after my capstone where I can.

The Chrony and the Utah Digital Newspapers archivist will need to talk through long-term solutions for online story preservation.

I will continue to work through any bugs that I can with the original process I designed, and will include it in my deliverables regardless – the context of its failure will still provide a great starting point to whatever someone tries next.

THANK YOU!

Thank you to the iSchool community for supporting me throughout this capstone.

Thank you to Josh Petersen and Tina Kirkham for embarking on this journey with me.

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Images Courtesy of: *The Daily Utah Chronicle*

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and Newsreader Semi Bold.



Then and Now



1897 Chronicle staff . . . they just missed out on an era of flappers, 'Hip and Rum' and wild Army ROTC dances.

64 Years of Bringing News

**Lantern 'Lit' in 1892 Gave
Rise to Today's Chronicle**

2024-2025 Staff

Select a School Year

