

Talk & Tour

RECORD TO ARCHIVE: IMD313 ACADEMIC VISIT TO STATE RECORD REPOSITORY PUSTAKA NEGERI SARAWAK

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In education, we believe in embracing various approaches to teaching and learning beyond the confines of the classroom. By incorporating site visits, hands-on experiences, and thorough research, we can ignite curiosity and bolster students' understanding and proficiency in their subjects. For instance, the course IMD313 Foundation of Archives takes a proactive step by organizing academic visits, providing students with a firsthand encounter with the actual records and archives management. This enriching opportunity is available to all Semester 5 students of the Diploma of Management Information, allowing them to delve deeper into the world of archives and records.



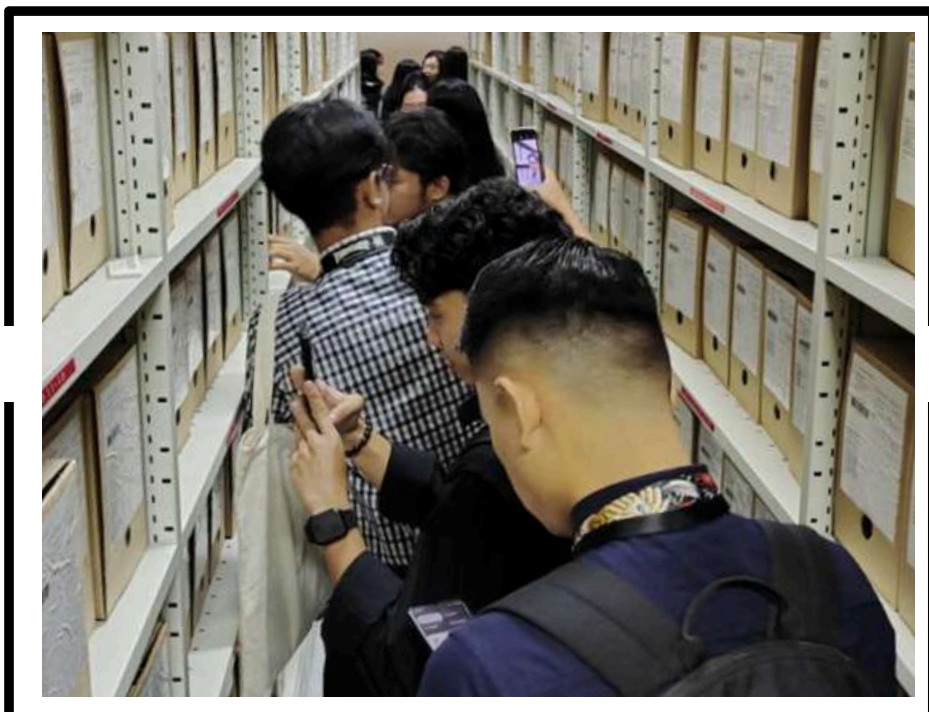
Amidst the vast options available for academic visits, the State Records Repository Pustaka Negeri Sarawak stood out as the perfect choice. Its inviting atmosphere, state-of-the-art facilities, and cutting-edge technologies offer students an unparalleled opportunity to witness their classroom learning come alive in a real-world setting. As early as week 4 of lectures, I encouraged my students to propose a suitable date for our visit to the State Records Repository. While it posed a challenge, as some students lacked experience crafting compelling proposals, I remained devoted to guiding and consulting them, assisting them in refining their proposals, and ensuring a rewarding visit for all.

Our long-awaited visit was scheduled after much back-and-forth. Despite the staff-packed schedule of events and programs, the State Records Repository displayed the utmost professionalism by kindly welcoming us into the organization.

We agreed on a date, 19th May 2023, a Friday, for this enlightening experience from 8.30 until 11.30 in the morning. The objectives of this visit were threefold: first, to enhance our students' comprehension of record and archive management; second to provide them with a firsthand encounter with the organization's methodologies, and third, to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and ideas with the experts in record and archive management.

The adventure began at dawn, as we set out from UITM Sarawak as early as 7 a.m. A bus driver awaited us eagerly, ready to transport us to the wondrous State Records Repository. While all students were mandated to join the visit, regrettably, one of them couldn't make it. The journey proved arduous due to the bustling traffic during peak hours. Yet, fortune smiled upon us, and we arrived promptly at 8.30 a.m. The warm and hospitable employees of the State Records Repository greeted us with open arms, led by En. Mohamad Aizat bin Ajis, Librarian and the day's distinguished speaker.

En. Mohamad Aizat gave a briefing before the visit and showed a video presentation of safety measures. Then, he took us to the bustling working area, where dedicated staff meticulously cleaned and sorted the records and archives before storing them in boxes. Their utmost care and attention ensured the preservation of delicate and old materials, safeguarding the records and themselves by donning face masks and gloves. Our journey continued to the fascinating digitization area, where students witnessed the intriguing microfilm process and learned how to use the machine for record highlighting and digital preservation. However, the true highlight was yet to come. An enthralling experience awaited as students stepped into a darkroom, witnessing the captivating process of manual photographic development. The visit offered an extraordinary glimpse into the inner workings of record management, leaving us all in awe of the artistry and precision involved.



With great interest, the students proceeded to the repository area, which is a vast space where records and archives found their secure abode, housed in various storage setups like compact storage, open shelves, and drawers. They were treated to a fascinating demonstration of how to label the boxes correctly, ensuring the optimal temperature and humidity for preserving different types of records. The exclusivity of this area, accessible only to staff, made the students giddy with excitement, prompting them to capture countless photographs.

The adventure continued as they ventured into the fumigation room, witnessing the fogging machine in action, expertly applying chemicals in a fine mist for sanitation, insect control, and odor removal. The versatility of these machines even allowed for the removal of molds, leaving the students thoroughly impressed. Next on the itinerary was the cutting board room, where students marveled at a special machine that efficiently cut boxes to precise sizes. A simple set of instructions was all it took for the cutter to perform its magic, leaving the students in awe as they manually folded the boards to create perfectly sized boxes. The ingenuity of this machine left a lasting impression and amazed the students.

The preservation section stood out as the most thrilling among all the captivating areas. En. Herrie Suliano, the skilled staff in charge, demonstrated traditional tissue repair techniques to the students. Patience was paramount, as these methods proved highly technical and intricate. The preservation process demanded top-notch tools, machines, and equipment, which came at a hefty price since most were imported from overseas. The students couldn't contain their excitement and curiosity, bombarding En. Herrie with numerous questions as they delved deeper into this fascinating realm. Their passion for learning was evident, and the preservation area left an indelible mark on their hearts and minds.

The grand finale of the visit led the students to the reference area, where they received valuable insights into using reference materials and the borrowing procedures. Finding aids can be found in digital and physical formats, empowering the students to navigate the vast archives effectively. Students were encouraged to register online through the membership application forms at the following link:

<https://sarawakid.sarawak.gov.my/web/ssov1/signup/>. Additionally, also invited students to join the Friends of Archives at Pustaka Negeri Sarawak through this link: <https://forms.gle/ANRVqpje9nqbfxz97>, providing support for the commendable work of the state archives at Pustaka Negeri Sarawak.

At the end of the session, the organization treated the students to a delightful feast, fostering a warm relationship between the staff and the students. With spirits lifted, they gathered for a memorable photo session, capturing the joy and camaraderie that blossomed throughout the visit. At around 11.30 a.m., the bus awaited at the entrance, ready to return them to campus according to schedule. The session was fruitful and fun, although signs of tiredness were evident on the students' faces. Nevertheless, their exhaustion couldn't dampen the enthusiasm they carried, even joining in a cheerful sing-along with the bus driver during the journey back.

With gratitude, the students reflected on the invaluable knowledge and experiences gained during the visit. The insights shared will enrich their academic journey and serve them well in future endeavors. A heartfelt appreciation was extended to the State Records Repository for their warm hospitality and support throughout the visit. I sincerely hope that the State Records Repository remains ever-welcoming to receive more of our students from the School of Information Science UiTM Sarawak. Thank you for embracing our students with open arms and fostering a nurturing environment for their academic growth and enrichment.

