

How to Build a Workflow: Improving Digital Content Appraisal and Processing at the University of Illinois Library

BETHANY ANDERSON, JOANNE KACZMAREK, and TRACY POPP

Abstract: Improving Digital Content Appraisal and Processing (IDCAP) is a project initiated by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) Library. The project's goal is to enhance and develop workflows across the Library's special collections units that support the appraisal and processing of digital content. Given the distributed nature of special collections at the Library, workflows vary considerably; IDCAP was conceptualized as a way to identify common challenges and share knowledge and best practices between units. By bringing these units together with their distinct and shared needs, IDCAP seeks to collectively build workflows that attend to the diversity of digital content acquired by the Library.

Over the past 18 years, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has launched numerous initiatives to provide curatorial and technical support for digital content identified as having archival or long-term value. However, special collections units have not had clear or consistent approaches to developing and supporting workflows needed for a comprehensive and sustainable digital preservation model, due in part to digital preservation's rapidly changing environment combined with competing priorities of the broader UIUC community.

This paper will describe IDCAP's work to identify needs, assess/create workflows, and build capacity across special collections units. In particular, the paper will describe two initial tasks: 1) a survey of peer institution's workflow documentation; and, 2) the creation of use case profiles drawn from examples of digital acquisitions from special collection units. Assessing commonalities and differences that emerge from these activities will be used to inform iterative workflow development.

About the authors:

Tracy Popp is the Digital Preservation Coordinator at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Library. In support of preservation of and access to digital collections, Ms. Popp leads the Library's born digital content preservation efforts. She holds a Master of Science of Library and Information Science and Certificate of Advanced Study in Library and Information Science from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

Joanne Kaczmarek is the Archivist for Electronic Records and the Director of Records and Information Management at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Joanne has been involved in numerous digital preservation projects, most recently in partnership with the Illinois State Archives with funding from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. This recent project has involved the exploration of machine learning for processing archival email.

Bethany Anderson is the Natural and Applied Sciences Archivist at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She serves as co-editor for the Archival Futures Series, which is co-published by the Society of American Archivists and the American Library Association, and as Reviews Editor for *American Archivist*. She holds an MA in Near Eastern Archaeology from the University of Chicago and an MS in Information Studies from the University of Texas at Austin. Her research interests include documenting

current science, the history of women in the sciences, and the application of computational approaches to archives to facilitate access.