
From Project to Strategy: Scalable Digital Curation at Ohio University Libraries

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Abstract:

The Ohio University Libraries has traditionally taken a project-based approach to its digitization efforts, drawing on ad hoc collaborations between Archives and Special Collections, Digital Initiatives, and Preservation, in response to funding opportunities. In order to engage in a more meaningful and strategic collaboration that would lay a foundation for a sustainable and scalable digital curation and preservation strategy, the Libraries tasked representatives from those three primary areas to research possible solutions to move this goal forward.

To this end Janet Carleton, Digital Initiatives coordinator, Sara Harrington, head of Arts and Archives, and Miriam Nelson, head of Preservation, applied and were accepted into the University of Maryland iSchool, Curation and Management of Digital Assets, post-master's certificate program. Acceptance and participation in the program were predicated on the potential impact of cross departmental research and collaboration culminating in a shared capstone project. The ultimate goal of this endeavor has been and continues to be laying the foundation to ready the Libraries for an institutional investment in digital preservation in the form of newly drafted policies, procedures, and workflows. This poster will serve to illustrate the work produced by in the capstone project and collaborative outcomes that continue to develop as a result.



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① The Research Problem: How should the Ohio University Libraries advance institutional digital preservation?

- Though established in 2004, Ohio University Libraries Digital Initiatives has by necessity remained a boutique operation.
- Priorities have not been driven by collections (value or condition) or by curriculum need.
- These external priorities have left interdepartmental workflows ad-hoc.
- Lack of investment in digital preservation has stalled strategic growth for Digital Initiatives as a unit, limited the desired expansion of the Libraries' digital presence, and left the Libraries ineligible for major grants.

② The Research Model

"A fully implemented and viable preservation program addresses **organizational issues, technological concerns, and funding questions**, balancing them like a three-legged stool."

- Kennedy and McGovern, 2003

③ The Research Process

Identify, research, and create drafts of:

- Relevant policies [organization]
- Cross-departmental procedural workflows [organization]
- Repurposable grant narratives [organization]
- A recommendation for a digital preservation system [technology]
- A commitment for ongoing, annual funding [resources]

④ The Research Products and Results

12 documents (see attached grid) created or updated in the areas of:

- Digital preservation
- Digitization for preservation and/or access
- Intellectual property / Open access

⑤ Impact on Institution and Insights

- Stronger working relationships between divisions and departments: Digital Initiatives, Preservation, Arts and Archives, and Library IT.
- Broader awareness of the complexity of digital curation and importance of digital preservation.
- Membership/subscription based solutions bundle technology and resources together in a way that may create a vulnerability.

- Direct influence on organizational infrastructure helps establish a strong foundation.

⑥ Continuing Questions and Next Steps

- How can we encourage long-term adoption of documentation?
- How do we open up the process to create buy-in at a University level?
- What committees or groups should be established to distribute responsibility and ensure sustainability?
- How do we increase resources for technological infrastructure to create balance with organizational infrastructure?

Category	Document	New/ Updated	Status	Summary	Library Status
Digital Preservation	Digital Preservation Strategy	New	Final	Overarching framework listing in what areas the library will be responsible for digital preservation with broad guidelines. Borrows heavily from the University of North Texas Libraries' Digital Preservation Policy Framework.	Preliminary approval from library administration to begin implementation in fall 2016.
Digital Preservation	Digital Preservation Solutions Rubric	New	Final	Weighted rubric in spreadsheet format of different possible hosted solutions. Based on the data accumulated for this rubric, we recommended joining the MetaArchive collaborative which appears in the Six-Year Strategy document.	Approved by both library and central IT. Contract being finalized.
Digital Preservation	Six-Year Strategy for Digital Preservation	New	Final	Recommends joining the MetaArchive collaborative, a LOCKKS implementation for cultural heritage materials. MetaArchive's contract period is 3 years, hence the six-year in the title.	Approved by both library and central IT. Contract being finalized.
Digitization for Preservation and/or Access	Collections Prioritization Methodology for Collections With AV	New	Draft	Collection-level rubric in spreadsheet format weighted by fragility of medium and importance of collection, to assist in prioritization for preservation reformatting. To be used in combination with the instructions for use in the Methodology for Prioritizing Collections for Digital Reformatting.	Preliminary approval from library administration to begin implementation in fall 2016.

Digitization for Preservation and/or Access	Methodology for Prioritizing Collections for Digital Reformatting	New	Draft	To be used in combination with the Collections Prioritization Methodology for Collections With AV rubric. Explains the scoring system and philosophy behind the rubric. The proposed scoring system is derived from The Field Audio Collection Evaluation Tool (FACET), MediaRIVERS (Media Research and Instructional Value Evaluation and Ranking System), and the Preservation Self Assessment Program (PSAP). FACET and PSAP are used to address the scoring of formats while MediaRIVERS is used to inform the scoring of a collection research and instructional value. Segments to be dropped into grant applications and reports. Sections describe the unique and rare collections, our Archives & Special Collections and library, and new digital preservation program. Previously we had no digital preservation program and so in recent years, as such a program became a requirement, were not able to apply for major grants	Preliminary approval from library administration to begin implementation in fall 2016.
Digitization for Preservation and/or Access	Repurposable Grant Documentation	Updated	Draft	Previous digitization projects (since 1998) occurred on an ad hoc basis as funding became available through donors or other sources. Recognizing that donors will still appear in a less predictable manner, these guidelines can help prioritize more systematically, and make the case both for and against specific projects.	Preliminary approval from library administration to begin implementation in fall 2016.
Digitization for Preservation and/or Access	Selection Guidelines for Digitization Projects	New	Draft	As projects increasingly include materials best suited to outsourcing (audio and video in particular), this document lays out the responsibilities of specific library staff positions for projects to proceed in a consistent manner.	Preliminary approval from library administration to begin implementation in fall 2016.

Intellectual Property / Open Access	Deed of Gift	Updated	Final	Existing document updated to include digitization for preservation and access, and a more nuanced intellectual property discussion, drawing heavily on the 2012 ARL Model Deed of Gift	Preliminary approval from library administration to begin implementation in fall 2016.
Intellectual Property / Open Access	Intellectual Property Analysis Procedure	New	Draft	Procedure for moving through the process of determining intellectual property status of potential candidates for digitization. Modified version of a paper by Sara Harrington, Lauren Boegen, and Megan Lewis as part of the UMD Certificate in the Curation and Management of Digital Assets.	Preliminary approval from library administration to begin implementation in fall 2016. Looking to consult with University Counsel.
Intellectual Property / Open Access	Intellectual Property Strategy	New	Draft	Developed in order to legally and ethically facilitate the addition of Libraries-held content to the Libraries digital content platforms Modified version of a paper by Sara Harrington, Lauren Boegen, and Megan Lewis as part of the UMD Certificate in the Curation and Management of Digital Assets. Draws heavily on guidelines from Cornell and Arizona Historical Society, and Levine Knies & Pike's 2014 Archival Practice article.	Preliminary approval from library administration to begin implementation in fall 2016. Looking to consult with University Counsel.
Intellectual Property / Open Access	Mahn Center for Archives & Special Collections Reproduction Request and Use Form	Updated	Final	Existing document updated to remove usage fees (reproduction fees remain). New emphasis on user's responsibility for determining copyright status, with added indemnification clause. Models used include Yale's Beinecke Library and University of Virginia.	Preliminary approval from library administration to begin implementation in fall 2016.