

Documenting a Pandemic from Your Living Room: Preserving and Making Accessible the Born Digital Records of the University of San Francisco COVID-19 Response Collection While Sheltering in Place

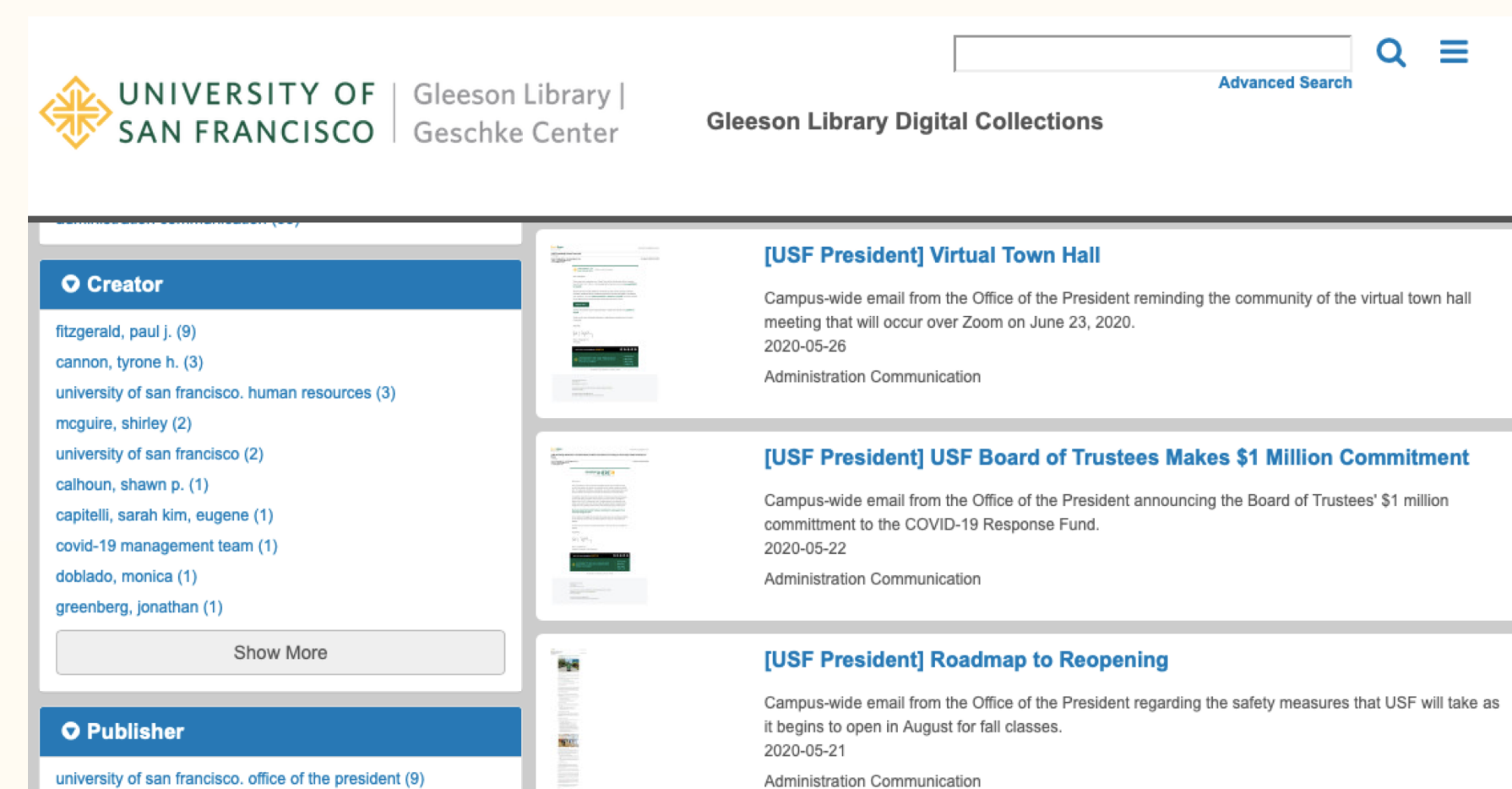


UNIVERSITY OF
SAN FRANCISCO

Gleeson Library |
Geschke Resource Center

Project Context

- Global effort by libraries, archives, and cultural heritage institutions to document community response to the COVID-19 outbreak
- Collaborative effort between Special Collections & University Archives, Digital Collections, and the Scholarship Repository departments at the Gleeson Library | Geschke Center at the University of San Francisco
- March 2020, we started to capture, track, and catalog born digital records of the USF campus-wide response to COVID-19 (emails, web pages, documents, social media posts, media articles, and videos) while sheltering in place
- Developed completely new workflows for processing and describing born digital records, previously not in place
- Started upload of files and their corresponding metadata to CONTENTdm



Goals

- The Special Collections & University Archives department at Gleeson Library seeks to preserve and provide access to born digital materials that tell the story of the USF community reaction to the Coronavirus pandemic.
- We aim to create a resource of enduring value for educators, researchers, students, and the public.

Collection Description

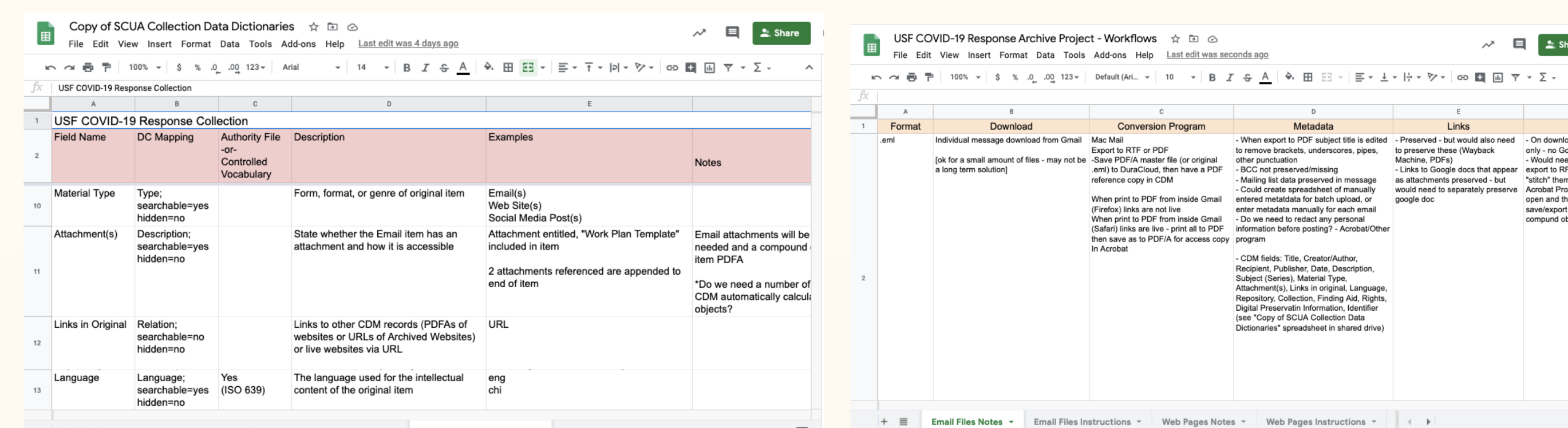
The USF COVID-19 Response Collection documents the developing response by USF administration, faculty, staff, and students to the Coronavirus pandemic. It includes official administration communications, news items, faculty panel discussions, student-created media, web pages and social media posts. The collection will be updated as new content is processed.

Challenges

- Accessioning, processing and preserving active, dynamic records
- Collaboration and access to technology while working remotely
- Project research was put on hold due to priority projects related to reopening Gleeson Library
- Staff furloughs

Workflows

- Developed completely new workflows for processing and describing born digital materials
- Created accessible, interlinked collection records using item level metadata fields and collection level search facets in CONTENTdm
- Developed born digital records preservation strategies using PDF/A formatting, WARC file preservation, and original copy/readable copy file preservation (Adobe Acrobat, Wayback Machine, DuraCloud)
- Implemented metadata creation strategies using best practices built on Dublin Core and LCAF
- Developed interdepartmental communication and task management strategies while working remotely utilizing Slack, Google Drive, and Airtable



Status

- Continuing to build the collection as new content is being generated, informing our program on feasible electronic records management practices
- Mid May soft launch of the collection
 - Currently, identified and/or captured:
 - 116 emails from Administration and other campus offices
 - 100 web pages (some with multiple iterations)
 - Posts from the official USF, @usfca Instagram and Twitter accounts
 - Student documents (ASUSF declarations and Foghorn newspaper articles)
 - In the R&D phase of preservation and access best practices for social media posts (tools considering; WebRecorder, wget, twarc, WARCcreate, Instagram-scraper, Instaloader, and CrowdTangle)

Future Steps

- Continue building the collection while keeping in mind what resources are needed (staff, technology, etc.)
- Keep an eye towards capturing diverse perspectives and reactions
- Configuring a user submission process
- Design digital humanities projects with educators, students, and researchers
- Potential collaborative research projects with other institutions on best practices for preserving websites and social media
- Develop policy for future digital records archiving projects

If you are interested in collaborating with us, please contact the University Archivist at University of San Francisco. To view the USF COVID-19 Response Collection, please see our digital collections page:
<https://digitalcollections.usfca.edu/digital/collection/p15129coll18>



Acknowledgements

- Gleeson Library Digital Collections and Scholarship Repository departments
- Gleeson Library student workers and interns
- SAA webcast course (2017), *Introduction to Email Preservation DAS: Foundational*

Our collection is currently included in the International Internet Preservation Consortium's *Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)* Collection in Archive-it, listed in the SAA Web Archiving Section's project inventory, and recorded in Documenting the Now's *Documenting COVID-19* project list.



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