Emory Libraries
Digital Collections Steering Committee
Policy Suite

Last Revised: March, 2018

EMORY
LIBRARIES &
INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY

Digital Collections Development Policy

Document Status: Final
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Reviewed by: Digital Library Program Steering Committee, Digital Collection Steering Committee
Approved by: Library Cabinet
Date Approved: March 2018
Revision Cycle: 3 years
Last reviewed: March 2018
Next Revision: March 2021

Purpose

Emory Libraries' digital collection and preservation efforts are designed to ensure long-term access to an increasing volume of materials that have intellectual significance and long-term value, and to deliver digital collections in an environment that allows for ease of searching, browsing, retrieval, and reuse. The Digital Collections Development Policy parallels and aligns with the collection development policies and practices governing development of Emory Libraries' other collections (e.g., physical/analog as well as born digital), which support teaching, learning, and research needs of faculty, students, and staff.

For this policy, a digital collection is defined as an aggregation of digital materials managed collectively and based on provenance, function, format, or subject. These include digital materials created by Emory University, unique born digital materials collected and stewarded by Emory Libraries, and published digital materials that require local hosting and rights management.

This policy statement describes what streams of content are appropriate for deposit into Emory's preservation repository. Individual libraries across campus are responsible for determining what content, physical or born digital, is in scope for selecting and acquiring based on subject relevance and archival value. However, the Digital Collections Steering Committee (DCSC) and its subcommittees serve as the collection development and collection management arm of Emory's preservation repository in order to document and guide digitized and born digital content's preservation and dissemination efforts.

Principles for Building Digital Collections at Emory

Emory Libraries' digital collections will:
- Support the curriculum, research, and teaching missions of the university
- Enhance and widen access and use, both nationally and internationally, of Emory's rare and unique collections
- Ensure the long-term preservation and support of Emory Libraries' digital collections.

Selection of Materials for Preservation

Selection is based on traditional collection development principles including authority, originality, curricular and research relevance, timeliness, breadth and/or depth of coverage, demand, and support of Emory's distinctive collections.

Materials included in Emory's preservation repository will be evaluated for broad and enduring value. Added value components to be considered include:
- degree of integration in an online environment;
- intellectual control (metadata);
- improvement of resource sharing;
- advancement of collaboration;
- enhancement of access;
- intrinsic research value; and
- rarity or uniqueness of assets/content.

Emory Libraries considers the following criteria to identify materials for ingest into Emory's preservation repository for purposes of preservation and/or display.   More specific guidance on preservation characteristics is reflected in the **Digital Preservation Policy.** In order for Emory Libraries to consider ingesting digital collections into the preservation repository for long-term access, the digital collections should:
- Have a plan for dissemination which includes the potential for either making the material widely accessible, either now or in the future, or providing restricted access to rare, at-risk materials not otherwise available;
- Be unique or have significant research value or mitigate inherent risks for materials in analog formats. This might encompass intellectual content, carrier/format, or digital enhancements. This potentially includes preservation copies of rare, fragile, or unique collections for long-term access or data analysis, and materials that are at risk of being lost due to an obsolete media or file format;
- Meet our ethical obligations and align with existing collection policies and standards, including Emory's Open Access Policy and donor agreements;
- Abide by relevant legal statutes governing preservation and distribution of these materials, including U.S. Copyright Law;
- Meet the guidelines for descriptive metadata outlined in the Core Metadata Standards[1]; and
- Be reviewed and approved by the Digital Collections Development Committee. Proposals with a sense of timeliness (e.g. coincide with University event, historical milestone, important anniversary) may be prioritized over others.

Digitization Criteria

Analog materials that need to be reformatted into a digital format for ingest must meet the above criteria and the additional digitization criteria below:
- Digitization of collections should enhance the intellectual value and utility of the existing print or audiovisual collection and/or create copies of rare, fragile, or at-risk collections for long-term access purposes.
- Material to be digitized should not have been digitized and made available elsewhere unless digitization by Emory will add significant value.

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[1] Core Metadata Standards can be found at http://metadata.emory.edu/

- The DCSC is responsible for prioritizing digitization as it pertains to ingest into Emory's preservation repository. Proposals with a sense of timeliness (e.g. coincide with University events, historical milestones, or important anniversaries) may be prioritized over others.

Digital Preservation Policy

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Approved by: Library Cabinet
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Purpose

Emory's Digital Preservation Policy outlines the general principles upon which Emory Libraries will ensure long-term access to its digital collections for the Emory University community. This policy is an integral part of Emory's overarching digital preservation strategy which makes explicit Emory's development and evolution of a comprehensive digital preservation program. This work is done in support of Emory University's mission "to create, preserve, teach, and apply knowledge in the service of humanity."

Scope

Emory's preservation repository's digital preservation activities are intended to preserve the digital collections of Emory University. This includes content that originated in digital form (born digital) and content that has been converted to digital form through digitization. Emory's preservation repository is responsible for securing, providing the means to preserve, and ensuring long-term access to Emory's digital collections.

Not all of the digital collections Emory Libraries creates or acquires are appropriate for inclusion in Emory's preservation repository. For more information about content that may be included in Emory's preservation repository, please refer to Emory Libraries' Digital Collections Development Policy.

Characteristics for Preservation

In order to ensure long-term access to digital collections that Emory Libraries stewards and/or owns, the Libraries prioritize certain characteristics of digital objects for preservation. While all the characteristics listed below should be preserved by the repository, some are necessary to ensure that digital collections are accessible for the long-term.

Primary characteristics are those components of digital objects the depositor must provide to ensure that object can be ingested into and preserved by Emory's preservation repository. These characteristics are essential to future generations accessing the object.

The primary characteristics of digital objects are:

The intellectual content of the object. Typically, this means the content-bearing digital files with which a consumer interacts. This will include all supplemental materials and the relationship between those materials, as can be determined from metadata or other context at the time of ingest.

The descriptive metadata associated with the object. All materials considered for preservation must have sufficient descriptive metadata, per the adopted and Library Cabinet-approved Core Metadata Guidelines[2]. Descriptive metadata is essential to ensure that if content is not usable, future generations can determine what the digital object is and how it may be accessed and used.

The copyright and license status of the object. Emory Libraries should determine, to the best of its ability, the copyright status of the object and whether any contracts or licenses, such as a Creative Commons license, Deed of Gift or Sale, or other permissions, govern the use and distribution of the physical, born digital, or digitized copy of the object. The digitization, preservation, and distribution of objects should abide by U.S. Copyright Law and any relevant license or contract terms. While these characteristics are used to control access to the digital object, they are also preserved themselves to ensure future generations can determine how the digital object can be accessed and re-used.

Secondary characteristics are those components that help place the digital object in context and ensure its integrity to future generations. Secondary characteristics require either some or all of the primary characteristics to exist before they are generated.

Secondary characteristics identified for preservation are:

The chain of custody of the object. Starting as early as possible, but at the very least at the moment of ingest into the repository, the history of the digital object including transformations or changes to it should be preserved. Better understanding the history of the digital object and changes to it over time ensures the object's integrity for future generations.

The object's representation. The binary data of digital objects alone is insufficient to make it interpretable to humans. Therefore, additional information must be collected about the digital object's representation, including the relationships between the parts of itself, to re-create the digital object's structure. Information that relates the digital object to other objects within the repository, or other digital objects within the collections, should be included at the time of ingest.

Fixity for the object. Fixity is the method by which digital objects are reviewed to ensure validity and integrity is maintained. Regular monitoring and reporting on the fixity of digital objects ensures that files are attended to as part of the preservation process. Therefore, Emory's preservation repository will keep sufficient fixity information on the digital objects to ensure at any point in the future the objects remain complete and uncorrupted.

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[2] Metadata Guidelines at http://metadata.emory.edu

Compliance

Compliance with the criteria noted in this document is necessary to ensure digital objects are subjected to the full extent of preservation activities allowed for by Emory's preservation repository. Failure or partial compliance with this policy does not necessarily mean that a digital object cannot be ingested into the repository, however failure to meet the criteria outlined here may result in an inability to guarantee the digital object is preserved. Requests for ingest and any exceptions must be submitted to the Digital Collections Steering Committee (DCSC). All decisions by DCSC to ingest digital objects into Emory's preservation repository must be documented.

Digital Object Retention Policy

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Reviewed by: Digital Library Program Steering Committee, Digital Collection Steering Committee
Approved by: Library Cabinet
Date Approved: March 2018
Revision Cycle: 3 years
Last reviewed: March 2018
Next Revision: March 2021

Purpose

Emory's Digital Object Retention Policy outlines situations in which Emory Libraries must remove or update digital objects in Emory's preservation repository as part of normal business operations or as Emory Libraries' missions and collecting areas change with time. The purpose of the Digital Object Retention Policy is to identify under which circumstances a fully ingested digital object may be versioned, deleted, or decommissioned from Emory's preservation repository. Digital objects will not be considered fully ingested at the time of deposit, but only after the appropriate processing of the digital object has been completed.

Defining Retention

All digital objects included in Emory's preservation repository are intended to be retained permanently upon ingestion. Emory's preservation repository will not be used as a temporary storage facility for digital objects.

Retention does not refer to the act of versioning, deleting, or decommissioning an object that hasn't completed ingestion (e.g. deleting a digital object a user created by mistake, or correcting metadata as part of a mediated deposit workflow). Instead, retention refers to the act of versioning, deleting, or decommissioning a fully ingested digital object so the original digital object will no longer be accessible.

Versioning

Defining Versioning

Versioning is the act of updating or editing a digital object that has been ingested into Emory's preservation repository. It is assumed previous versions of the digital object will be retained within the repository for administrative and preservation purposes, but only the most recent version of the digital object will be accessible to users of the repository.

Principles of Versioning

A version is created when digital objects' primary or secondary characteristics are modified. Primary and secondary characteristics are defined in the Digital Preservation Policy and are listed below for convenience:

Primary Characteristics
- The intellectual content of the object.
- The descriptive metadata associated with the object.
- The copyright and/or license status of the object.

Secondary Characteristics
- The chain of custody of the object.
- The object's representation.
- Fixity for the object.

Versioning Procedures

Versioning of a digital object may be performed by a designated digital content steward or authorized depositor. The reasons for versioning the object should be captured by Emory's preservation repository within the metadata of the digital object itself.

Decommissioning

Defining Decommissioning

Decommissioning is the act of removing a fully ingested digital object from the inventory of Emory's preservation repository. Decommissioning assumes the digital object's primary and secondary characteristics will remain within the repository, however it won't be accessible to end-users of the repository (i.e. the digital object will be considered dark).

Principles of Decommissioning

Decommissioning can only occur for digital objects that meet one or more of the following criteria:
- The digital object does not further the mission of Emory's preservation repository; or
- The digital object is unnecessarily duplicated in Emory's preservation repository; or
- The digital object no longer retains its integrity, identity, or authenticity; or
- The right to distribute the digital object becomes unclear or unknown.

Before any digital object is recommended for decommissioning, reasonable efforts shall be made to ascertain that Emory Libraries has the right and responsibility to decommission the object.

Decommissioning Procedures

A designated digital content steward may recommend decommissioning a digital object if, in their best judgment, one or more criteria for decommissioning has been met. The recommendation must be made in writing to Emory's Digital Collection Steering Committee. In special circumstances, the University Librarian may make decisions on decommissioning and those decisions should be documented as well. Such recommendations will specify the source and/or provenance of the digital object and the reason for decommissioning. Digital Collection Steering Committee approval is required for actual decommissioning.

Once the object has been decommissioned from Emory's preservation repository, a tombstone page[3] indicating the object is not available should be put in its place. To avoid confusion, the object's persistent identifier should not be re-used. The recommendation for decommissioning should be recorded alongside the now dark digital object.

Deletion

Defining Deletion

Deletion is the act of removing the primary and secondary characteristics of a digital object from Emory's preservation repository. Deleting a digital object assumes that the digital object will no longer be maintained, preserved, or stored in Emory's preservation repository.

Principles of Deletion

Deletion can only occur for digital objects that meet one or more of the following criteria:
- Emory Libraries agrees to delete a digital object because its rightful copyright owner has issued a demand to do so or Emory received an order from a court of competent jurisdiction; or
- Emory Libraries determines that the deletion of the digital object is in the best interest of Emory Libraries; or
- Emory Libraries determines that another entity is the rightful owner of the digital object.

Before any digital object is recommended for deletion, reasonable efforts shall be made to ascertain that Emory Libraries has the right and responsibility to delete the object.

Deletion Procedures

The Digital Collection Steering Committee may recommend deletion of a digital object if, in their best judgment, one or more criteria for deletion has been met. The recommendation must be made in writing to Emory's University Librarian. Such recommendations will specify the source and/or provenance of the digital object and the reason for deletion. The University Librarian's approval is required for deletion from Emory's preservation repository.

Once the object has been deleted from Emory's preservation repository, a tombstone page indicating the object is no longer available should be put in its place. While the intellectual content files will be deleted, descriptive and administrative metadata may be retained for repository administrators for the purposes of recording the circumstances for deletion or to prevent future re-ingest attempts. Finally, to avoid confusion, the object's persistent identifier should not be re-used. The recommendation for deletion should be recorded and displayed alongside the descriptive and administrative metadata for the digital object.

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[3] A tombstone page is defined as a user facing page that is generated when content has been decommissioned or deleted. The page should not explain why the content has been removed or even that there was content, instead it should be similar to a 404-error page and provide contact information should the user believe they have reached the tombstone page in error.

Third-Party Dissemination Policy

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Next Revision: March 2021

Purpose and Scope

In order to expand access and discoverability and enhance preservation of Emory University's digital collections, digital content may be shared with third-party preservation and access services. This policy outlines considerations for making digital objects and/or components of a digital object available to third-party services. Although Emory's preservation repository may disseminate stewarded content to third-parties for access or preservation, Emory University will continue to own and/or steward its digital collections.

This policy does not address the preservation of licensed resources, which is addressed in Emory Libraries' general collection policy; only digital content locally owned or stewarded by Emory University in Emory's preservation repository is governed by this policy. Also out of scope is Emory University's use of Archive-IT, an Internet Archive tool for web archiving, because Emory's use of the service is not dissemination-based. Finally, this policy does not address which components of a digital object are disseminated to third-party services, this may be determined by the service itself.

The recommendation to join or contribute to third-party services should be made by the Digital Collections Steering Committee (DCSC) in consultation with the leadership of Emory's preservation repository and submitted to the University Librarian and Libraries Cabinet for approval.

Dissemination for Access

Recognizing that users may desire multiple channels for accessing Emory University's digital collections, it is recommended that digital collections be as widely shared and/or discoverable as possible. Digital content in the public domain, or for which Emory University has copyright, should be shared with appropriate third-party services. Preservation copies of all disseminated digital collections will be maintained in Emory's preservation repository.

Emory Libraries will share metadata and/or digital content with third-party repositories and portals as part of collaborative digitization projects (e.g., the ASERL Civil War Project) so as to further expose relevant Emory University digital content. Any requirements from grant or collaborative efforts for distribution of Emory University's collections should be vetted using the criteria below by the DCSC in consultation with the leadership of Emory's preservation repository.

The following general criteria are used to determine whether Emory University's digital content should be provided to a third-party dissemination service.

- **Open Access:** The third-party service should not put digital content behind a pay wall or be commercialized.
- **Facility of Ingest:** The third-party service's method of ingest for digital content should be documented and easily integrated into Emory's preservation repository.
- **Recognition of Emory:** The third-party service should allow for identification of Emory University as the contributor so as to highlight its contribution to the greater corpus, potentially leading researchers to more deeply explore Emory University's unique digital collections; digital content should be able to be grouped as Emory collections.
- **Accessibility:** The third-party service should allow for access to digital content in widely-accepted file formats (preferably formats which facilitate accessibility for visually impaired users).
- **Ownership of Content:** The third-party service should allow Emory's preservation repository to retain preservation copies of submitted digital content.
- **Protection of Patron Privacy:** The third-party service should not require personally identifiable information to use the digital content and should only report use at an aggregate level.
- **Search Capability and Functionality:** The third-party service should provide search and discovery tools that allow users to locate and manage their searches and the digital content.
- **Variety of file formats:** The third-party services should support the ability to export a variety of file formats for users to access and download digital content.
- **Availability of content:** The third-party service should make digital content available to a wider audience rather than restricted to institutional members.

Dissemination for Preservation

In some cases, digital content owned or stewarded by Emory Libraries and deemed to be of significant historical and intellectual value may be preserved by a third-party service.

Criteria for choosing preservation services

Emory Libraries will evaluate a third-party's capacity to provide preservation for digital objects. General considerations for choosing a third-party service or vendor include:

- **Transparency:** The third-party service provider should offer transparency and disclosure of the policies and strategies it uses for preservation.
- **Business model:** The third-party service provider should exhibit economic sustainability and viability, transparency in business operations and costs, and provide a clearly defined service level agreement and/or terms of service.
- **Standards:** The third-party service provider should align with industry standards.
- **Ownership/Stewardship of Content:** The third-party service should allow Emory's preservation repository to retain or retrieve preservation copies of submitted digital content.

Other considerations that may be used in deciding whether or not to preserve Emory University's digital collections with a third-party service include:

- **Uniqueness of digital content:** Rare or unique digital content that is one of a kind or not present in other repositories (digital or physical).
- **Technical considerations:** Capability to preserve digital content that was either difficult or impossible to digitize or that would cost more to re-format than it would to preserve in the third-party service.
- **Monetary considerations:** Digital content whose scholarly or cultural heritage significance far outweighs the cost to preserve within the third-party service.
- **Legal considerations:** Before depositing content into a third-party service, Emory University should ensure that it has the legal rights to preserve and distribute the digital content with a third-party service.