DCSC Digital Preservation Commitment Document

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The Digital Preservation Commitment Document outlines the Libraries' level of stewardship and preservation for produced or acquired digital content. This commitment policy is maintained by the Digital Collections Steering Committee (DCSC), who will review it for adherence to the policies and guidelines of the Digital Collection Development Policy. It will be reviewed at least once a year. The DCSC must review all requests for material ingest (in whatever format) into the repository.

Technical specifications regarding preservation (e.g., file formats) are to be developed by the Digital Library Program's Digital Preservation Working Group.1

Decisions on commitment levels are not immutable; digital collections may be periodically reviewed by the DCSC to determine if a change in commitment level is warranted.

A separate dissemination and distribution document will outline current practices and recommendations for distribution and dissemination of content, both internally and externally.

All materials considered for preservation must have sufficient descriptive metadata, per the adopted and Cabinet-approved Metadata Working Group guidelines (http://metadata.emory.edu). There are established specifications for preservation-grade metadata for specific content types (audio, video, still images, born digital disk images) as utilized by the Keep and DAMS systems. However, MARC records for legacy digitized materials must include accepted fields to document permissions for digitization of content.

Policies and Parameters for Preservation of Digital Assets

Long Term Commitment
A long-term preservation commitment signifies LITS's intention to maintain an archival copy of the digital object in the preservation repository and provide researcher access to it (when permissible) in perpetuity. This commitment can require that the original content be migrated, transformed or normalized into another stable format to assure long term access. This Preserved content should be in widely used formats that are well documented, which conform to Emory's best practices guidance for file formats. Format guidelines are to be developed by the DLP Digital Preservation Working Group noted above. Master's copies, from which access copies can be re-generated, will be preserved.

1Retention policies (i.e., policies outlining the nature of retention of digital assets) will be in elaborated upon in a separate document.
Criteria:
- Digital objects belonging to Emory Libraries collections (acquired by, purchased for, or donated to) with enduring value as resources, evidence, or artifacts.
- Emory-digitized and born digital material for which Emory has secured rights and permissions or for which Emory is the corporate author
- Digitized materials for which the original object is at high-risk for loss
- Digitized or born digital material that is in high demand for the long term

Examples of material in this level (not exhaustive):
- Electronic Theses and Dissertations
- Digitized resources of original collection material that is nearing obsolescence or in danger of deterioration (such as digitized audiovisual material)
- Library documentation and data (e.g., library surveys, annual reports, special reports)
- Digital resources created by Emory and deemed to be of long-term value
- Unique manuscript or archival collections

Medium Term Commitment
A medium-term preservation commitment signifies LITS’s intention to maintain the digital object in the preservation repository and provide access to it for time-bound demand. This commitment can require that the original content be migrated, transformed or normalized into another stable format to assure preservation. Periodic review should occur at regular intervals by the DCSC to determine if content still meets criteria for medium term preservation, including whether the file formats still conform to Emory’s best practices guidance. Material in this designation will be retained for no more than 10 years. This content should be in widely used formats that are well documented, which conform to Emory’s best practices guidance for file formats.

Criteria:
- Digitized or born digital materials that will be in high demand for several years, but with limited long-term impact
- Digital materials that, during their limited lifecycle, need to retain their viability and authenticity
- Digital materials that, during their limited lifecycle, will possibly need to be migrated from one format to another, with the preservation repository being an intermediary step

Examples of material in this level (not exhaustive):
- Selected open educational resources (such as Coursera class videos)
- Library learning objects (guides, tutorials, recorded webinars)
- Grant-funded digital project content
- Research datasets purchased and housed/served at Emory, per license agreements

No Preservation Commitment
No preservation commitment signifies that the materials are not candidates for preservation, and that LITS will not maintain the digital object in the preservation repository.

**Criteria:**
- Little to no demand for long term preservation, but possible demand for working storage
- Low risk of loss or risk of loss is irrelevant due to nature of the materials
- No right to reproduce or make available or discoverable for either access or preservation due to security or privacy concerns

**Examples of material in this level (not exhaustive):**
- Purchased or licensed resources that are hosted or served by vendor/publisher, or by an agreed to third party (e.g., Portico, CLOCKSS)
- Materials to which Emory holds no rights to reproduce or disseminate for either preservation or access purposes
- Non-Emory material in Emory digital projects (e.g. partner content such as GSU maps included in Atlanta Maps)
- Born-digital objects belonging to Emory Libraries or ECDS that are working copies or purely transactional in nature (e.g. Photoshop edited copies of digital images produced by Exhibits team)

**Guidelines for Preservation by Third Parties Preservation of Digital Resources**

LITS also has responsibility for working externally through consortial action (e.g., CLOCKSS, Portico, Digital Preservation Network [DPN]), licensing agreements, etc. to assure that someone (possibly, but not necessarily, Emory) carries out preservation so that Emory faculty, staff, and students will have adequate ongoing access to these resources for which we have purchased archival access. Particular emphasis should be given to resources that exist in digital form only.

In some cases it may be proposed that digital resources created or acquired by Emory and deemed to be of long-term value should be preserved by another institution or organization (e.g., HathiTrust, Digital Preservation Network, Portico).

For research data, Emory has established a relationship with the Dataverse Network at UNC’s Odum Institute, which maintains long-term preservation of Emory research datasets deposited therein\(^2\). Note that Emory will evaluate the third party capacity to provide long-term access to digital files, metadata, and functionality in order to ensure that the resources will be preserved at least as well as they would be by Emory, and at an equal or lesser cost. Issues that must be taken into account include:

- Shared obligations and cooperative preservation.
- Information sharing. (e.g., transparency and disclosure of vendor policies and tactics)

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\(^2\) The signed Data Deposit Agreement between Emory and the Odum Institute at UNC-Chapel Hill outlines the responsibilities of each organization for the stewardship of research data in the Emory Dataverse.
• Technology support (e.g., reuse of same migration paths and strategies by others; following emerging common/recommended practice).
• Development of minimal standards for capture, management, and maintenance (to enable efficient strategies).