Digital Collections Team 2024-25

Overview:

The Digital Collections Team works to determine policy and workflows for the production and publishing of digital collections to produce a consistent, engaging user experience for patrons across the Library's web platforms and discovery services. The team encourages ownership of and communication regarding digital collections and staff and faculty investment in their excellence across the library.

Library KPIs:

- Digital Collections (Primary)
  - Extant digital collections
  - Newly created digital collections
  - Total pages/items
  - Usage of digital collections (see Web Properties)
  - Web Properties
  - Fellowships

Objectives (includes timebound goals and projects):

Guidelines and procedures are created for the digital archive drive and Special Collection & Archive's born-digital collection development processes.

- **Why:**
  - Improve the documentation and effectiveness of our digital preservation practices
- **How:**
  - Review digital archive drives for documentation and organization
  - Procedures for born-digital collection development discussed, drafted, and revised using feedback from team
- **Success looks like:**
  - 80% of our digital archive drives will be reviewed and improved with documentation and organization by the end of the 2025 Spring Semester.
  - Procedures for born-digital collection development processes are communicated and supported by the team.
- **Fall Update:**
  - With a new digital archivist onboarding and developing workflows, this has not been a focus for fall 2024.
  - Once high priority Archive-It needs have been fulfilled, the team will coordinate a presentation with Rebecca Hastings to ensure the group understands how the software functions and other digital preservation opportunities we can explore, in addition to the above goals of digital archive drive review and improvement.

- **Spring Update:**
  - Most high-priority web content has been successfully captured using Archive-It in advance of the university website overhaul. A few additional capture requests may still come in as we approach the transition date.
  - We've begun considering additional applications for Archive-It beyond archiving the main university site. While no major expansions occurred this year, this remains an area of interest for future development.
  - The Spec partition of the Archive Drive remains in solid shape and continues to meet current needs. The general partition still requires review and organizational cleanup. Minimal progress was made on this front during the year, and further work is recommended in the coming year.

Review Digital Collections for accessibility of media files and improve with additional connective, interpretive material.
- **Why:**
  - Improve the quality and accessibility of our digital collections in light of the upcoming DOJ ADA rule change deadline
- **How:**
  - Review digital collections media files for accessibility, particularly alt text and transcript availability
  - Identify and address any accessibility issues that may be discovered, and discuss and institute accessibility improvements as necessary
- **Success looks like:**
  - 100% of our digital collections are Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 Level AA accessible, meeting the new DOJ ADA requirements for title 2
- **Fall Update:**
  - All of the four monthly Digital Collection Team meeting and the six bi-weekly check-in meetings have centered on gauging the current accessibility of our digital collections in anticipation of the DOJ ADA ruling. Work has included overviewing the ruling and it's definition of terms, conducting a survey of a sample of digital collections, testing accuracy of Python tools for generating alt text descriptions and beginning a conversation around changing metadata description practices in the future.
  - Some elements of digital collections, like maps and data visualizations, remain challenging for accessibility. Since no widely accessible solutions exist for these materials, the WCAG AA Guidelines do not provide explicit requirements for them.
  - This process also involved creating transcripts for 230 audio files that previously lacked transcriptions over the summer of 2024.
- **Spring Update:**

- Using the Taylor Wilderness Research Station Archive and the Context Podcast Digital Collections as launchpads, the Digital Collection Team and Devin Becker collaborated to improve the accessibility of the Oral History as Data template and standardize it closer to our central digital collection templates.
- After an attempt at interdepartmental testing was unsuccessful, the team collaborated to create two accessibility testing devices on Linux laptops equipped with Orca screen readers for testing library web sites.
- The team has hired and will supervise a student worker throughout summer of 2025 to transcribe the remaining 60 LCOH audio files.
- Presentations were given about an iteration of an AI computer vision Python tool that could be used to describe photos for alt text fields or simply extract text from images, and it's strengths and weaknesses. Special collections is experimenting with other AI workflows on collections that will be published this summer and opportunities with these tools continue to be of interest in the coming year.

Improve user engagement with our digital collections through use of web statistics

- o **Why:**
  - To measure and improve upon user experience and user acquisition for our digital collections
- o **How:**
  - Use Google Analytics and other data sources to evaluate engagement throughout the collections and make improvements to areas where necessary/available
- o **Success looks like:**
  - Using analysis of user behavior, revisions are made to our digital collections infrastructure that improve engagement and/or acquisition of users for our digital collections
- o **Fall Update:**
  - While this period did undertake an extensive redesign for the digital collections browse page and updates across all digital collections, these were driven by a need to update template elements and the development of a new tool which allows the patron to search across collections. That said, one of the goals for this Spring period can be using analytics to track how users are engaging with the browse and search pages to inform a possible redesign. Analytics Dashboard Report templates were developed for easier reading and recording of metrics.
- o **Spring Update:**
  - Implementing analytics, accessibility standards and intuitive navigation, the digital collections team undertook redesigning and rewriting the Digital Collection Docs Page, the Digital Collection Browse Page, the base template

About Page, the Special Collections Page and completed the search tool, which included opting in all applicable digital collections to this functionality.

- Formalizing the Digital Collection Lauch Checklist and incorporating GA4 QR codes into outreach material over the course of this year has also helped us to understand what types of campaigns are most effective.

Unit/Team Metrics:
- o ~~# of digital archive folders reviewed for documentation and organization~~
- o ~~% of archive drive documented~~
- o ~~# of published documentation for preservation workflows and guidelines~~
- o *# of digital collections meeting WCAG 2.1 AA*
    - *Fall update: 133 (Latah Oral History Collection still pending transcripts)*
    - *Spring Update: 139 (Latah Oral History Collection still pending transcripts but this process is underway over the course of summer 2025)*
- o *% of media items with transcripts made available*
    - Fall update: added 145, 99.25% increase of items previously missing transcripts (All but LOHC)
    - Spring update: added 123
- o *% increase in size of digital collections*
    - Fall update: 3.08%
    - Spring update: 4.51%
- o *Web engagement statistics :*
    - *Fall update: from Combined Digital Collection Report, Aug.15-Jan. 1*
        - Total users: 105,155
        - New users: 98,693
        - Views: 517,251
        - Views per user: 4.94
        - Sessions: 178,531
        - Average session duration: 00:03:22
        - Engaged sessions: 98,508
        - Engagement rate: 55.18%
    - Spring Update: from Digital Properties (www.lib.uidaho.edu/digital/ + cdil.lib.uidaho.edu) *Jan.2-June 10th*
        - Total users: 64,070
            - o 16.7% increase
        - New users: 58.256
            - o 14.8% increase
        - Views: 322,483
            - o 12.6% increase
        - Views per user: 5.08
            - o 5.08 decrease

- Sessions: 88,281
  - 18% increase
- Average session duration: 00:03:53
  - 63.6% increase
- Engaged sessions: 51,303
  - 18.1% increase
- Engagement rate: 58.11%
  - .1% increase
  - *# and type of record revision contacts ("contact us about this record")*
    - *Fall update: 3*
    - *Spring update: 29*
  - *# of visits to digital collections' contextual/interpretive content*
    - Fall update: 3,692
    - Spring update: 4,666
      - 13.6% increase

Possible Revisions/Additions to Objectives for 2025-2026

Work in progress from discussion with next year's digital collection team lead Rebecca Hastings.

- Enriching About Pages
- Improving image quality on some collections
  - Such as Iddings Lantern Slide
  - Thinking about watermarked images and rescanning
- Same archive drive objective but maybe more precise language
- Accessibility – feeling good on audit and transcripts but thinking about rubric for taking on university wide materials. What is reasonable to maintain and how do we communicate that?
- Accessibility – testing on devices that we have set up with screen readers. What does the testing look like?
- Accessibility – formalizing Alt Text processes
- AI – Can we use our own tools and refine the Python iterations for extracting text and describing images? Better than working with third party tools and keeps us communicating about developing tech.

Overall: thinking about how to lessen the impact of possible data emergencies in the future.

Membership:
- Ariana Burns

- Kevin Dobbins
- Rebecca Hastings
- Dulce Kersting-Lark, Ex-Officio
- Maryelizabeth Koepele
- Kelley Moulton
- Zoe Stave
- Andrew Weymouth (Lead)
- Evan Williamson

Reporting to:
- Associate Dean, Research & Instruction