Bryn Mawr College Digitized Collections Development Policy

I. Mission

Bryn Mawr College's digital collections support the overarching mission of the Library & Information Technology Services (LITS) division to enhance the educational mission of the College and to preserve its material heritage. Digital collections promote teaching and learning by removing barriers to the access of primary sources. When students and faculty can access digital collections online, they are empowered to conduct research, interact with, and reuse primary sources in creative new ways via self-service discovery interfaces. Digital collections are used in diverse ways by the College community, such as in the creation of digital exhibits and data visualizations.

Through its digital collections, the College especially seeks to preserve, elevate, and improve access to narratives of diverse, marginalized, and historically underrepresented communities at the College. By taking an active role in the creation of digital collections, LITS also seeks to counteract histories of exclusion while continuously being mindful of the potential for harm to those represented in the historical record. LITS is committed to partnering with students and faculty in the creation of new digital collections to fulfill this mission.

II. Context and definitions

The *Digitized Collections Development Policy* establishes the criteria for determining what collections will be digitized, preserved, and made accessible. Programmatic digitization is the production of preservation-quality digital objects from existing analog originals according to a coherent digital collections strategy. The creation of high-quality digital surrogates equates to the creation of a new collection object which, like its physical counterpart, requires ongoing stewardship. For this reason, any digitization that is done with the intention to provide long-term access requires project management, strategic planning, and collaborative decision making. Considerations for digitized objects include storage and access needs, file formats, technical specifications, file-naming conventions, metadata requirements, quality assurance procedures, and preservation management procedures. These considerations are detailed at length in the *Special Collections Digitization Guide*.

III. Scope

Inclusion in the digital collections equates to a commitment to provide long-term preservation as well as current or future access to that content. To responsibly meet this commitment, the scope of the digital collections is necessarily more narrow and restrictive than that of the physical collections. Collecting priorities are set to support the College's academic programs, existing or emerging College strengths, and the teaching and research interests of students and faculty across the College, and as a consequence will change over time. The digital collections are particularly focused on women's history, including women's rights and education; student life and activism; social justice; and College history. Aside from the thematic focus, inclusion in the digital collections must satisfy the selection criteria provided in Section IV: Selection and Acquisition.

IV.   Selection and Acquisition

The following criteria apply to digitized materials that are candidates for inclusion in the digital repository and related digital preservation workflows. Potential contributors of digital content should coordinate with LITS in advance to establish the correct protocols, such as technical specifications and metadata guidelines.

Five of the following criteria are required for an item to be considered for digitization and/or inclusion: significance, cost, cataloging and metadata, non-duplication, and completion. Meeting the other selection criteria, while not required, will assist with the prioritization of projects by strengthening the case for or against inclusion.

1. **Significance and uniqueness (required)**
   - Materials that align closely with the *Collection Management Policy* and the broader mission of the College
   - Materials that hold high research value for current and potential users
   - Rare or unique items that represent subjects of existing or emerging strength or interest at the College
   - Materials that help to counteract traditional absence or erasure in the collections

2. **Cost (required)**
   - The following cost factors have been considered and determined to fall within budget; or, if the budget is exceeded, special permission has been granted:
      (1) Cost of local and offsite (cloud) storage
      (2) Cost of maintenance and expected cost of migration over time

3. **Cataloging and metadata (required)**
   - Item is adequately described (i.e. cataloged with a bibliographic record or processed with a finding aid)
   - If description is lacking, staffing can be allocated for all of the required descriptive work
   - Metadata adheres, or can be enhanced to adhere, to TriCo metadata guidelines

4. **Restrictions**
   - There are no donor-imposed, copyright, or other legal restrictions preventing reproduction and/or dissemination
      (1) Some copyrighted or otherwise restricted items may be considered if they can be embargoed or if display and download can be restricted to a low-resolution derivative

        (2) Orphan Works (works for which the copyright holder cannot be located or identified) will be considered case by case, utilizing a risk management approach

5. **Non-duplication (required)**
   - Materials are not already freely or commercially available online.
     - (1) An exception to this is if new digitization would improve upon the quality of the existing image or metadata. For example, employing digitization techniques to reveal hidden inscriptions in manuscripts, or scanning photographs at higher resolutions to conform to current preservation standards.

6. **Completeness (required)**
   - Materials are a complete collection that can stand as a coherent whole, or the item is a complete work, i.e. cover-to-cover book or an entire archival folder
     - (1) Thoughtful sampling may be permitted if item-level metadata would benefit plates in books or if the entire archival folder is not significant or relevant. If portions of an item have deliberately not been digitized, this should be indicated in the description.

7. **Use**
   - Increase access to otherwise restricted materials
   - Promote underused collections to new users
   - Frequently requested materials that would benefit from remote, self-service access and improved discoverability through cross-collection search and browse
   - There is a defined set of anticipated users or uses for these materials
   - There are clear connections to research and teaching at the College

8. **Preservation**
   - The analog object is fragile or deteriorating and digitization or reformatting would reduce handling of the physical object.
     - (1) Conservation work may be required if the process of digitization or reformatting would put the original materials at risk.

9. **Outreach**
   - Supports outreach and educational initiatives of the College
   - Promotes collaboration with other institutions who share the same mission

10. **Relationship to other collections**
    - Item relates to other items already in the College's digital collections and will improve research or increase research value in a specific subject area

- Links the College's collections with geographically dispersed materials at other institutions

11. **Funding**
    - Fulfills a grant or donor request
    - Potential to attract funding

12. **Monetary value**
    - Digitization is done for insurance purposes

V. Excluded/Out-of-Scope

The following list of excluded items may be revisited later for inclusion if capacity increases or priorities shift.

1. **Scan-on-demand requests**
   Digitization done in response to scan-on-demand faculty, student, and researcher requests will generally not be eligible for inclusion in the digital collections unless the materials have been evaluated carefully to confirm that they meet the scope and selection criteria described above. Scan-on-demand image files are stored temporarily and purged on a monthly basis.

2. **Low-quality digital assets**
   Digital assets that do not meet the technical specifications outlined in the *Special Collections Digitization Guide* may not be accepted into the digital collections. This includes low-resolution or overly compressed files, overcropped images, illegible images, etc.

3. **Copyrighted and sensitive materials**
   Copyrighted and personally sensitive materials will not be included unless permission is secured or they can be safely embargoed. Low risk copyrighted materials may be made accessible at low resolutions.

4. **Datasets**
   Datasets require specific technical infrastructure to support and are not currently a part of the collecting priorities.

VI. Deaccessioning

Deaccessioning is the process by which digital assets are removed from the digital collections. An item or an entire collection may be deaccessioned if:

- It is found to no longer have enduring value for the College.
- It can no longer be properly preserved or managed due to storage limitations.
- It is a duplicate (i.e. versions of the same file).
- It has become corrupted.

These decisions will be made transparently and on a case-by-case basis.

VII.   Copyright and Open Access Policy

U.S. Copyright law protects creators' rights to control the use of their works for a limited period of time. Creators have exclusive rights to reproduce, distribute, perform, and display their works, and to create derivative works. In addition to copyright protections, some materials may be subject to restrictions because of privacy and publicity rights, trademark, purchase agreement, or donor stipulation. Foreign-made works may be subject to foreign copyright laws.

Bryn Mawr College does not hold blanket copyright to all of its digital collections. Access to the digital collections is provided under the Fair Use (17 U.S. Code § 107) exception of U.S. Copyright law (U.S. Code, Title 17) for the purposes of "criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research." In keeping with fair use principles, copyrighted text and images may be provided for access at low resolutions, and copyrighted audiovisual content may be IP embargoed or only available to view on campus.

The College will make every effort to provide open access to public domain content and content to which it holds exclusive rights or has been granted permission by the copyright holder(s) to make freely accessible. These categories of content will be made downloadable at high resolutions at no charge. In some cases, the College may be granted permission by the copyright holder(s) to make content accessible but not downloadable at high resolutions. Any relevant restrictions will be indicated in the item's description.

Reproduction and publication of materials protected by copyright for purposes beyond that allowed by fair use require the written permission of the copyright holder. Ultimate responsibility for assessing copyright status and for securing any necessary permission rests exclusively with the user. The Special Collections department will provide limited assistance with copyright and permission to publish inquiries. Rights and Reproductions inquiries can be made via the **online form** or by contacting **repros@brynmawr.edu**.

VIII.   Takedown Requests

Bryn Mawr College makes every effort to conform with copyright, privacy, confidentiality, and donor restrictions before content is made accessible. If you are a rights holder and have not granted permission, or are the subject of materials that have been made accessible on this site, you may request these materials be removed or embargoed.

A takedown request may be initiated by:

- The individual or organization who is the copyright holder.
- The individual or organization who is the subject of the record containing personal or confidential information.

- A legally authorized agent representing the copyright holder or record subject.

To submit a takedown request, please contact **repros@brynmawr.edu**. You will be asked to provide the following information:

1. Name
2. Email
3. Phone Number
4. URL to the record(s)
5. Reason for Request
6. Supporting documentation

Upon receiving a request, the content in question will be temporarily embargoed and an investigation into the claim will begin. A resolution will be communicated in writing to the address provided within one month. If an infringement or privacy violation is determined to have occurred, the item(s) in question will either be permanently removed or embargoed until the applicable rights have expired.

IX.   Roles and Responsibilities

Digital Collections and Metadata Librarian: Responsible for the curation and description of digital assets across their lifecycle and the management of digitization and reformatting projects.

Special Collections Curators and Archivists: Responsible for the selection and acquisition of digital assets through the process of collection development and records management.

X.   Policy Revision

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the appropriate members of the Library & Information Technology Services staff.

XI.   Resources

1. Amherst College. (2013, September 23). *Digital Collection Development Policy*. Retrieved from https://www.amherst.edu/library/services/digital/digitalcolldev
2. Dartmouth College. (2012, May 7). *Selection Policy for Digitization Projects*. Retrieved from https://www.dartmouth.edu/~library/digital/about/policies/selection.html
3. NISO. (2007). *A Framework of Guidance for Building Good Digital Collections*. Retrieved from https://www.niso.org/sites/default/files/2017-08/framework3.pdf
4. Science History Institute. (2019). *Digital Collections Policy*. Retrieved from https://digital.sciencehistory.org/policy

5. Swarthmore College. (2016). *Swarthmore College Libraries' Digital Collection Development Policy*. Retrieved from https://www.swarthmore.edu/sites/default/files/assets/documents/libraries/policy-digital-collections-October2016.pdf
6. Zeigler, S. L. (2019, August 9). "Digitization Selection Criteria as Anti-Racist Action." *Code4Lib Journal, (45)*. Retrieved from https://journal.code4lib.org/articles/14667