**WIU Case Study**

**April 2014**

1. **Institution Bio and Back Story**

**Metrics- Institutional Level**

**Number of students and faculty (Fall 2013)**

Students: 11,707 Total Employees: 1890

Undergraduate: 9873 Faculty: 720

Graduate: 1834 Administrative Staff: 317

Staff: 853

**Endowment and Budget:**

Endowment: $46 million

Total Budget: $241.6 million

Appropriated Budget: $52.76 million

**Carnegie Classification:**

* Undergraduate Instructional Program: Prof+A&S/HGC: Professions plus arts & sciences, high graduate coexistence
* Graduate Instructional Program: S-Doc/Ed: Single doctoral (education)
* Enrollment Profile: HU: High undergraduate
* Undergraduate Profile: FT4/S/HTI: Full-time four-year, selective, higher transfer-in
* Size and Setting: L4/R: Large four-year, primarily residential
* Basic Master's L: Master's Colleges and Universities (larger programs)

**Four Degree Granting Colleges:** Arts and Sciences, Education and Human Services, Business and Technology, Fine Arts and Communication

**Degrees Offered:** B.A., B.S., B.B., B.S. Ed., B.F.A., B.S.W., B.S.N., M.A., M.S., M.S. Ed., M.F.A., M.M., Ed. S., Ed.D.

**Metrics –** Library Level

**Size of library:**

* Number of faculty and staff: 39 staff; 15 librarians; 4 graduate assistants; 2 administrators
* Total Operating budget: $5.01 million
* Number of volumes: Approximately 800,000
* Size of digital collections: Approximately 2 TB

**Staff:**

• Number of staff in Digitization Unit: 2. Additionally, approximately 40 hours of student work is allotted each week. Archives/Special Collections Unit faculty and staff also offer occasional assistance to the Digitization Unit. Nobody is assigned to specifically digital preservation as a responsibility.

• Organizational role: The organizational roles of people whose duties include digital preservation (broadly understood) include the Digitization Unit coordinator, one library specialist (metadata), the Director of Archives/Special Collections, and a handful of student workers.

• No single person is responsible for digital preservation. It is simply part of the workflow for the aforementioned employees. All staff members involved with digital preservation devote less than 20% or less of their time to digital preservation work.

Digital preservation technologies currently in use:

* ARCHON (EAD finding aids)
* ContentDM
* Library purchased cloud storage
* Campus wide IT backup (tape storage)
* External hard drives, personal storage space.

**Defining Moment:**

There was never one specific moment that I realized we had a problem with digital preservation. It was a gradual realization that as we continued to digitize materials in house (primarily photographs, maps, manuscripts) that we were creating our own problem. It was always in the back of my mind, but it was never serious enough for me to do anything about it. It was not until the opportunity to join this grant presented itself that I actually actively thought about our desperate lack of preparedness for short and long term digital preservation.

1. **Self-Assessment Results**

WIU Libraries has minimal policies regarding electronic materials in the library. We have a library-wide disaster plan, but digital materials are only given cursory attention. Our plan relies heavily upon campus IT, and we have no control over their disaster planning and readiness. We have been involved in digitization initiatives (mostly the scanning of photographs from Special Collections) since 2003. We started a stand-alone Digitization Unit in 2008, but it was given neither the budget nor adequate staffing to become a comprehensive digitization operation.

To date we have approximately 2 TB of digital materials in WIU Libraries. They are stored in an embarrassing mish-mash of locations, and we do not have a great grasp over the materials. Almost all of our digital materials are analog items we have digitized. We have very little born digital items in the Libraries at this time. (Though this promises to change in the future as we are asked to take over administrative control of non-current materials from our Visual Productions Center and campus PBS television station.)

We do not currently have a true digital repository system at our institution. We use ContentDM through our CARLI membership to present many of our digital collections, but we are aware that this is not a true preservation system. Other than that, our digital preservation network is cobbled together though campus wide IT, internal library solutions, and external hard drives and cds. In short, these solutions are definitely not ideal.

Our university recently hired its first Chief Information Officer, and he has already shaken up the way IT is handled on campus, including centralizing many of the campus wide functions. It is unclear how this will play out long term, but the library is represented on the IT advisory board by a very talented individual who is able to articulate the library’s needs effectively.

1. **Policy Gap Analysis**

**Where We Are**

In short: Wayward. We have not had enough coordination among our library units to centralize our processes and procedures as they relate to digital preservation. Digital initiatives began in the Archives and Special Collections Unit, and we relied upon our Systems Unit to assist with much of the back end work. This worked well enough to make the materials accessible to users, but preservation was never considered. When WIU Libraries added a dedicated Digitization Unit it was more because library administration knew enough to know that we needed some sort of centralized digitization center, but not really what it should look like and how it should function. The end result is a half-hearted attempt at a digitization program, and one which overemphasizes one aspect of digitization (the actual production of digital items) at the expense of another aspect (digital preservation.)

What WIU Libraries needs to do is to study the entire digital library cycle and allocate resources to each area more equitably and wisely.

**Where We Want to Be**

The greatest concern with using the plural ‘we’ in this heading is that I am not convinced that there honestly is a ‘we’ in this discussion. At this point it’s more ‘I’, and I simply do not have the ability to get everything done that I feel is necessary. But I would say that my colleagues agree that we need much better policies and procedures for our digital initiatives. We need more comprehensive digital collection development policies, both for digitized analog materials and for born digital items.

Furthermore, we need to find a way to have our voice heard on a campus wide platform. This is even more so the case after records management was transferred to University Libraries in 2011. We do not have a mandate to act as I believe we should to fulfill our records management requirements, particularly as it relates to digital records. Finding a way to make our voices heard and to acquire the additional resources we need to follow the laws is a significant challenge, but it’s a direction in which we must proceed.

We also need to be aware of digital preservation-themed legislative mandates coming down to the state universities. This is, thankfully, on the central administration’s radar for the moment, and we need to keep the pressure on to make appropriate recommendations benefiting University Libraries as WIU’s primary digital information warehouse.

**The Gap**

Not surprisingly, WIU’s primary barriers to building and sustaining a proper digital preservation program are staff and resources. Collectively we probably have enough people on our current staff who have the expertise to handle the various aspects of digital preservation, but there has not been an institutional commitment to assign to those individuals the duties. With a 2013 change in administration at WIU Libraries we have a Dean who is aware of the problem and has a genuine interest in exploring ways to solve the problem, but to date no faculty member has a workload assignment specifically dedicated to our digital library. Two classified staff members lead the program. Beginning in 2014 our Digitization Unit will report directly to a faculty member, and this is likely to improve the staffing situation.

Financial resources are an entirely different kettle of fish. There is no way we have the resources to buy a turnkey digital preservation solution. It’s possible it might work if we could negotiate a consortial package and we were able to secure a commitment from our central administration. I foresee no way in which we could absorb that expense from our current appropriation. We have not investigated any open source solution due to the extensive programming and maintenance requirements needed to get something up and running. Our greatest hope for establishing an appropriate digital preservation program rests in our new dean being successful in lobbying central administration for new resources to make it a reality. I, for one, am not hopeful this is likely.

**Digital Preservation Policy/Program Proposal**

**Mission/Scope**

University Libraries identifies, collects, organizes, preserves and provides access to information resources and services to support the University's commitment to academic excellence, educational opportunity, personal growth and social responsibility. This same mission extends into our digital initiatives. We are the designated depository of institutional knowledge, and much of this information now comes digitally. WIU Libraries also has a special commitment to preserving the history and culture of a sixteen county are in west central Illinois. We digitize and make available to our region’s communities important materials documenting daily life and customs. We consider it our obligation to preserve these digitized materials for our regional partners.

**Digital Preservation Workflow**

Selection. Selection will be performed by the appropriate subject specialists and/or unit and department heads in accordance with established collection development policies for those collections and units. In most cases this will be the Head of Special Collections, in consultation with the Coordinator of the Digitization Unit.

**Acquisition**. Initial acquisition of relevant born-digital files will be performed by the appropriate subject specialists and/or unit and department heads in accordance with established collection development policies for those collections and units. Additionally, scanning to create digital objects is performed by Digitization Unit staff in accordance with their policies. Individual units and content creators are responsible for furnishing relevant files in appropriate formats for preservation to the Digitization Unit for long-term preservation.

**Curation**. (Managing files and metadata): File management will be completed in the selected system, governed by collections-based policies for availability, access, and metadata creation. Metadata will adhere to professional standards (i.e. MARC, MODS, EAD etc.) with a goal of single entry of metadata promulgated across multiple systems if necessary to promote metadata promiscuity. Preservation metadata will be system-generated (i.e. Archivematica/Curator’s workbench), based on policies set in coordination with collection managers and Digitization Staff.

**Archiving**. Digital Unit staff will be responsible for the archiving of digital files, in consultation with individual collection managers to ensure appropriate metadata assignment and access levels, providing packet-level metadata, and uploading packets to the selected storage solution.

**Storage**. Storage needs to be locally redundant and geographically redundant; accessible to relevant staff only; live networked storage (rather than static CDs/DVDS/Hard drives/external drives); scalable; affordable. We will likely rely upon a mixture of library storage and campus storage; we expect cooperation between campus IT and the library to meet our needs.

**Retrieval.** This has not yet been discussed.

**Strategy**

**Communication & education.**

1. Administrators: Particularly central administration knows nothing about this issue.

ii. Colleagues who are stakeholders: Office of Sponsored Projects. Faculty. Library liaisons.

iii. Content providers: University Archives and Special Collections. Digitization Unit. Other campus content providers as appropriate.

**Allocation of resources.**

1. People: Director of Archives and Special Collections. Systems librarian. Digitization Unit Coordinator. A Scholarly Communications librarian (which we do not have) is desperately needed to coordinate all of this.

ii. Budget : We will need budget for: On-campus redundant servers. Dedicated hard-funded allocation for digital preservation activities. Regular budget for local servers/storage space and redundant campus backup. Budget for subscription fees for geographically disparate offsite digital storage, and possibly for a robust digital preservation management system.

1. **Lessons Learned**

This entire process has served as a major learning opportunity for me. I learned how complicated digital preservation is, I learned how far off the radar it is for most people, and I learned how very much I am in the same boat as so many colleagues.

If and when we fully implement a digital preservation program at my institution it will require a level of user education I have never before encountered. From doing my campus survey to information conversations with colleagues it is crystal clear that very few people understand what digital preservation truly involves and how such a program looks.

I will be curious to see how digital preservation all pans out on our campus. There are still so many unknowns- will there be a statewide system, will we have to go it alone, will there be a sub-sect of institutions taking on this task? The entire process has been incredibly enlightening. I have looked at problems from entirely new perspectives and delved deeper into this singular issue than I ever thought I would.