All Hands on Deck!
at the Duke Libraries’
Digital Production Center

by
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Overview

1. The “Before Times”
   How the DPC operated and what we worked on

2. Pandemic Shift
   Changes to schedules and to priorities

3. Looking Ahead
   Management, communication, and moving forward
Introduction to the Digital Production Center

- Located in Perkins Library next to the Duke Chapel
- Four full-time staff
- One intern, and one student worker
The Before Times
All Work On-Site

Because everything **was** on site!

- Capture equipment
- Collection materials
- QC equipment
Collection-level Digitization

- Projects were planned
- Entire collections were digitized
- Based on their alignment with DUL’s strategic mission
Pandemic Shift

Changes we made to stay safe and adapt workflows for shifting priorities
Preparing to Stay at Home

- Returned materials to Special Collections
- Covered equipment
- Brought home calibrated monitors to perform QC
Fully-remote Tasks

- Lots of quality control
- Updated much needed documentation
- Cleaned up disk spaces
- Training and professional development
Pivot to hybrid schedule

- Adapted hybrid schedule to minimize number of staff on site at same time
- Capture performed on site
- Quality control performed off site
- Requested space to expand department footprint
Safety Considerations

- Developed protocols for cleaning space and equipment
- Provided individual equipment and materials for the staff and volunteers
- Secured an extra capture room to further spread out staff
Shifting Priorities

- Moratorium on all digital collection and digital preservation projects
- Focused all resources on supporting Special Collections’ patron and instruction requests
- Developed and implemented Folder-level digitization workflow
What is Folder-level Digitization?

- Amplified version of instruction/patron request scanning
- Entire folders scanned, instead of just single items
- Now, the folder is the item/object
- Implemented just in time for the closing of the RL reading room when Covid arrived
Q: What do the following now share in common?

A: All could be considered “folders” under new model.
Folder-level workflow

**RLAS**
Works with patrons to identify materials, preps, and delivers materials to DPC

**Conservation**
Repairs and/or preps materials for digital capture

**DCCS**
Ingests files to the digital repository, applies metadata, publish

1. **DPC**
Reviews materials, ID conservation issues, determines digitization method

2. **DPC**
Digitizes materials, QC files, delivers files to patrons, preps for ingest

3. **Conservation**

4. **DPC**

5. **DPC**
Key Benefits of this Model

**Efficiency**
- Improved workflow
- Eliminates repeat requests

**Preservation**
- Reduces wear on materials
- Entire folders ingested to DDR

**Access**
- New digital collections
- Researchers receive materials without needing to visit
Staffing Adjustments

- We needed help to keep up with patron requests
- Recruited volunteers
- DPC staff pivoted from production mode to training mode
Onboarding During a Pandemic

- Documentation
- Video trainings
- In-person training

Wash your hands!

- Wash hands:
  - before handling any special collections
  - after snack breaks
  - Dry hands thoroughly
  - Do not apply hand lotions
  - Refrain from touching face

- Wear clean, well-fitting gloves when handling metal objects, photographs, and film-based material.
Looking Ahead

Accomplishments and Lessons Learned
Highlights and Accomplishments

- Wrote an NEH grant to digitize *Behind the Veil* while fully-remote
- Expanded our footprint
- We stayed super busy!
79,549
New files created by the DPC—27% increase from pre-pandemic years

431
Patron requests completed—446% increase

172
New collections launched—30 from patron requests

Fiscal Year 2020-21
Some last thoughts

**Change Management**
- Transparency
- Empathy
- Clarity

**Hybrid model works in the DPC**
- Safety
- Flexibility
- Morale boost

**Communication**
- Ongoing
- Manage expectations
- Advocacy
Does anyone have any questions?

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*Inspected and approved by Conrad and Claire Baker (Giao’s kids), and Jen’s bees. Nov 4, 2021*