Special Collections of the Libraries of The Claremont Colleges
Digital Projects Plan

Our special collections digital projects are a vital part of the Digital Library program of the Libraries of The Claremont Colleges. In order to manage effectively our digital projects and ensure their sustainability, we need a plan that addresses strategies for choosing projects; guidelines and procedures for the digitization process; a plan for both the maintenance of and sustainable access to digital projects; and a budget and staffing levels appropriate for supporting our digital project goals.

I. Special Collections Digital Project Goals
The special collections of the Libraries of The Claremont Colleges contribute digital collections and projects to the Claremont Colleges Digital Library program under the following broad guidelines:

- Projects that help establish the Libraries’ distinctive identity by digitizing our unique, owned collections and library-created exhibits
- Projects that promote our institutional objectives: Supporting learning, teaching, and research at The Colleges to further intellectual discovery, critical thinking, and life-long learning
- Projects that benefit our primary user community and the scholarly community at large
- Projects that have a potential for wide appeal

II. Digitization Criteria
We will choose collections to digitize based on the following criteria, organized into two broad categories: considerations that impact the potential value of digitization and considerations that affect the feasibility of digitization.

A. Value of Digitization
1. Scholarship
We recognize a growing expectation from the scholarly community for electronic means to locate and access archival and special collections materials.

2. Faculty Involvement & Classroom Use
Collections will be chosen for digitization based on their potential for integration into the classroom environment and to be a valuable source of teaching materials. Just as we solicit input from faculty on collection development, we must also seek faculty advice with our digital projects, in recognition that students’ study is in great part driven by faculty requirements.

3. Preservation and Use
Highly used and fragile collections are priority. Digitizing a collection and providing alternative access to it decreases use of the original materials, therefore facilitating preservation.

4. Public Relations
Collections that have potential value due to “famous” associations; collections that are unique to Claremont and the region; collections that have intrinsic and/or monetary value; and collections that give the Claremont Colleges prestige in the scholarly community are candidates for digitization.
B. Ease of Digitization

1. Copyright Clearance
Our digital projects will emphasize items and collections for which copyright infringement is not an issue including collections we own, collections produced by The Colleges and therefore owned by The Colleges, collections that have entered the public domain, and collections for which the Libraries own copyright.

2. Collection-Based
A collection-based approach to choosing projects for digitization takes advantage of the organization and description that exists for a collection and requires little if any curatorial attention. Decisions to digitize all or parts of a collection will be made on a case-by-case basis and will be based on what serves the collection and the user best. For the foreseeable future, we will not digitize entire books.

An exception to this is web exhibits. Special collections librarians prepare approximately six library exhibitions of our collections each academic year; exhibits may be in the Libraries or in other campus locations. We are committed to creating library exhibits because they contribute to study and debate at the Colleges, complement courses being offered, and advertise our collections. As resources and time allow, the DPS will work with the librarian(s) who prepare exhibitions to create web-based counterparts to library exhibits. Web exhibits may duplicate the library exhibits or they may showcase items related to but not included in library exhibits. Web exhibits will not be ephemeral, as library exhibits are, but remain available as part of the Digital Library. As such, they are subject to the digitization criteria detailed in the Special Collections Digital Plan, as are all of our digital projects.

3. Processed
In order to create proper metadata to allow for optimum usability, collections that are organized, described, and processed fully will be given greater priority.

4. Size and Scope
When choosing collections to digitize, the size of the collection, the types of formats in the collection, the metadata needed, advance work that may be required to prepare the collection for digitization, and available staff and budget for the project will all be weighed.

III. Digital Assets Management – Under development