I. Purpose/Context
This policy formalizes the University at Albany Libraries’ commitment to preserving and providing access to digital content created and acquired by the Libraries. The Libraries recognize that digital content poses distinct preservation challenges that require a policy beyond what is used for traditional analog materials. The policy supports the Libraries’ mission to “promote intellectual growth and creativity by developing collections, facilitating access to information resources, teaching the effective use of information resources and critical evaluation skills and offering research assistance.” The policy advocates the adoption of accepted standards and technologies used in the library and archival professions, with the assumption that these are subject to change over time.

II. Objectives
The Libraries aim is to provide long-term access to its digital content. In order to ensure long-term access, the Libraries will adopt standardized practices developed by library and IT professionals. The Libraries’ objectives are as follows:

a. Maintain and develop processes and systems to capture, manage, preserve, find, and make accessible digital content now and into the future
b. Create metadata necessary to preserve digital content
c. Preserve authentic, accurate, and reliable digital content
d. Provide persistent access to digital content over time
e. Demonstrate auditable compliance with the development of the standards and practice of the digital preservation community
f. Provide technical specifications for hardware and software to preserve digital content

III. Scope
This policy addresses all aspects of preservation of digital content for which the Libraries are the primary custodian. Digital preservation decisions are made on the basis of the Libraries’ collection development policy, this Policy, the enduring value of the digital content, and the feasibility of preserving the digital content. When possible, decisions about the need for preservation are made at the time of creation or acquisition of digital content. Particular emphasis will be given to resources that exist in digital form only. The Libraries will also inform, consult, and coordinate with other units of the University as necessary to assure that University at Albany faculty, staff, and students will have adequate ongoing access to administrative, scholarly, and other digital content created at the University. The Libraries, however, cannot guarantee preservation for content that we do not own and manage.

IV. Principles
The University Libraries adheres to the following principles to guide digital preservation activities:

a. Manage digital content with the understanding that long-term access is the primary goal, which will be supported to the best of our ability given available technology and resources.
b. Create digital content with supporting metadata to establish authenticity and provenance, and ensure they are unaltered and the original content is preserved.
c. Commit to life cycle management of digital content, which includes making decisions regarding retention, use, and preservation at the acquisition, licensing and/or creation stage.
d. Participate in collaborative agreements that are a good use of library resources, and maintain responsibility for preservation when working externally through consortia action, licensing, or contracted services.

e. Document and maintain rights management actions and applicable copyrights associated with digital content.

f. Observe current standards and best practices related to the creation, maintenance, storage and delivery of digital content and metadata as determined by the digital preservation community.

g. Define, plan and implement digital preservation activities that make best use of University resources to ensure that the program is cost-effective, transparent and auditable over time. Recognize that sustaining digital content requires active management and a long-term financial commitment to be successful.

h. Commit to staff training and development in areas related to digital preservation, as well as outreach to inform faculty, students and staff of best practices for creating and maintaining digital content.

i. Develop and maintain necessary hardware, software, expertise and protocols to ensure long-term access to digital content.

j. Evaluate external initiatives that seek to provide preservation services for subscribed or purchased digital content and participate when such services are cost-effective.

V. **Selection and Acquisition**

The selection of digital content is made by archivists, curators, and appropriate subject librarians and is subject to the same criteria for selection and preservation set forth in the Library’s collection development policy ([http://library.albany.edu/subject/cdp/](http://library.albany.edu/subject/cdp/)). The Library will support access and give highest priority to digital content that are selected for long-term preservation.

VI. **Access**

Digital preservation provides long term access to digital content. Access is the delivery of services and functions that support users in determining the existence, description, location and availability of digital content. Users will utilize the identification and description of relevant information, and receive information, which can be local or remote and might include interactions with external systems.

Digital content might have defined restrictions for access and use. Access restrictions vary and might be determined by the donor, copyright, legal requirements, deed of gift, privacy concerns, or a project’s mission and pertain to the legal framework, licensing terms, and access control.

VII. **Long-term Storage**

The preservation of digital content of enduring value will require conversion of file formats that are chronically obsolescent and subject to continuous migrations over time. Preservation services necessitate the management of data storage: services are guided by the technical considerations and best practice to maintain appropriate technologies.

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