

# **Spartan Archive: Building a Permanent Home for Electronic Institutional Records**

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**Abstract:** In 1969, the Michigan State University Board of Trustees established the University Archives & Historical Collections with a mandate to collect and preserve the historical records of the university. This mandate extends to critical institutional records now created solely in digital form. But as with other archival repositories, the MSU Archives faced a lack of technical resources and the challenge of re-thinking archival workflow in a digital world. In 2009, NHPRC funded the Spartan Archive project to develop policies and procedures to appraise, ingest, process, describe and preserve institutional electronic records.

During the course of the project, the MSU Archives will build a permanent electronic archive and design a public interface to access the archived digital records. The project will focus on three large electronic record series produced by the Registrar's Office: the catalog of Academic Programs, the Description of Courses offered each semester, and the annual Student Directory. The Spartan Archive will be based on traditional archival principles in combination with the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) reference model for long-term digital preservation and access. For data management, the Integrated Rules-Oriented Data System (iRODS) distributed data grid system will be utilized. The MSU Archives will collaborate with our designated communities; including faculty and staff from MSU's administrative and academic units, current undergraduate and graduate students, and alumni, throughout the project. Progress will be shared with archivists at the Big Ten universities through the Committee on Institutional Cooperation's (CIC) University Archives Group (UAG). On project completion, the new preservation environment will be extended to include other electronic records of enduring historical value to MSU. This poster illustrates the project plan and expected outcomes for the three-year Spartan Archive project.

## **About the authors:**

**Cynthia A. Ghering** received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Western Michigan University in 1991 and Master of Science in Archives and Records Management from the University of Michigan in 1999. Prior to assuming her present role at the Michigan State University, Cynthia spent nearly a decade with the Ohio Historical Society where she started as the Collection Access Coordinator, cataloging and digitizing archival, library and museum materials, then becoming Head of the Manuscripts and Audiovisuals Department and later the Assistant Director of the Curatorial and Collections Services Department. In January of 2008, Cynthia became the third Director of MSU's Archives and Historical Collections in its 40-year history. As part of the University's Libraries, Computing and Technology unit, MSU Archives and Historical Collections maintains responsibility for the preservation and access to the University's historical and business records and over 1,000 non-university historical collections for the research and study of Michigan State University, central Michigan, agriculture, farming, lumber and automobile industry. In 2009 NHPRC funded the Spartan Archive project to develop policies and procedures to appraise, ingest, process, describe and preserve institutional electronic records. The University Archives also provides records management training and services to academic and administrative units and facilitates public access to these collections both onsite and online. Cynthia is the chair of a cross-institutional

team investigating the university's digital curation practices and is co-chair of the University Collections Committee.

*Lisa Schmidt* is Electronic Records Archivist at the Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections. In October 2007, Lisa began working for MATRIX: Center for Humane Arts, Letters, and Social Sciences Online, a digital humanities research center at Michigan State. Her work at MATRIX included an NHPRC-funded project to assess and improve the preservation practices for the H-Net academic e-mail lists. In a joint appointment with the MSU Archives as digital preservation analyst, she engaged in a project exploring digital curation practices at the university. She is now working full time on electronic records projects for the MSU Archives. These include such projects as managing the development of the NHPRC-funded "Spartan Archive" preservation environment for electronic institutional records and creating appraisal, transfer, and storage plans for the university's digital content of enduring value. Lisa received an MS in Information Studies from the University of Texas at Austin in August 2007. Prior to joining the information studies field, she enjoyed a successful career as a high technology marketing communications professional in the San Francisco Bay Area and Austin. She also holds a BA in history and an MBA, both from the University of Texas.