

**Spartan Archive:  
An Electronic Records Archive at Michigan State University  
NHPRC Project #RE-10025-10**

**CIC Quarterly Report, July 1, 2010–September 30, 2010**

In late 2009, the Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections (UAHC) received a three-year, \$251,079 grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) to develop policies and procedures to appraise, ingest, process, describe, and preserve institutional electronic records. The original grant proposal and supporting documents for the project, “Spartan Archive: An Electronic Records Archive at Michigan State University,” may be found at [http://www.archives.msu.edu/about/sap\\_project\\_documentation.php](http://www.archives.msu.edu/about/sap_project_documentation.php). In the spirit of sharing models and lessons learned for better management of university electronic records and digital assets, and as required in NHPRC’s performance objectives for the Spartan Archive project, UAHC is sharing quarterly progress reports with the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) and soliciting feedback from colleagues at other universities.

Project team members include Cynthia Ghering, director of UAHC and project director; Lisa Schmidt, electronic records archivist and project manager; Ed Busch and Whitney Miller, archivists; and Ajay Patel, information technologist from Administrative Information Services (AIS) and project technical advisor. Note that Michael Babcock, an original team member who represented technology services for the Office of the Registrar, has left that position; the Office of the Registrar is in the process of assigning a replacement.

The Spartan Archive project team undertook the following activities during the reporting period:

***Spartan Archive Project Workplan***

- Creation of project advisory committee
- Search for Project Information Technologist (PIT)
- Introduction of regular Spartan Archive team meetings
- Survey of community needs and expectations
- Preparation for implementation of Archivists’ Toolkit
- Electronic records workflow: accessioning
- iRODS workshop arrangements

***Presentations and Proposals***

- Society of American Archivists (SAA) 2010 Research Forum (Poster)
- Best Practices Exchange 2010
- Midwest Archives Conference (MAC) 2011 session proposal
- Digital Preservation Management Workshop, invitation to present
- SAA 2011 session proposal

***Publications***

- *State News* article
- *MSU News* article interview

***Conferences and Workshops***

- SAA Research Forum and annual meeting, August 10-14
- Best Practices Exchange, September 29-October 1

### ***Other Related Activities***

- Revisions to university policies and procedures
- “Trusted Document Management System” checklist
- Inventory of electronic records from Office of Board of Trustees
- Retention schedule reviews: MSU Extension and College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

### **Spartan Archive Project Workplan**

- **Creation of project advisory committee**

An advisory committee was created for the project, including Shawn Nicholson, assistant director, Digital Information Services, MSU Libraries; Matt Kolb, information technologist from Academic Technology Services (ATS), and Spartan Archive project team members. The primary function of this advisory committee is to serve as a search committee for the Project Information Technologist.

- **Search for Project Information Technologist (PIT)**

In July, the Project Information Technologist (PIT) job was posted in several venues. The search committee selected five candidates for interviews, and interviewing will take place through the month of October 2010. The Archives expects to extend an offer to the top candidate in November, with an expected hiring date of January 2011.

- **Introduction of regular Spartan Archive team meetings**

In July, the Spartan Archive project team began holding monthly meetings.

- **Survey of community needs and expectations**

Schmidt began researching what the Office of the Registrar currently offers users online. She also met with Miller to determine where the Spartan Archive records series are currently defined in the records workflow.

- **Preparation for implementation of Archivists’ Toolkit**

Patel began the process of setting up a server for the implementation of Archivists’ Toolkit.

- **Electronic records workflows: accessioning**

With Busch, Schmidt began evaluating the current accessioning process for digital records.

- **iRODS workshop arrangements**

Schmidt made preliminary arrangements for the iRODS workshop at the Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center, East Lansing, for April 7-8, 2011, to include a block of hotel rooms for out-of-town attendees, a reception, and breakfasts and lunches. She also publicized the workshops to the CIC-UAG and CIC Center for Library Initiatives.

Some project activities scheduled for the first phase of the project, which ended on September 30, 2010, will be carried over to the next phase, which runs October 1, 2010-March 31, 2010. These include continuations of several of the activities listed above along with the following:

- Hiring of the project information technologist
- Implementation of Archivists’ Toolkit and migration of collection data
- Development of public interface for Archivists’ Toolkit

## Presentations and Proposals

- **Society of American Archivists (SAA) Research Forum (Poster)**  
On August 10, 2010, Ghering and Schmidt presented a poster entitled “Spartan Archive: Building a Permanent Home for Electronic Institutional Records” at the SAA Research Forum in Washington, DC. The poster, which provided an overview of the project, including outcomes and major activities during each phase, is available on the project website at <http://www.archives.msu.edu/documents/SAARF2010Poster.web.pdf>. More than 100 archivists and researchers attended the Research Forum.
- **Best Practices Exchange 2010**  
On September 29, 2010, Schmidt delivered the presentation “A Tale of Two Michigan State University Digital Preservation Projects” at the 2010 Best Practices Exchange in Phoenix. The presentation, which compared and contrasted several elements of the Spartan Archive project with Schmidt’s earlier NHPRC-funded H-Net e-mail list preservation project, is available on the project website at <http://www.archives.msu.edu/documents/BPE2010.pdf>.
- **Midwest Archives Conference (MAC) 2011 session proposal**  
Schmidt recruited participants and submitted a session proposal for the 2011 Midwest Archives Conference (MAC) meeting entitled “Streams in the E-Record Workflow: Developing Elements of the Archival Process for Electronic Records of Historical Value.” Ghering agreed to chair the session. Other session participants include Jackie Esposito of Penn State University and Pat Michaelis of the Kansas State Historical Society.
- **Digital Preservation Management Workshop, invitation to present**  
Ghering and Schmidt were invited to present on digital preservation tools and workflows at a Digital Preservation Management Workshop that will be held in Ann Arbor, November 1-5. The presentation will include current digital archives accessioning practices and a discussion of the pre-ingest tools that are being examined for use with Spartan Archive.
- **SAA 2011 session proposal**  
Ghering and Schmidt put together a “work in progress” session and submitted a proposal for the 2011 SAA conference entitled “Spartan Archive: A Permanent Preservation Environment Under Development at Michigan State University.” Ghering, Schmidt, and the information technologist would present on the high level, project implementation and progress to date, and technical aspects respectively. Jackie Esposito of Penn State agreed to chair the session.

## Publications

- **State News article**  
Ghering was interviewed for an article on the Spartan Archive project for the *State News*, the student newspaper of Michigan State University. The article, which was published on July 27, 2010, may be found at [http://www.statenews.com/index.php/article/2010/07/msu\\_continuing\\_update\\_of\\_digital\\_archives](http://www.statenews.com/index.php/article/2010/07/msu_continuing_update_of_digital_archives).

- **MSU News article interview**

Ghering and Schmidt were interviewed for an article on the Spartan Archive project for the *MSU News*, Michigan State University's online employee newsletter. The article will likely be published in October 2010.

## Conferences and Workshops

- **SAA Research Forum and annual meeting, August 10-14**

Ghering and Schmidt attended the SAA Research Forum and annual meeting in DC and learned about tools, workflows, and policies that will be explored for use in Spartan Archive. In addition to the poster on Spartan Archive at the Research Forum, they delivered a presentation entitled "It's Different with Digital: Influencing Curation Policy When There's No Mandate to Curate" that referenced the Spartan Archive project.

- **Best Practices Exchange 2010, September 29-October 1**

Schmidt gathered more information and ideas for tools to use with the Spartan Archive project and general electronic records workflow at the University Archives.

## Other Related Activities

- **Enterprise Business Systems Project: Revisions to university policy and procedures**

Ghering proposed revisions to current university policy and procedures as part of Michigan State's Enterprise Business Systems Project implementation. Starting on January 1, 2011, the university will begin a "paper-sparse" business workflow for finance and human resources transactions. This will result in the creation of more born-digital records that will require preservation in a permanent electronic records archive.

- **"Trusted Document Management System" checklist**

Ghering and Schmidt drafted a "Trusted Document Management System (TDMS)" checklist for document repositories that store university records, based on the Trusted Repository Audit and Certification (TRAC): Criteria and Checklist. Pending review by Internal Audit, revisions of university policy and procedures will be proposed that reflect the TDMS recommendations.

- **Inventory of electronic records from Office of Board of Trustees**

Ghering performed an inventory of electronic records from the Office of Board of Trustees currently residing in the university's ANGEL course management system. Schmidt and Busch will test ingest tools and workflow on this set of records.

- **Retention schedule reviews**

Miller reviewed records retention schedules with MSU Extension and the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.



Cynthia A. Ghering  
Project Director



Lisa M. Schmidt  
Project Manager