

Perfecting Preservation Policy

Designing intradepartmental agreement through policy
development

Alex Kinnaman | Virginia Tech University Libraries

MDPN Member Summit 2021

June 15, 2021

<http://bit.ly/policy-mdpn21>



Policies

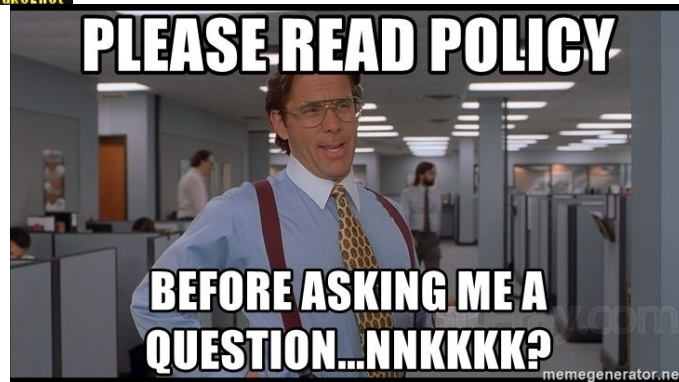
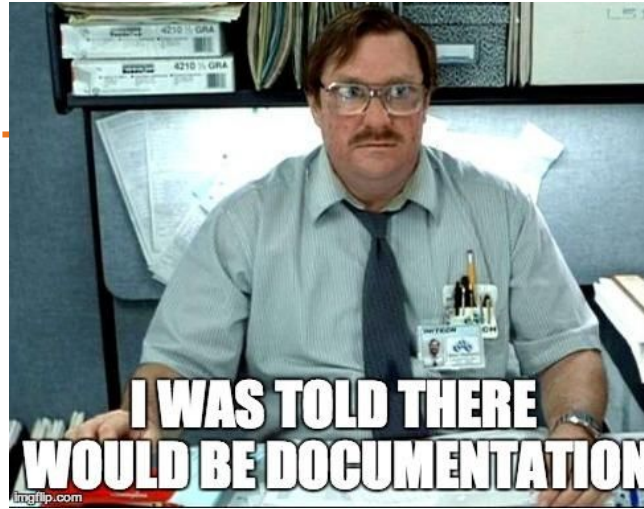
...and why we need them

Why are they important?

How do we write them?

What policies do we need?

Brace Yourself



BRACE YOURSELF



Documentation = Sanity

“Documentation is a love letter to your future self... take the confusing, frustrating, and frequently asked questions around agency operations and simplify them.”

-- Melanie Chandruang



Benefits of Policy Development

- Define and describe your services
- Enhance collaboration between departments and groups
- Track changes in services over time
- Establish a consistent procedure
- Identify gaps and areas of improvement
- Tool for advocacy and raising awareness
- Transparency and building trust

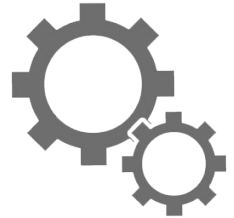


Policies and Digital Preservation

DP is a combination of people, technology, content, workflows, and documentation

This includes:

- Policies
- Procedures
- Workflows
- Statements
- Supporting documentation



Policy-Driven Digital Preservation

No policies or documentation → chaos

Procedure-driven → your services determine your policies and you adapt if needed -- most common

Policy-driven → you determine your needs and build services based on this -- ideal

Institutional vs Consortial Policies

Institutional

- Unique based on needs and services
- Specific needs are individual to each institution

Consortial

- Broader, meant to suit a wide variety of institutions
- More service-oriented



Digital Preservation: Transparency & Trust

Transparency

Making policies and statements public (as appropriate) to promote information exchange and trust



Trust

Building trust with those whose content you manage by providing accurate and provable information on how the content is being managed

Overarching Goal

Create interdepartmental consensus on a digital preservation approach through policy development

Now What??

Getting Started

1. Identify needs
2. Identify stakeholders
3. Identify your audience
4. Gather a team
5. Create a policy structure
6. Find examples
7. Set a workflow
8. Determine an access point



Identify Your Needs

What services are you providing?

What preservation activities are you performing?

What preservation-supporting activities are you performing?

Not all institutions or organizations have the same needs

Assess your repository (briefly)

Understand what you have, what you're doing, and how “ready” you are to develop policies

- [CoreTrustSeal](#) requirements
- [Digital Preservation Coalition Handbook](#)
- [DPC Rapid Assessment Model](#)
- [NDSA Levels of Digital Preservation v.2](#)
- [Socio-Technical Sustainability Roadmap](#)



Examples of activities

- Fixity
- Audit logging
- Identifier minting
- Preservation metadata
- Minimal metadata
- Disaster recovery
- Content deletion/withdrawal
- Content restoration
- Reporting/Notification system
- Storage, diverse storage
- Content replication and versioning



Identify your stakeholders

Each preservation activity or service may affect different groups in your institution

- Advisory groups
- Department heads or specific departments
- Patrons/users
- Administration
- External partners



Identify your audience

Who are these policies for?

- Patrons/users
- Internal use
- Certification review body
- Other institutions



Gather a team

- Based on your activities and stakeholders
- Small but dedicated
- Diverse expertise and stake

Can't get a team?

→ Create a reviewing body to provide feedback and approve

Create (or borrow) a policy structure

...or even better, create a Policy on Policies!

Need a defined structure to ensure consistency. For example:

- Title
- Scope
- Key strategies
- Document Revision History
- Resources (if applicable)



Find Examples

- Google is your friend.
- Find examples to base your main policies on that suit your needs
- It's ok to recycle language, structure, references, etc
- Add them as references to your policies if you use examples heavily



Set a Workflow

- Identify a collaborative workspace to share and host drafts
- Define specific responsibilities and deadlines
- Identify your reviewing body(ies)
- Track the state of each document and policy
- Include a Document Revision History section for individual revision tracking

Determine Access Point

- Based on your audience and technical resources
- Examples:
 - Your institutional repository
 - Confluence
 - Google Drive
 - GitHub
 - Wiki
 - LibGuide



Policies & Statements



Policies

- Broad, overarching goals and objectives
- Formatted
- Not for procedures and detailed descriptions
- Not for specific technologies, solutions, etc
- Requires review and approval from some body of stakeholders

Core Policies

“Core” per ISO 16363 (TDR) and CoreTrustSeal

- Digital Preservation Policy: outlines your digital preservation priorities, strategies, scope, and goals
- Succession Policy: outlines the “what-if” scenarios
- Collection Policy: defines your digital repository collection scope



Preservation Policy

What you provide and why it's important

- Preservation objectives
- Preservation strategies
- Minimal term of preservation in years (e.g. 3-5, 5-7, 7-10)
- Activities surrounding preservation



Preservation Policy Specifics

- Preservation strategies and acceptable actions
- Decisions about the digital objects (formats, metadata)
- Who the material is being preserved for
- Resourcing
- Responsibilities
- Standards
- Collaboration and partnerships
- Information security



Succession Policy

- Cessation of funding
- Decreased personnel
- Failure of technology
- Loss of storage
- Loss of content, code, documentation, etc
- Changes in partnerships or subscriptions
- Changes in Institutional priorities



Collection Policy

- Defines the type of information you will preserve, retain, manage, and provide access to
- Defines the type of information you will not accept
- May include minimal metadata or minimal requirements for deposit



Additional Policies

- Fixity
- Audit and logging
- Content deletion/withdrawal
- Content restoration
- Reporting
- URL Redirection
- Identifier minting
- Test Restoration
- Policy on Policies
- Metadata
- Preferred and Acceptable Formats



Statements & Supporting Documentation

- Describes some procedural information (e.g. Preservation Strategies Document)
- Content that is not quite a policy but necessary (e.g. Mission Statement, Designated Community)
- Directly supports your preservation strategy
- Only requires approval from the experts implementing



Statement & Documentation Examples

- Designated Community
- Mission Statement
- Deposit Agreement
- Storage/Storage Usage Guidelines
- Preservation Strategies
- URL Redirection



Estimated Timeline for a Single Policy

Research: 1-2 months

Drafting: 2-3 months

Revising: 2-4 weeks

Review: 2-4 weeks

Approval: 2-4 weeks

Publish: 1-2 weeks

~ 5 - 8.5 months total



Ongoing Review

- Like our content, our policies require regular review
- Define responsibilities - who is reviewing?
- Set a revision schedule for your policies (annual, bi-annual, etc.)
- Versioning



Example: Virginia Tech



Virginia Tech

- Developing a new Digital Libraries Platform built on AWS and customized microservices
- Submitting a co-application for the CoreTrustSeal Certification
- Dual need for extensive documentation and official policy

Virginia Tech Timeline

2 years - March 2019 - present

- Policy development, drafted in Google Docs: 1 - 6 months per policy
- Review by supervisor: 1 - 4 weeks
- Review by IT Advisory group: 2 - 4 weeks
 - Review by APTrust Certification Working Group: 2 weeks
- If approved, post on Confluence
- If not approved, restart process



VT Policy Development Tracking

Digital Library Policy and Documentation: <https://webapps.es.vt.edu/confluence/display/LIBDPLD/Digital+Library+Policy+and+Documentation>

Policy	Version	State	Public	Responsible	Supervisor Review (Nathan Hall)	IT Advisory Review	APTrust Review (optional)	Stakeholders	Notes
Collection Policy	1.0	Complete	Yes	JT		X			
Content Withdrawal, Deletion, and Takedown Policy	1.0	Complete	Yes	AK	X	X		SCUA, DIPS, DIL	
Disaster Recovery Policy	0.5	Living document	Yes	AK, JT				Digital Libraries	
Fixity Policy	1.0	Complete	Yes	AK	X	X		Digital Libraries	
Identifier Minting Service Policy	1.0	Complete	Yes	AK, JT	X	X		Digital Libraries	
Preservation Events Audit Policy	1.0	Complete	Yes	AK	X	X		Digital Libraries, Digital Preservation Coordinator	
Sucession Policy	1.0	Complete	Yes	AK, JT	X	X	X	Financial Director, Director of IT	
Test Restoration Policy	1.0	Complete	Yes	AK, JT	X	X		Digital Libraries, Digital Preservation Coordinator	
URL Redirection Policy	1.0	Complete	Yes	JT	X	X		Digital Libraries	
VTDLP Policy on Policies	1.0	Complete	Yes	AK, JT	X	X		Digital Libraries, Digital Preservation Coordinator	
VTDLP Preservation Policy	1.0	Complete	Yes	AK, JT	X	X	X	Digital Libraries, Digital Preservation Coordinator	
Preferred and Acceptable Formats Policy	1.0	Complete	Yes	AK, JT		x			
Supporting Documents	Version	State	Public	Responsible	Supervisor Review (Nathan Hall)	IT Advisory Review (optional)	APTrust Review (optional)	Stakeholders	Notes
Designated Community	1.0	Complete	Yes	AK	X	X	X		Will need to add to pub
Distributed Digital Preservation Service Environmental Scan Report	1.0	Complete	On request	AK	X				Internal, or for use in th
VTDLP Package Descriptions	1.0	Complete	Yes	AK, JT	X				
File Management and Transfer Procedure		In progress	Yes	JT					
Mission Statement	1.0	Complete	Yes	JT, AK	X				Will need to add to pub

VT Documentation Access Points

- Internal Confluence for procedure and internal documents
- Public Confluence for Policy and Documentation:
<https://apps.es.vt.edu/confluence/display/LIBDPLD/Digital+Library+Policy+and+Documentation>
- GitHub: <https://github.com/VTUL/dlp-access>



Bigger Picture



The Library System Train

IT is trying to keep the train on time



Digital preservation makes the train more complicated

Not Just a Communication Issue

IT is worried others will:

- Break something
- Add something unnecessary
- Give them more work
- Break something

IT is also generally:

- Short on staff and/or bandwidth
- Blamed if something does break
- Managing larger, organization-wide systems



Negotiation with IT

Approach IT with evidence in tiered levels of granularity that prove what you ask for is necessary and standard

1. Shared roadmap and goals
2. Regular communication
3. Preservation product owners
4. User stories
5. JIRA task creation and prioritization
6. Library-wide cultural shift



Advocacy

- Naturally collaborative within departments - slowly build buy-in
- Compare your policies to other institutions and repository assessment criteria to prove you need them (and therefore that you have specific preservation needs)

“Sometimes you have to kick over some ant hills to get what you need”

-- Cinda May



Changing the Culture

Changing the culture is like steering a large ship; you can turn the rudder now, but it takes time for the ship to change course

Shared model

- Shared values
- Shared processes
- Shared tools
- Shared policies
- Trust



Wrap Up

Policy for the sake of policy is not useful

- Create policies that are meaningful, useful, adoptable, and intentional
- Develop trust with stakeholders through transparency
- Use your policies for advocacy and outreach
- Reach out to the digital preservation community for help



Select Resources

- [APTrust Wiki](#)
- [CoreTrustSeal Requirements](#)
- [“Documenting Digital Preservation: Policies, Practices, and Workflows”](#) -- Sam Meister, Carly Dearborn, & Nathan Tallman
- [Digital Preservation Coalition Handbook](#)
- [“Digital Preservation Policy Framework: A Case Study”](#) - Dan Noonan (2014)
- [“Guidelines and Criteria to Select for Digital Preservation”](#) - Nathan Tallman & Lauren Work (2018)
- [Virginia Tech Digital Library Policy and Documentation](#)



Questions?

Slides:

<http://bit.ly/policy-mdpn21>

Contact:

Alex Kinnaman

Digital Preservation Coordinator

Virginia Tech

alexk93@vt.edu

@alex_kinnaman