

# Digital Collection Management with Legacy and Evolving Digital Collections

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## Overview

The UF Digital Collections began in 2006 with UF outgrowing the available statewide hosting available in terms of quantity, scope, variety, and complexity of materials as well as critical needs for branding, visual design, enhanced features, and more.<sup>1</sup>

While the system and local hosting and support for the UF Digital Collections started in 2006, UF's digitization work began in the early 1990s. The early digitization work was experimental and focused on preservation need. This evolved into digitization on collaborative projects with the State University Libraries, with a great deal of the work focused on Florida-related collections. Materials for digitization came from many collections, including the P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History, UF's University Archives, and large and small science collections.

## Legacy and Evolving Digital Collections

The early digitized materials are online and accessible in the UF Digital Collections. However, some early materials and collections have not yet been reviewed by Curators and queued for updating. The collections and items in need of updating are not described following the best practices now in place and are not organized in the ideal manner to support the parallel physical collections and thus do not ideally support work by Curators and patrons.

From a preliminary and basic review, these need discussion for possible needed updates:

- University Archives
- Florida Collections
- Science Collections
- Special and fast-tracked project work, as with Caribbean Collage

In order to make technical changes to position the collections for evolution and enhancement, Curatorial review and discussion is needed with the Head of Digital Development & Web Services, Digital Humanities Librarian, and others. The discussion and planning are critical to planning the best process and path for the needed work, and to prevent new complications.

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<sup>1</sup> See: <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/UF00078632/00001/pdf>

## **Evolution of the UF Digital Collections Homepage**

As it has grown and changed over the years, the UF Digital Collections homepage has evolved from the central first-place with links to small, subject-based digital collections into a design with various subject-based collections as well as collections that parallel and map to their physical counterparts. The current UFDC homepage is also often bypassed with users, with users going directly to items or to the thematic digital collections with so many now being destinations on their own.

With the current UFDC homepage often missed in favor of a specific collection, the UFDC homepage has evolved to be more of a service front-end for internal library users and a quick showcase for overall library presentation needs for showing the scope, variety, and sampling of the digital collections.

## **Further Evolving the UFDC Homepage**

The UFDC homepage will require ongoing changes to best balance how to support external users, internal users, and internal users with the UFDC homepage as a showcase and jumping off point to show technical capacity and variety. As the collections continue to grow, changes will be needed to best support the encompassed 500+ different collections and 8+ million pages of materials.

Technical enhancements and regular usability tests inform some changes. Curator inquiries are the regular impetus for changes. For instance, the Baldwin Digital Collection started as a “children’s literature digital collection” and not specifically the Baldwin which was confusing to patrons, the Curator, and others. After Curatorial review, the collection was updated to be the Baldwin with the digital collection and physical holdings directly aligned, making both more sensible for patrons and giving the Curator clear control and authority.

Other examples include Curator inquiries on what collections are on the UFDC homepage. Initially there were subject-grouped collections, which these evolved into more specific collections, with some collections on the homepage and some not. As the process occurred, it happened more often than not that the collections on the homepage would be major UF library collections and often related to Centers on campus. In noticing this emerging pattern, the Curator for the Isser and Rae Price Library of Judaica noted it, and the Judaica Collections were added to the UFDC Homepage, which made the structure more consistent and coherent. Similarly, the current Pioneer Days in Florida grant includes updating many items to be within the larger, containing presence for the PK Yonge Library Digital Collection. Once the updates are made, the PK Yonge Library would be added to the UFDC homepage for consistency.

## **Topical Collections, Formats, Thematic Groups, Exhibits, and More**

In addition to continuing to evolve the UFDC homepage in its current structure, other options are also available. For instance, dLOC has a topical collections page, which has a listing for formats, thematic groups, and special collections and exhibits: <http://dloc.com/dloc1/collect>. This sort of topical page can be added to any collection, and new collections can be created with existing and new materials.