



*Digital Scholarship, Publishing, and Preservation  
at Northeastern University*

## **Community and Collections Policies**

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### **1. Introduction**

The Northeastern University Libraries' digital archive (hereafter called IRis) is a system for collecting, distributing, managing, publishing, and preserving digital (electronic) information created by NU faculty, students, and staff.

IRis is a collaboration among NU librarians, archivists, technology professionals, faculty, and administrators. It includes the intellectual output of NU faculty and students, including both research and teaching/learning materials. It also contains materials that document the evolution of the University's programs, activities, and policies.

It is important that all stakeholders understand and agree to the policies, guidelines and procedures required to make IRis a success. The following policy statements may be developed and modified over time.

### **2. IRis Community Definition**

A community is a Northeastern University unit, group, or individual that contributes digital material to IRis. Examples of communities include research centers, academic or administrative departments, and student groups. Each community may assign a contact person to work with IRis staff. Communities may be divided into sub-communities that may be autonomous.

### **3. Responsibilities of an IRis Community**

Communities and their members agree to:

- Work with Library staff to define their community and collections
- Develop an internal submission process for the community or authorize Library staff to submit on the community's behalf
- Provide organization and description of submitted content as needed
- With assistance from Library staff, verify that submission to IRis is allowed, when copyright holder is other than the **submitter(s)** or Northeastern University
- Assure materials proposed for submission comply with local, state, and federal content and privacy laws, and with the University Appropriate Use Policy
- Observe all policies relevant to IRis
- Notify IRis at [irisinfo@neu.edu](mailto:irisinfo@neu.edu) of organizational changes in the unit that affect submissions
- Reply to annual call for updating community information.

### **4. Rights Retained by IRis Communities**

Communities retain the right to:

- Decide who may submit content on behalf of their community
- Receive a digital copy of submitted content upon request
- Request to remove objects (see section 8)
- Propose restructuring of communities, sub-communities, or collections
- Request to limit access via password to specific individuals within the University to IRis content at the collection level, subject to the approval of the IRis Management Group

### **5. Responsibilities of Northeastern University Libraries**

Northeastern University Libraries undertake to:

- Provide guidance or assistance in establishing new communities and collections, and in submitting objects to IRis
- Retain and maintain access to content submitted to IRis
- Preserve content, in collaboration with the IRis software provider (see Policy on Format Support and Preservation)
- Limit access to content according to community requests that have been approved by the IRis Management Group
- Notify communities of changes to object, e.g. migration from obsolete formats
- Return collections to existing communities if the Northeastern University Libraries cease to support IRis

### **6. Rights of Northeastern University Libraries**

Northeastern University Libraries retains the right to:

- Redistribute, sell, amend, or copyright metadata for objects in IRis
- Refuse content not within the scope of IRis (see IRis Content Policies below)
- Remove content under appropriate circumstances
- Renegotiate the terms of participation with communities
- Migrate objects as necessary to preserve integrity of information
- Set quotas (size of files, number of objects) to determine what constitutes free service and after which point to charge a fee

- Charge a fee for activities requiring extensive centralized support from the NU Libraries (e.g. specialized metadata creation)
- Examine IRis system logs and records

## 7. IRis Content Policies

- A. The material (object) submitted to IRis must be produced, submitted or sponsored by Northeastern University faculty, staff, or students.
- B. Objects must be scholarly, research-oriented, pedagogical, or must illuminate the history of Northeastern University.
- C. Objects must have enduring value.
- D. Objects must be in digital format, complete, and ready for dissemination.
- E. The author/owner should grant Northeastern University the right to preserve and disseminate the objects via IRis.
- F. If an object is part of a series, other objects in that series should also be contributed, so IRis can offer as full a set as possible.
- G. Objects and object descriptions must comply with local, state and federal content and privacy laws as they may apply, and with the Northeastern University Appropriate Use and all other University policies.
- H. Object content not permitted for submission/publication to IRis:

In addition to material types not permitted under the University Appropriate Use Policy, objects with the following content are not permitted to be submitted or posted to the repository:

- FERPA-protected information, including student e-mail addresses
- HIPAA-regulated information (protected health information), including any information related to the past, present or future physical or mental health of an individual, except only if the individual has authorized release of their information in writing, and such release is in the hands of the publisher
- Content barred by law or regulation from publication
- Intellectual property for which the submitter does not have permission to submit and distribute
- Non-public personally identifiable financial information of any kind; including, but not limited to, social security numbers, credit/debit card numbers, account numbers, account balances, except only where such records pre-exist as legitimate publicly accessible records outside the University
- Photographic depictions of individuals in areas where a reasonable expectation of privacy exists, except only if all individuals depicted have given written consent to publication of their image
- Unpublished telephone numbers and/or private residential addresses, except only if consent for publication has first been obtained from the owner of the number and/or residential address
- Records protected by state privacy laws. Please note that privacy laws vary by state, and protect their residents even when they are out of state.

## **8. Withdrawing Objects from IRis**

Northeastern University Libraries recognizes that occasionally it may be necessary to remove objects from IRis. Under some circumstances, objects will be removed from view, but to avoid loss of the historical record, all such transactions will be traced in an administrator's note in Digital Commons. The content of the note should be one of the following:

"Removed from view at Northeastern University's discretion [day/month/year]"

"Removed from view at Northeastern University Libraries' discretion [day/month/year]"

"Removed from view by legal order [day/month/year]"

## **9. Preservation Guide**

The Libraries' goal is to preserve and provide long-term access to the content of the material stored in IRis. Our ideal is to accept and guarantee permanent access to all types of digital materials. At present, the Libraries are developing a digital preservation program.

It is recommended that submitters review the Policy on Format Support and Preservation before depositing their work to IRis.

## **10. Metadata in IRis**

IRis uses Qualified Dublin Core for its descriptive metadata. Qualified Dublin Core comprises the core 15 simple elements and an enrichment of these 15 that permits the collection and storage of richer data describing digital objects. Northeastern University participates in the Open Archives Initiative, an organization that promotes interoperability and enhanced access to scholarly communication. As a data provider, IRis exposes Simple Dublin Core descriptive metadata for harvesting by institutions complying with the Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting. Once harvested, the descriptive metadata can be searched by users of OAI service providers such as Google and WorldCat, enabling researchers worldwide to discover content in IRis.

## **11. Metadata Required for Submission to IRis**

To successfully submit a digital object to IRis, the submitter is required to fill in the title, at least one keyword or phrase, and the publication year. Other metadata may be added as desired.

## **12. Responsibility of Authorizing Individuals**

The Authorizing Individual (the rights holder or the representative of the rights holder of a specific digital object) bears full responsibility for any and all direct, indirect and consequential losses arising from their acts of publication. The University shall have no liability to any person or entity for any losses incurred as a result of submission, nor from losses sustained as a result of failure of the University to accept, publish or maintain a submission.

## **13. Northeastern University's Responsibilities and Rights**

IRis functions within Northeastern University and is governed by University policies including but not limited to the Appropriate Use Policy and all applicable local, state and federal laws. Access granted by virtue of IRis does not confer rights of any kind. The University reserves the right to amend, change or terminate the repository service at any time, with or without notice. The University retains the right to take any and all actions with respect to its institutional repository, IRis, in its sole discretion. The decision of the University in appeals regarding rejected materials is final.