

## Audio & Video

### Domain/Scope:

Time based media. This includes traditional analog audio and video (vinyl, cassettes, VHS, etc.) as well as digital audio and video formats (CDs, DVDs, DAT, mini-dv, etc.). Finally, last category is the haziest and includes “born digital” materials such as Quicktime movies, Flash animations etc. The verdict is still out on musical scores. Scores occupy a middle ground between print formats and graphic images, yet also serve the audio formats that represent the realization of the scores in sound. Including them within this scope focuses more on content than on format. Yet not everything covered here is related to music as “content”—video recordings, spoken word audio recordings, etc.—and it would seem unusual to include scores for that reason.

That covers the formats. The next question is ownership. Obviously library collections, LRC and also material owned by an academic department (to the extent that they are willing to share). Music, East Asian Studies, and African-American Studies have significant video collections that can be made searchable online. Some parts of Learning Objects projects (VIM and EMW videos) and other things created by ITS (IMS and Digitization). Musical performances (mostly audio but some video) and theatre and dance (currently archived in the dance dept). This takes care of curricular and (most) academic A/V. However, this does not include UR events, Commencement, visiting speakers, etc. and perhaps it should. This sort of material has archival value and some of it could certainly be used in classes. This also does not include faculty owned or faculty created works (largely because of the IP tangle that would invariably be encountered). Student work is omitted for the same reason, though, perhaps student groups should and would like to have their projects archived.

### Existing Practices:

Video collections are housed in the Science Library, LRC and certain departments. Audio collections are in the Music Library, World Music Archive and certain departments. To the extent that the items are catalogued and included in a searchable database, the materials are accessible. Some content is not catalogued or is otherwise unavailable to patrons easily (Dance department videos for example).

Digital audio/video for courses is on the Condor server. The Mus-Lib folder has all the E-reserve music. Video files are put under the faculty’s folder (this is problematic) and LRC resources are in the eparis directory (also problematic). Access to these files for students is usually provided via a link in Blackboard or, sometimes, a link on a password protected website.

Faculty can and often do add their own digital audio and video to their condor space. Usually these are short clips of commercial films though sometimes it is their own field work, classroom recordings or other, non-commercial content. Access to this content is provided by the faculty member in whatever way they see fit. There is no central “catalogue” of this content, though faculty members sometimes share these resources.

IMS keeps copies of events they tape and gives the original to the client (to do with as they see fit). Some of these tapes are made into DVDs but this is not a systematic practice. Clips from (for example) some Wes Seminars are on the website for UR. Commencement (both this year and last year) is available but only if you know where to

look for it. The link is only maintained for a short time (though the files remain on Condor).

There is an inconsistency in the recording and storage of performing arts events on campus. Much depends on whether a performance is sponsored by the CFA, the departments involved (Music, Dance, or Theater), or a student group, and the resulting recordings are not always accessible to the community to the same degree, even though a particular performance may have overlapping interests for different departments.

### **Strengths:**

Library catalogues are good and seem to be well maintained and accurate. E-Reserves and streaming seem to be satisfying the faculty and students. There doesn't seem to be any serious complaint about any A/V services.

### **Weaknesses:**

Streaming video, music E-res and LRC files are not in a database. In particular, digitized video owned by the Library should be in a library folder (not the faculty member's) so that they can be used by any faculty without duplicating the effort (and the file). We are actively working on doing this over the summer. We also need to track the format (size and codec) of the files and re-do and improve them whenever we can.

Most department and special events audio and video is not catalogued or accessible (unless you happen to "know" they have it). This means that one department may be using an old, poor quality VHS tape when the Library actually has a new DVD copy (this has happened once that I know of). It is not easy to find out if a past event has been taped (unless you're the one who requested the taping). Some of these events (the Singing Scrolls, the Sand Mandala, etc.) would have curricular uses if they were readily available.

### **Opportunities:**

Wesleyan has become a member of "iTunes U." and can take advantage of podcasting options. We will continue to maintain subscriptions to audio and video delivery services such as Ruckus, Naxos Music Library, and Smithsonian Global Sound. There are additional video streaming subscription services available to institutions, such as Films Media Group's OnDemand. And there are opportunities to create a learning environment for music with Indiana U.'s Variations2 project, which allows for the synchronization of digitized musical scores and audio recordings.

### **Threats:**

VHS is rapidly becoming an obsolete format. Many tapes in the Library do not play well and are out-of-print. Some of these (Eyes on the Prize) will never come out on DVD because of permissions issues. Audio formats such as vinyl and cassette tape will have to continue to be supported, since copyright restrictions and limitations of time and staffing make mass transfers of these nearly impossible. Future audio preservation will have to rely on digital storage only, as the concept of an ideal storage medium involving either tape or disc is becoming obsolete, in favor of continual format migration. As more and more A/V is created by more and more people it will be impossible to find anything unless there is some sort of cataloging. We are rapidly running out of space on Condor, largely

because we don't have a policy about taking old content down. A/V creators have different methods for archiving their work that range from "very good" to "none at all". A central repository (with an opt-in option) would allow this content to be protected and accessible for years to come.

**Short-term recommendations:**

A general weeding policy is needed for files on Condor, to prevent it from filling up with unused files. There needs to be a general survey of departmental collections to determine their numbers and the needs for managing these. A policy needs to be adopted concerning the limits on the number of users that can simultaneously view or listen to online media.

**Long-term recommendations:**

We will rely increasingly on subscription services for much mainstream media, and can then focus our attention on maintaining the more obscure and locally-produced collections here on campus. We need to clean up the general management issues, particularly those surrounding file-naming conventions. We should work toward a unified search of all collections on campus with standardized search tools.