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SCAMeL Speedy Startup 2026

Project: Digitization of the University Lecture Series: Phase 1

Project Manager: Angela Houser

Project Manager Title: Digital Archivist and Manager of the University of Texas Southwestern Special Collections Library and University Archives

Institution: The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center

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Digitization of video cassettes is a time-consuming and costly process. When digitizing large amounts of tapes, contracting with a digitization vendor is often the most cost-effective and time-conscious way to make these items available to the masses. The University Lecture Series – a collection of lectures presented monthly at The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center (UTSW) since the 1980s – would benefit from the large-scale digitization efforts that can be begun through this grant. These lectures include a variety of topics from experts across the world and within the university; they are a staple for the Medical College, and their digitization would provide access to unique talks that are unavailable elsewhere.

Through the digitization of the recorded lectures, the information shared by the presenters will be available to a new generation of learners across the region. In previous years, people viewed these lectures by attending them in-person or through the recording at the library. In recent years, even this last option was not available to patrons as the library and the university have continued to advance, and media has become obsolete. Through the digitization of these items, they will be preserved for future generations and become accessible again.

The two main goals of this project are preservation of the items and accessibility. Preservation is key because VHS tapes are an unstable format that need special care which our current facility cannot provide. Digitization will enable the archive to preserve the information before the items become too degraded to view or digitize in the future. With this digitization, we can provide access to lectures that current students are unaware of, with closed captions so that patrons of all abilities can benefit and learn from the information they contain.

The lectures found in this project come from prominent scientists in their fields, many of whom are also Nobel Laureates. These lectures will provide insight into the research they have done to achieve such acclaim. We have identified 30 lectures to start this project that will benefit the medical and scientific research of our region. Some topic highlights are immune responses, molecular neurotransmitter release, the discovery of the double helix and genome project, molecular approaches to disease, and so much more. The tapes selected for digitization include 10 Nobel Laureates, several of whom

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have passed away in recent years. These lectures are unique in that they were tailored for the scientific environment at UTSW and have the ability to benefit the region as a whole. Through their digitization, smaller medical schools would benefit from the ability to view these items as they might not possess the budget to invite lecturers. In addition to those medical schools, high school students would be able to access the lectures for research or for further understanding of what they may want to study someday.

The way that researchers can access these materials is just as important as digitizing them. The recordings, with their closed captions, will be put into the digital archive repository, TIND. Once online, the material can be used by scientific and medical researchers across the Southwest region and beyond. TIND is free for all users, but it does not allow the downloading of the items, which will allow the Digital Archivist to properly assess how often the lectures are being accessed and where they are being accessed from. As the materials are made available, the University Archives will advertise them through university newsletters and the archives' social media accounts. Additionally, there will be opportunities to send a notification of these items being made available through different relevant listservs. The different formats of advertising will get more eyes on the project and allow more people to access these lectures for their research purposes.

The process of digitization will be carried out by the vendor, Media Preserve. The manager of this project will be the Digital Archivist, who will be the main contact for the vendor. They will be responsible for ensuring that the media is sent and returned in the same condition, all files provided by Media Preserve are transferred to the institutional server, and that each video will have an access and preservation file associated with it.

With the items being sent to a third-party vendor, the timeline for this project will be much shorter than if the work was to be done in-house. The time it will take the vendor to digitize the items may vary, but with the number of items being proposed, it should take around two months for the digitization process to be completed. Once the digital files have been provided to the Digital Archivist, they will be uploaded to the platform Sonix for closed caption work to begin. The process of producing the closed captions

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through Sonix will take a few months to complete as each video will need to be reviewed for quality control by the archival team.

In total, the project should take six to eight months to complete. For this project, we are requesting the full $5000 award to achieve the first phase of digitization of the full University Lecture Series collection. This funding will cover the cost to digitize and close caption 30 VHS tapes. This will allow the Digital Archivist to make the recordings available online, for free, to interested parties within the region and globally.

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Forecasted Project Budget

Item	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total
VHS Digitization	30	$45	$1350
Shipping (FedEx)	2	$80	$160
Closed Captions	30hrs	$105	$3150
		Total:	$4660

Assistant Vice President for Library Services Signature

Kelly Gonzalez

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