

URSA Digitization Specifications

When digitizing items it is important to think about which file formats will be able to provide continued access in the future. Or to put it another way, we must consider which formats are able to be used regardless of which type of software program an individual has. For example, Word and Excel documents work best in those respective programs, but PDF or text files can be opened and used by many programs. **URSA works best with files that are unencrypted, uncompressed, and saved in non-proprietary software programs.**

Preferred file types for URSA submissions:

Mercer University Archives may convert file formats or reduce a file's size to ensure that all submissions are compatible with end-user needs on URSA.

See below for our medium-specific file standards and file naming conventions for your digitization needs.

Medium	Format(s)	Resolution
Manuscripts	PDF/A	>300 dpi
<i>Scans of paper documents or born-digital files</i>	PDF	24-bit color OR 8-bit grayscale
Photographic Prints	JPEG	>300 dpi
<i>Scans of photographs or born-digital files</i>	TIFF	24-bit color OR 8-bit grayscale
Slides and Negatives	JPEG	>1200 dpi
	TIFF	24-bit color OR 8-bit grayscale
Graphic Illustrations/Artwork – 2D	JPEG	>600 dpi
	TIFF	24-bit color OR 8-bit grayscale
Graphic Illustrations/Artwork – 3D	JPEG	>600 dpi
<i>Photographs of the item from various angles</i>	TIFF	24-bit color OR 8-bit grayscale
Audio Files	MP3	High-quality compression 16-bit
	AAC	
	TIFF	

Medium	Format(s)	Resolution
Video Files	MPEG4	High-quality compression
PowerPoint Presentations	PDF/A	>300 dpi
	PDF	24-bit color
Research Posters	PDF/A	>300 dpi
	PDF	24-bit color

If you have questions about digitizing your file for URSA, please contact [an archivist](#).

File Naming Conventions:

Below are some general guidelines for creating file name for your digital objects.

- **Choose unique file names.** File names should be unique as possible, including place as _1 after the name to distinguish between files.
- **UNIX characters only.** File and directory names must use only characters allowed by the UNIX operating system. Allowable characters are: a-z A-Z 0-9 _ -
- **Do not use special characters,** such as, . \ / () : * ? " & |, except for dashes or underscores. These characters are often reserved for use by the operating system.
- **Do not use spaces** in the file name, use underscores or dashes instead. Browsers and some older operating systems do not handle spaces well.
- **Use leading zeros.** If the file name includes numbers use zeros as placeholders. For example, a collection with 999 items should be numbered: mac001.tif, mac002.tif ... mac011.tif, mac012.tif, etc. (NOT mac1.tif, mac2.tif ...). This practice facilitates sorting and file management.