

Emergency Collecting Tabletop

Tuesday Afternoon:

You are checking your social media feed over lunch. Protests and counter-protests over a controversial political figure coming to your town has sparked huge crowds coming from all over. Several skirmishes have broken out downtown, with some minor injuries being reported. Twitter reports of hate speech being sprayed on some public buildings and folks being harassed in eating establishments.

The controversial figure is scheduled to speak at the Student Activities Building (SAB) later that evening. The SAB is located across the Quad from the Library. Several staff decide to head home early, wanting to go home before the protesters head over to campus. Library administration discusses shutting down the Library, but it is close to midterms and students cover nearly every square inch of available study space. They decide to remain open, with a few additional staff in place in case there is a problem.

You carry some responsibility for digital collection and preservation at your institution.

- **How do you plan to document the official and unofficial response to the event?**
- **What tools and workflows currently exist to capture the content being created?**
- **What do you do first?**
- **Will you stay in your office or go home at quitting time?**
- **Who can you turn to for assistance and support?**

Tuesday Evening:

Folks have been pouring on to campus all afternoon. Crowds are much heavier than anticipated. Roads around the area are completely blocked, either by streams of folks crossing the street or cars and buses looking for a place to park. Folks are carrying signs and shouting. Many are openly carrying guns, which is raising tensions. (Although you live in an open carry state, this is not a typical sight and the remaining patrons and staff alike are feeling extremely uncomfortable.)

As the sun goes down, things intensify. Someone starts throwing bricks, rocks, and lit firecrackers into the crowd. A group grabs a few police barriers and uses them as battering rams in an attempt to gain access to the Student Activities Building through a side door. Fights begin to break out. Police respond by firing tear gas into the crowds. Much of the action is caught on tape by cellphones.

Family and friends are calling asking if you are ok. You know several of your colleagues were participating in the protest and you have heard rumors that several ended up going to the hospital. You stay up most of the night glued to your computer screen, your phone, and the television all at once.

Wednesday morning arrives before you know it. Classes are canceled for Wednesday and staff are encouraged to stay home unless they are essential personnel. The quad is a mess, with news reporters and police documenting the scene. Posters and trash are everywhere. The Library is open but minimally staffed.

In spite of the limited staffing, your administration has told you that you need to create a mechanism to collect community generated videos, photos, and other materials from the event. They have given you until Monday to get it up and running. You

organize some virtual meetings to see what you can get started on. Some of your staff lack the technology to telecommute, and others are too upset to focus on work.

- **Can you meet the administration's deadline? How?**
- **What tools will you use?**
- **What are the limits of those tools? How will you publicize your collecting?**
- **What are the metadata, rights, and security issues that need to be considered?**
- **How will you balance your regular duties with the need to design, implement, publicize and troubleshoot this activity?**
- **How will you handle the psychological effects of week's events?**

Discuss the short and long-term actions that are required to preserve and provide access to this content. In what ways were you prepared/not to respond to this event?