



Implementing Institutional Repositories: Key Policy Issues

Concurrent Discussion Session

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Discussion Summary

Policy issues arise immediately when libraries begin to implement institutional repositories (IR) and the topic is clearly one of interest to ARL members. An overflow audience of over 50 participants attended the discussion session led by two ARL directors whose libraries are now implementing the DSpace IR software and establishing advisory groups from across their universities.

The discussion opened with each attendee briefly answering the question: "Where are you now?" The answers ranged across a wide spectrum from those directors who are just considering the issues involved in installing IR to those who have been using DSpace for a year now and are facing new questions and issues. **Participants raised a number of points:**

- Cornell has implemented DSpace and is recruiting faculty participation. Sarah Thomas pointed out that it is crucial to have institutional support for an IR. She was able to make the case for institutional support when taking on the physics archives from Los Alamos. Sarah also mentioned that Cornell is developing software called "DPubs" that is intended to create a journals publishing functionality that would work with DSpace.

- Vanderbilt is operating DSpace and found it very useful to have the provost appoint a policy committee on campus that oversees the IR. A number of participants commented that administrative support from the top is crucial. Sarah Thomas asked what happens if an IR is created without institutional support. When grant money runs out, who will support the repository?
- Collaboration between IT staff and those at the library is necessary.
- Huge datasets demand adequate storage space that the library can offer.
- The question was raised whether the communities created by DSpace should mirror university departments or create new communities. A number of respondents said they found that cross-campus initiatives and centers had strong appeal for creating communities. Sandra Yee mentioned the Presidential initiative at Wayne State that centered on research on children. This will be the first community for their IR. Such an approach makes funding easier.
- The University of Wisconsin is looking at building a repository of video content and thinking that it should be a collaborative effort. Ken Frazier reported that getting permissions from presenters is not difficult.
- A number of institutions have achieved varying degrees of success by focusing on special collections. Louisville is digitizing its special collections on underground railroads and Albany will include its collections of slides and lectures given on campus. Illinois-Chicago has created an IR of the chancellor's and provost's speeches and memos of record, a project that was easy to get administrative buy-in and funding for. Joanne Eustis commented that she had support from retiring faculty members who wanted a repository to leave their papers.
- UC Santa Barbara has used a layered service model with the CDL. They have seven terabytes of GIS data in the Alexandria Digital Library Project. Faculty are creating mini-digital libraries but without metadata, copyright notices, etc. Looking at this effort as more of an archive for faculty datasets rather than an open repository has helped gain faculty support.

A number of major issues emerged from the group discussion:

- **Faculty Support** : A large number of directors reported that their institutional repositories consisted, at this point, of theses and dissertations. They are still working to get faculty support for the submission of research and publications. Faculty needed to be convinced that they would gain from the submission of their work. Faculty support is much stronger for a disciplinary rather than an institutional repository. Some are considering the concept of a

research center that would involve more than one discipline. Graduate students, on the other hand, were much more receptive to the concept and use of repositories.

- **Ownership of Materials in Repository:** Faculty must have the rights to deposit their work in the repository and must give the library the right to post and archive the work. They also must decide what level of access they wish to make available. UCSB has established a copyright advisory committee on campus. The issue of ownership of copyright can be difficult. What type of document should faculty sign? MIT has an agreement that can serve as a good model. <<http://libraries.mit.edu/dspace-mit/mit/policies/license.html>>
- **Establishment of Quality Standards:** The problem of quality control arises when individual faculty members want to include materials that have not been vetted through publication or other means. Who makes the decision whether or not to include these materials? This is a new issue and most library directors haven't yet reached the point with implementing institutional repositories to even consider the question. But it is crucial. The dual issues of gatekeeping and standards will make or break repositories.
- **Institutional vs. Disciplinary Repository:** There was some discussion about the use of the term "institutional repository." Some felt that faculty may be less inclined to contribute work to their institution than they would be to a repository that was disciplined-based. While these concepts are not mutually exclusive, it was suggested that alternative terminology might be more appropriate; for example, one could use the term "distributed digital repositories." The notion of "institutional" may be best used in making the case for a repository to the administration where one can argue that the repository will help create synergy among and preserve the assets of the institution. In working with faculty, the notion of disciplinary communities may be the better approach.

Summary Prepared by Judith Matz

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