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Creating an Institutional Repository

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ABSTRACT

Creating an institutional repository (IR) requires much forethought and planning. Setting up a university IR committee will help direct policy and collection goals, and will encourage faculty participation. There are many things to consider in design such as branding, policy, copyright, collection development, author submissions and discoverability. Publishing in an IR requires original works, and copyright issues arise, especially if authors wish to publish in other journals. Our IR goal was to promote scholarship and encourage faculty to create publishing profile space in SelectedWorks, which can become a virtual curricula vita. The ultimate goal is discoverability and open access contribution to scholarship in the field. This article is a personal recounting of our experience in setting up FireScholars, our institutional repository at Southeastern University.

Introduction

I started getting emails from BePress before my first day of work at Southeastern University. It was a clear sign that my new employer was eager and ready to start an institutional repository (IR). BePress is a cloud based IR with no client software, and all publications are part of the larger Digital Commons Network discoverable worldwide. There are many things to consider in designing an IR and BePress had them all covered with phone calls, Webex sessions and workforms to help outline all the key installation setup steps. My objective was to setup and build an IR with collections in my first year at Southeastern University.
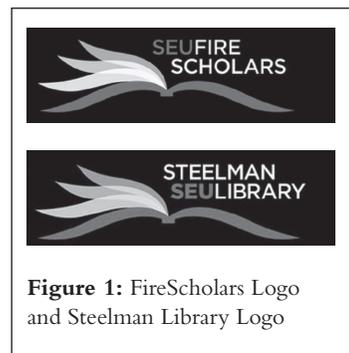
Setup

David Stienstra with BePress was very helpful with personal phone calls, Webex sessions and documents such as *Customization Guide for Digital Commons Repositories* and the *Digital Commons IR Set-up Form* ("Reference Material and User Guides," n.d.). Digital setup is not foreign to me; I have created websites many times and worked with OCLC's ContentDM. I was impressed with the level of customization in Digital Commons. We had many decisions to make, including graphics, site name, URL, policies, and collection types just to name a few. We knew there was much to do before we were ready, and David Stienstra was there helping us understand the process every step of the way.

The Digital Commons Committee was formed to help garner input from our campus community. Armstrong (2014) advises, "When promoting institutional repositories (IRs), there is often a disconnect between librarians and their faculty" (p. 43). Therefore, the inclusion of campus faculty was seen as a key to successful implementation of our IR. Our faculty are expected to contribute to scholarly publications in various forms and the Digital Commons was a perfect mechanism for obtaining such participation. Armstrong (2014) considers discoverability a key objective of creating an IR: "Universities have a responsibility to ensure that the scholarship produced at their institution is both discoverable and accessible to the greatest number of people possible" (p. 44). We accomplished discoverability with the Digital Commons Network, Google, and our library system. We knew right away that we had to encourage everyone to participate and take ownership to create the mechanism for participation. Our Digital Commons Committee included members from every department on campus to become ambassadors and builders to encourage participation and support of our program. In this fashion, faculty are more likely to take ownership and individual pride in the IR and thus contribute to the scholarship it should contain.

The BePress IR setup led us through the paces in areas such as graphics, name, and URL for our IR. Meagan Carroll, one of our student workers, contributed much to the image design and logo for our library. We were thrilled to make the IR logo and library logos match and harmonize so nicely (see figure 1).

Figure 1: FireScholars Logo and Steelman Library Logo

Our campus marketing department helped ensure that we were true to the colors and fonts, so as to harmonize with the university branding elements. We wrestled with various names and ideas and thought people might not know what an "Institutional Repository" means because it is a technical term (Armstrong, 2014, p. 46). As a result, we chose to highlight scholarship and our university emblem. Fire represents our sport teams at Southeastern so we chose to combine the team name with scholarship and brand them without a space, hence FireScholars. Together with our helpful IT staff we created a new home at http://firescholars.seu.edu.

Policies

A big part of setting up an IR is establishing a collection policy to address most contingencies of publishing and author-related issues. The obvious issues include ensuring works published are indeed the creative work of the authors and that those works contain proper citations for all quotations, text, photos, video, and audio components. There are many considerations concerning what will be published

in an IR. For example, will you publish all works, or only works in compliance with your institutional image and mission? For our IR policy, we dug deep and looked at many other BePress Digital Commons policies. Pepperdine was most helpful in allowing us permission to use their policy as a template ("Pepperdine Digital Commons," n.d.). However, even their policy was built from other Digital Commons IR collections. BePress offered us a template for *Author Guidelines* and the *About Areas* for our IR. We built our site policies based on the recommendations of the Digital Commons Committee.

In combination with the policies was the author consent form. BePress has a well-thought-out way of requiring authors to "click consent" with self-submission. This click consent is an agreement that the work submitted is indeed the author's original work and an agreement that the author is in compliance with the terms of the IR hosting policy. Self-submission works well for faculty but the committee did not wish to allow students to self-submit. The first change we needed to make was to thoroughly edit the self-submit consent form and create a PDF version that could be printed and signed. We wanted to make sure the students signed the form for all submissions. One concern was not to allude to the idea that 100% of student-submitted papers would be published. This allowed the committee to select and/or not select for various reasons without creating difficulty in the assumption that all submitted works would be published. We worded the student form to identify the collection as "Selected Papers," and noted that not every paper would be selected if it failed to meet all criteria for inclusion. The student consent forms are signed and archived, but not published. Faculty self-submit consents are only recorded as a consent click; no signed form is created.

Copyrights and Publishing Issues

Publishing in the IR creates copyright for authors. Copyright is established when something is published in a fixed medium, such as print or a digital archive. Most IRs are designed to be permanent, so this is an excellent mechanism to establish copyright since works no longer have to be sent to the U. S. Copyright Office or marked with the copyright symbol (©). When faculty submit original works, they can choose a Creative Commons License or other copyright options. Establishing copyright through IR publishing is a convenient benefit for authors. However, IR publishing could affect or be affected by other publishing of the same materials elsewhere.

A concern of faculty often raised is whether they are permitted to submit previously published articles to the IR. Can the IR also publish or should it just provide an abstract and link to the previously published instance? Burrows (2007) explains that publishers are more accepting towards IR publishing: "Initially most publishers were suspicious of institutional repositories and tried to prevent authors from depositing articles in them. But this situation quickly changed, to such an extent that many

publishers now permit this kind of open archiving" (p. 8). Currently 78% of the publishers in the SHERPA/RoMEO database allow some type of preprint or postprint IR publishing to support open access ("RoMEO Statistics," n.d.).

To further enhance our faculty publications in our IR we added SelectedWorks which creates a virtual curricula vita (CV) for faculty authors. It automatically pulls all items published in the Digital Commons Network into a single author landing page. The authors can build a biography section, upload a photo, and even upload a formatted CV. Boise State provides a faculty service they call "Mediated Deposit" whereby the librarians research the rights, obtain permissions, load articles and create the SelectedWorks profiles for the faculty (Armstrong, 2014, p. 47). In our case, we defer these tasks to the faculty and encourage them to create their own SelectedWorks profiles and load their own works.

Inevitably, there will be unforeseen ramifications of IR copyright issues and global publishing. In one case, a student honors paper created a problem for the advisor. The student published in the IR using the advisor's research data. After the student honors paper was published, the advisor worried that he would be accused of violating the student's copyright. In this case, we were able to change the title of the student's work and reattribute it as a derivative of the advisor's work.

Another consideration in building an IR is determining what areas of scholarship should be captured and preserved. Our focus is on highlighting student and faculty scholarship. Members of the committee not only shape IR policy, but also help identify various writings and publications at Southeastern University, which should be considered for inclusion in the IR. Efforts to preserve and host alumni publications, student papers, selected faculty papers and conference proceedings resulted in the setup of separate IR collections. The Department of English and Foreign Language publishes a yearly journal of student writings called *Oracle: Undergraduate Journal of Southeastern University*. Many institutions utilize BePress' special area to help publish journals. We applied for and obtained an ISSN from the Library of Congress and hope to begin publishing *Oracle* in FireScholars soon.

Discoverability

The last step in setting up an IR is discoverability. People can always navigate to our university site with direct links to the collection, but there are other ways to find published content. One of our primary goals, like Burrows (2007), was to "promote and disseminate [our] research and achievements" (p. 4). We found that Google spiders will crawl most IRs and index them into Google. We also found that most archives: ContentDM, Digital Commons, Dspace, ePrints and DigiTools are compliant with the Open Archives Initiative Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH). The OAI-PMH allows an automatic open access to the IR ("OAI-

PMH," n.d.). Our library automation system, WorldShare Management Services from OCLC, offers a service called Digital Collection Gateway, which allows for OAI harvesting. This creates MARC records from our IR collections and makes the materials discoverable in our library catalog. The IR Subjects end up in MARC 653 fields, the title appears in the 245 field, the author populates the 720 field, and the abstract populates the 520 field. Our library cataloger helped select the author keywords and Digital Commons subjects for student honors submissions, but these keywords and subjects are not in the OCLC controlled vocabulary. However, these limitations do not appear to inhibit the discoverability of our IR publications.

Conclusion

If your goal is to promote scholarship among your students and faculty, creating an IR might be the right choice. Think carefully about your collection policy and use those who have gone before you in this process. Spend the appropriate time necessary to create policies to address copyright and other issues concerning IR publishing. We liked the web-based tools of BePress that do not require a downloaded local client or complex server installation. We wanted something with a broad universal appeal, global scholarship collection, and open access. With over 430 institutions and over 1,433,000 published works, BePress' Digital Commons Network invites colleges and universities into a greater scholarship community, where authors are making a real contribution. ✝

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