Building an Institutional Repository in Hard Times

Michael Hall  Faith Ope  Deborah Davis  Cliff Landis
Valdosta State University
1500 N. Patterson Street  Valdosta, GA 31698
(vholl, fogu, davdek, jcland@valdosta.edu)

This poster presents an overview of an exploratory research initiative to examine and assess the viability of development of an institutional repository system at a teaching-oriented mid-size university with minimal monetary commitment. A need has been identified for an institutional repository and necessary steps have been taken to implement it. Several departments worked together to create a prototype Institutional Repository using DSpace, an open source repository. Automated Systems Unit volunteered to learn and edit the Manakin interface to fit in with the university’s existing web presence and guidelines. Though XMLUI, the learning curve for XMLUI was steeper than for Manakin.

The Future of the Project
Though developing an IR program may seem relatively cheap and easy to implement at minimal cost, sustaining such a program in terms of keeping the community engaged and maintaining institutional support are key to the success of an IR program. The project team plans for the future focus on a minimal cost approach to maintaining VSU’s IR. Plans are in place to use volunteers and interns to upload faculty and student content so there will be even more incentives for faculty to deposit their materials in the repository. Through a release form for theses and dissertations exists, it has not been standardized and plans are in place to submit a standardized form to the Graduate School for students to submit with their theses and dissertations electronically. A faculty outreach program in spring 2009 will be initiated to raise awareness about the repository and inform faculty and students about hosting and making their scholarly works available to the public through Vtext.

Vtext Policies

Vtext’s V-Text Digital Repository Copyright and Licensing Policy

Copyright owner will grant nonexclusive rights to VSU and T-Text Digital Repository for the non-exclusive copyright owner and will not grant permission to others for promotion and marketing.

Vtext’s V-Text Digital Repository Collection Policy

The V-Text Digital Repository Collection Policy is a simple hierarchy structure: Community/Collection/Work. Once works are submitted, all works will be sorted into two primary categories: authorized and unapproved. The primary focus for future goals is on ensuring that copyright controls. It should be noted that policy development can potentially be one of the more time consuming steps in setting up a repository. However, the Vtext team has chosen to save time by surveying other policies and adapting them where appropriate. Already, VSU has received permission to adopt existing policies from other established repositories such as those at Georgia Tech and at the University of Texas at Austin.

The process began by identifying willing partners within the library and evaluating how their skills could be best applied to the project. Next, the current web presence of digital content created by faculty and students was surveyed to identify candidate materials that could be housed in the repository. Candidate materials for a repository were found in a number of faculty and departmental homepages and in student theses and dissertations. Because Valdosta State is not a large research institution, teaching materials were also identified as a potential source of content.

The next step was to set policies and procedures for the repository. The project needed to set metadata guidelines, file type controls, and copyright controls. It should be noted that policy development can potentially be one of the more time consuming steps in setting up a repository. However, the Vtext team has chosen to save time by surveying other policies and adapting them where appropriate. Already, VSU has received permission to adopt existing policies from other established repositories such as those at Georgia Tech and at the University of Texas at Austin.