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Institutional Repository Task Force Report

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WKUspace
Where **K**nowledge **U**nfolds

"The greater our knowledge increases the more our ignorance unfolds."
-- John F. Kennedy

Essential Elements for a WKU Institutional Repository (IR)

➡ Must have philosophical and financial commitment "top down" from University
   administration for this collaborative effort
➡ Develop a sustainable collection policy and adopt an architecture for managing,
   preserving, backing up, and delivering (access and searching) content
   > Create an institutionally defined service mission and priorities
   > Start small with quality content to showcase value of IR
   > Budget for a hosted service
➡ Market the values and benefits of an IR
   > Centralized site for "communities" – thus efficient
   > Indexed by Google and other harvesters
   > Visible to funding or development agencies as showcase of
   >   accomplishments
   > Forever archived and retrievable
   > Deposits assigned a persistent, permanent identifier (URL, handle)
➡ Understand value, train librarians and develop training/instructional materials, tap
   a few early adopters, and develop public relations program to be used indefinitely
➡ Name the repository something other than Institutional Repository

These elements are discussed more thoroughly in the following pages.

An institutional repository can truly propel WKU into a leading American university with
international reach as possibly the first in Kentucky and certainly as a university on the
cutting edge of a nascent movement with enduring value.

I. Statement of Purpose

An institutional repository (IR) at WKU will offer a *centralized system and service* that supports the intellectual life of the University and will *promote scholarly communication and learning through a managed collection of research and teaching materials* that spans all disciplines and that is offered in consistent metadata structures and deposited in non-proprietary formats to achieve *permanency* and *lasting discovery* and archival value for anyone seeking content on a specialized topic. Documents, productions, and other content cannot be subject to fires, water damage, or vandalism. An IR is essentially fail-safe and forever.

The purpose of an IR is to improve retention and access to scholarly output at an institution and to provide access in perpetuity through a permanent URL for each deposit. The IR can expedite or enhance a traditional publishing model for a journal article, book chapter, or other scholarly output and also showcase to the world what WKU scholars are doing. IRs can provide resources about the University and its accomplishments through carefully managed and organized records, official ceremonies, and other documents of historical value. IRs offer an efficiency of digital location that could ease departmental websites or eliminate duplicate materials and allow users to search a more general database that gets indexed by Google and other metadata harvesters and point to a single URL.

An IR should be named something other than institutional repository in order to convey an exciting, non-threatening environment for scholars to share and communicate, for faculty to showcase accomplishments, for funding agencies to find attractive and knowledgeable initiatives, for fireproof and fail-safe backup in perpetuity. Quality scholarship has lasting, historical value.

IRs are broad-based systems that involve libraries, technology, legal permissions, and other institutional support for a unified emphasis on the value of this electronic space—collaborative efforts within an institution.

Some suggested names are: TOPScholars, TOPSpace, WKUspace, digiSPACE.

Generally a needs assessment, either through survey or interviews, or both, is conducted to determine understandings, buy-ins, initial content, etc.

II. Content, Metatada, and Policy

Standard tags and content offers consistency and searchability (discovery) to scholars. If necessary, some content can be restricted to local users; other content can be truly open access. Also, determine best method of organization for the content (communities, subjects, colleges)

Institutional commitment from top down must exist, as well as financial support to cover technology; however, **content** is the key. Suggestions for seeking early adopters include the following:

Hoffman Environmental Institute projects, maps, unpublished theses
Applied Research and Technology Centers
Working papers; Technical reprints; White papers; Gray literature
Electronic theses and dissertations; honors theses
Special collections, Folklife, Photographs, Digital Kentuckiana
Electronic portfolios
Faculty Publications and CVs
Gaines Media Lecture Series (School of Journalism & Broadcasting)
Learning modules, separated from course support, and deposited for use across disciplines by anyone virtually worldwide
Performances, other artistic creations (video – audio streaming)
Robert Penn Warren Center (lectures, symposiums)
Jim Wayne Miller Writing Contest, finalists' papers
Publications resulting from Center for the Study of the Civil War in the West
Engaging in the Spirit presentations; Commencement speeches, etc.

Additional Examples of Content
- The Honors Program has over 200 capstone theses that have been or are being scanned and loaded onto their website to attract future scholars, to promote a planned undergraduate and graduate program (5-year degree), and to showcase WKU scholars. This is ideal content for an institutional repository
- The upcoming all-day student research conference that will feature undergraduate and graduate presentations, poster sessions, visual and analytic works can reside on the IR. First steps would be to develop an online submission form and URL for Abstracts. Later, the content can be dumped into the IR
- A digitized map of the karst regions in Kentucky could be accessed by geography/geology students at WKU or internationally as renowned scientists seek to know more about caves and other land formations
- A learning module for teachers that shows water quality concepts and awareness remains on the IR long after the specific classes have need of them, thus future teachers can draw upon these modules for instructional purposes
- Working papers of the Gordon Ford College of Business, conference proceedings, technical reports, datasets, dance, art, theater experiences

III. Structure and Costs

The task force examined providers of hosted services (ProQuest/bepress, BioMed Central and VITAL from VLTS).

The best recommendation is to have an IR hosted by ProQuest's Digital Commons, one of the few and leading providers. For our FTE greater than 7500, the annual cost is

$34,500. Staffing implications for oversight of system, metadata decisions, development of instructional materials, troubleshooting and other support will involve current positions, as well as possible new positions as the project expands. Library faculty and staff will realize different expectations and responsibilities as the repository unfolds (partial reassignments of responsibilities, increased attention to and manipulation of IR content by public and technical services faculty and students or graduate assistants, where possible, etc.) Additional start-up costs will be required if digitization is pursued as a logical progression and service in the form of a reasonably professional digitization lab, or funds to collaborate with a bindery that provides such services on a larger scale. Digitization equipment or that service is desirable should materials be identified that exist only in print and are valuable to deposit digitally.

Other collaboration must include IT as needed to resolve software issues, authentication, etc., advice from legal counsel, knowledge of creative commons and other licenses, copyright and intellectual property issues, and expectation that all library faculty will support, solicit, and, where needed, assist in content development or facilitation to the repository.

If WKU were to host its own IR, we would need server space, personnel devoted to programming and maintenance, back-up, upgrades, data migration as technology changes, and other issues directly impacting IT and requiring additional staffing, a far more costly option than a hosted server. WKU would also have to locate and pay for remote storage back-up, an essential component of an IR—in perpetuity and fail-safe. For example, the University of Washington library hosts its own IR using DSpace. They have added staff, such as a system administrator and they need more programming support to achieve additional system changes and functionality.

IV. Licensing and Permissions

An IR requires legal parameters for uploading data, granting rights or receiving rights to place on an IR, distribution rights, privacy usage data, statistics, and digital rights management where user wants work limited to WKU community only.

Understanding differences in copyright, creative commons licenses, and license to publish models must exist and be assigned to a specific person or persons. Some legal considerations are publisher driven for an author who wants to deposit an article, book chapter, or monograph.

Retention is long term or in perpetuity based on the assumption that scholarship will have historical, lasting value. An item may be removed if a professor leaves an institution and no longer wants to be associated at that site or if work subsequently is copyrighted by the author or the copyright holder terminates the license to disseminate the work.

V. Training and New Responsibilities

An institutional repository encourages creators of intellectual works to self-archive their material. This redefines the role of the librarian since self-archived materials must still adhere to protocols that assure access and preservation. The librarian's role will now include introducing creators of intellectual works to important issues including digital format choices, resource preservation, copyright, and metadata. It is critical that librarians be prepared to teach people how to responsibly create and self-archive digital images and resources for institutional repositories and to assume the role of providing assistance for mentoring or capturing unique and valuable content that may reside as untapped historic, scholarly resources within the University.

Training is two-part: (1) training authors and staff in software use and protocol and moving library faculty to new level of responsibility in actively seeking content for collections beyond traditional collection management. Faculty can have departmental assistants proxy in their works. Undergraduates would need faculty sponsorship or oversight, and (2) training users developing training materials for users and providing materials for subject librarians so they can help guide users in responsible institutional repository deposits and in discovering the value of such.

Establishing and creating a viable IR often involves a culture shift for disciplines that are unaccustomed to self-archiving preprints or post prints. Training and public relations can assist but impetus from administrators and the efficiencies of the ideal can help.

VI. Marketing and Public Relations (PR)

Marketing and public relations involve every librarian and administrator, as well as other faculty who can positively seek out and discuss individually and with departments and colleges the value of IR deposits and that this is part of an institutionally defined initiative for scholarly communication that creates broader communities for research materials than exists within departments.

Librarians must engage in outreach, talk to colleges, departments, individuals and be excited about IRs. Personal contact is most effective. Content development is a continuous process.

Submitted by
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