Implementing an Institutional Repository at Central Michigan University

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Abstract

Central Michigan University has embarked on the creation of an institutional repository to collect and disseminate the scholarly, creative, and institutional documents of the university. In the spring of 2008, the repository was launched using CONTENTdm software from OCLC. In an attempt to convey the broad scope envisioned by the repository implementation team, hereafter called the Repository Team, the repository was named the **C**entral Michigan University **On**line **D**igital **O**bject **R**epository or CONDOR. CONDOR can be accessed at http://repository.cmich.edu.

This paper details the process by which the institutional repository was created, obstacles addressed, goals defined, and looks at plans for the future. Among the obstacles were faculty buy-in, university buy-in, initial and ongoing funding, copyright compliance, busy schedules, lack of dedicated staff, and the promotion and tenure culture of the academic community. This paper will examine how the Repository Team has begun to address these issues to foster interest and to move CONDOR forward.

Definitions

Institutional Repository - According to Clifford Lynch (2003) "A university-based institutional repository is a set of services that a university offers to the members of its community for the management and dissemination of digital materials created by the institution and its community members. It is most essentially an organizational commitment to the stewardship of these digital materials, including long-term preservation where appropriate, as well as organization and access or distribution."

Object - *Object* refers to any entity (image, peer-reviewed article, podcast, etc.) in any format (print, audio, video, etc.) that has been produced by a creator and contributed to the repository. This definition is derived from the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative [http://dublincore.org/documents/dcmi-terms].

Objects include such things as:

Pre-prints of journal articles
Approved post-prints
Works in progress
Performances
Learning objects
Grant proposals and reports
Digitized special collections
University policies
University meeting minutes
Theses and dissertations
Student research projects
Images
Technical reports
Syllabi and lesson plans
Poetry and plays
Datasets
Archival material
White papers
Conference presentations
Posters

Creator - *Creator* refers to "An entity primarily responsible for making the resource" as defined by Dublin Core Metadata Initiative [http://dublincore.org/documents/dcmi-terms].

Open Access Publishing – *Open Access Publishing* refers to the information dissemination model that makes information freely available, typically via the internet, without restriction to everyone.

Background

In 2006 members of the Libraries staff began exploring the feasibility of developing an institutional repository at Central Michigan University. As the concept was explored, it became evident that this was a project worth pursuing. Conversations with faculty and staff outside the Libraries uncovered other university departments that were planning smaller more focused repository projects. Some departments were already engaged in developing the infrastructure to house their departmental research. Soon a cross-departmental team known as the Repository Team was assembled. Team members were drawn from the Libraries, the university archives, the Office of Information Technology, the Department of English Language and Literature, the Geography Department, the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow College of Health Professions, Off-campus Programs, the Faculty Center for Innovative Teaching (FaCIT), and the Department of Counseling and Special Education.

Phase I - Funding

The first action of the team was to seek funding. In 2005 Central Michigan University revealed its five-year strategic plan known as the CMU 2010 Initiative. According to the 2010 website, "CMU 2010 is Central Michigan University's strategic plan for achieving its vision. Sometimes referred to as the vision plan, CMU 2010 outlines five institutional priorities as well as strategies and initiatives that are being pursued in order to achieve the priorities." Monies were allocated to fund projects that align with the university's stated 2010 goals and priorities. Believing that the institutional repository met the stated criteria, the Repository Team submitted funding proposals to the 2010 process in the fall of 2006 and again in the spring of 2007. Although several proposals were funded by the CMU 2010 Initiative committees, the repository project was not among them. Realizing the value of an institutional repository to the university, the Libraries administration worked with OCLC to reallocate monies in our OCLC deposit account and funded a two year pilot project using CONTENTdm software.

Phase II – Implementation Plan

With funding temporarily resolved, work began in earnest on the repository in the fall of 2007. The team reviewed the literature, examined existing repositories, conferred with repository administrators at other universities and began to craft the repository. As a way to focus the team's efforts, the Repository Team prepared an implementation plan. The plan was divided into sections covering such topics as: the project's mission statement; the role of the project manager; the role of the team members; key deliverables (outcomes) for each stage of the project; goals; potential constraints to the successful completion of the project; estimated costs; marketing; training; and assessment. In addition to assessing the overall benefit of the repository to both contributors and to the university community, the plan provided criteria for assessment of whether adequate support (staffing, training, consultants if needed, resources, etc.) was allocated at each phase of the project.

The plan tasked the team with responsibility for setting up and maintaining infrastructure, policies and procedures, coordination with the university attorney on documentation, working with copyright owners, uploading objects to the repository, assigning metadata, marketing, and training.

The plan identified potential constraints to the successful completion of the project. Among them were insufficient time, budget, and staffing; software limitations; lack of faculty buy-in; staff workloads that do not allow adequate time to work on this project; incorrect assumptions on the part of team members, contributors and the university; goals that are not in line with resources; unrealistic deadlines; the loss of participants because the process takes too long; lack of a clear definition of the scope of the project; resources unavailable at the point of need; and decisions not properly documented. Many of these constraints have been echoed in the literature as is represented by Davis and Connelly (2007) and Foster and Gibbons (2005).

In addition to establishing the overall goals of the project, the plan addressed the goals, objectives and scope for each phase of the project. Critical to success was the identification of key individuals needed to effectively accomplish the stated goals and identification of the timeline required for completion. Documentation of tasks, decisions and steps helped keep the team on task.

With any project of this type, licensure issues are of preeminent concern. The plan identified who should assume responsibility for licensure, what was needed to negotiate the license, and when license provisions began and ended. Frequent communication on license provisions to all involved parties helped ensure that licensure provisions were upheld. Restrictions and obligations of both the vendor and the library were communicated to all members of the team.

Concurrent with the formation of the implementation plan was an effort to garner a better understanding of the software's capabilities. The team participated in a formal training session and worked together to uncover additional features and functions of the software.

Phase III – Policies and Procedures

In phase three, policies, procedures, a *Frequently Asked Questions* (FAQ) document, text for the website's homepage, and a *Best Practices Guide* were created. Only two policies were deemed necessary. The first outlined the rights and responsibilities of the repository. The Repository Team was assigned responsibility for such things as marketing, training, preservation, hardware and software maintenance, implementing processes to address intellectual property rights, and cataloging and assigning metadata. In exchange, the Repository Team asked for the right to retain, reproduce and disseminate objects; to negotiate agreements with software and hardware vendors; to migrate objects if a format is in danger of obsolescence; and to deny admission of an object that does not meet the mission of the repository.

The second policy detailed the process for requesting the withdrawal of an object from the repository. Following numerous lively discussions, the team established the criteria for consideration of removal. Challenged items will be suppressed while an investigation is conducted. The challenger must provide specific rationale supporting their objections to the repository object. If an object meets any one of three criteria, it will be suppressed immediately by the Repository Team regardless of whether a challenge has been formally made. The three criteria are: 1) inaccurate factual information; 2) plagiarized material; and 3) slanderous statements. Later in the process the team found it necessary to implement a few guidelines to address submissions that were deemed inappropriate. Guidelines were adopted to address submissions that were unrelated to scholarly research, were not job related, linked to commercial sites, or provided links that did not resolve to actual content.

Phase three also saw the creation of letters and forms. A letter was developed to request publisher permission to include the object in the repository. An author agreement form [see Appendix A] was developed to ensure that the author/creator understood how their contribution would be handled by the repository. Later a co-author agreement form was developed for co-authors with no Central Michigan University affiliation. Following a revised opinion from the university attorney, the repository is no longer required to obtain permission from all co-authors before an item can be submitted to the repository. All letters and forms were reviewed and approved by the university attorney.

Phase IV – Submission form

Phase four brought the development of an online form to streamline the submission process. The form seeks to elicit as much metadata as possible from the contributor and allows the object to be submitted as an attachment. The submission form is linked to the university's campus ID server thereby affording the opportunity to authenticate the submitter and filter out spam and submissions from those not affiliated with the university. The form also links to the author agreement form and includes definitions of each metadata field.

Phase four also brought the beginning of our marketing efforts. The marketing plan is discussed later in this article.

Issues and Problems

Major hurdles – According to the literature, our major hurdles were, and are, those most commonly faced in the implementation of all institutional repositories. The first hurdle has been to convince the institution of the value of the repository and explain the purpose of the repository. The second hurdle has been to overcome the lack of faculty buy-in. Foster and Gibbons (2005 studied faculty research and writing including the ways researchers feel about repositories. One of their key findings was that faculty want to share their research with others. Foster and Gibbons concluded that researchers first and foremost want items in the repository to be safe. Secondly, researchers saw the repository as a mechanism for helping others "find, use and cite the work they put into them" (para. 19).

Our experience has been that researchers do not see the repository as something that can help them meet the goals identified by Foster and Gibbons. This is due in part to lack of knowledge and in part to concerns about such issues as copyright, promotion and tenure, and intellectual property rights. Addressing faculty concerns is paramount to the success of the repository. Making time to meet with university units to explain the possibilities that the repository brings to the academy is critical to overcoming these hurdles.

Copyright and intellectual property rights – Primary among the issues surrounding faculty buy-in is the concern for loss of intellectual property rights (IP) and copyright infringement. Three avenues were pursued at Central Michigan University to address these issues. First the team reviewed copyright and intellectual property rights law. Second the team developed the documents described in the section on phase three of our project. These documents are the author agreement form and the letter soliciting approval from copyright holders. Third the team developed language for the copyright field of the metadata.

While investigating copyright and intellectual property rights issues, the team questioned whether our faculty was aware of their right to retain many of the copyright provisions for their works. This led to a decision to promote the SPARC "Author Addendum" (http://www.arl.org/sparc/author/index.shtml) as a component of our marketing plan.

The intellectual property rights owner retains intellectual property rights to all objects placed in the repository. In some cases this will be the creator/author of the object. In others the creator/author has turned over the rights to the publisher. Acknowledging that no print or online resource is completely safe from those who wish to plagiarize, the repository team instituted procedures to establish the identity of the rights holders and to restrict access as needed. Access can be restricted on a case-by-case basis or for a group of objects. To date few objects are restricted, as the goal is to promote and grow the repository. That goal would be severely hindered if the majority of the objects were suppressed from view.

Copyright and intellectual property rights are established by applying appropriate metadata. This may or may not be the same entity. A signed release from the author/creator plus a release from the copyright owner must be on file before an object is added to the repository. A tracking mechanism was established to confirm that all approvals have been garnered before the object is added to the repository. This is discussed later in this article.

Bailey (2008) reports on a new policy by the *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology (*JASIST). It allows authors to self-archive preprints by posting them to their personal websites as long as they are properly labeled as a preprint. Although Bailey is reporting this as a new policy for JASIST, the repository team found that many publishers have had policies in place allowing preprints to be posted on personal websites and in institutional repositories. It is important that we make our faculty aware of this as we educate them on the uses and value of the repository. Publisher websites or the *SHERPA/RoMEO Publisher Copyright Policies and Self-Archiving* database [http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/remeo.php] can establish the publisher's policy in this area. The Central Michigan University General Counsel advised that we use SHERPA/RoMEO cautiously as this is a British website and it would be difficult to mount a legal argument based on a website that does not come under U.S. law. Regardless of whether the publisher's website includes a statement allowing preprints to be added to the repository, the University's General Counsel advised that no post-print be included without documented approval from the copyright owner.

Work for hire – Although it may be labeled differently at other institutions, work for hire is a common concept. At Central Michigan University, "work for hire" is defined as documents, coursework, learning objects, syllabi or any object that was created under the terms of a specific contractual agreement. This definition excludes objects created in the course of one's job, such as a faculty member who creates syllabi to support his or her courses. Works for hire extends to learning objects, documentation, and other creations that are produced by a staff member whose primary job responsibility is to create the type of object in question, such as images created by the university photographer.

Reappointment, promotion and tenure - Faculty concern for meeting the requirements of reappointment, promotion and tenure pose significant obstacles. Departmental bylaws set down strict criteria that must be met for promotion and tenure. These criteria are based on the traditional scholarly publishing model which requires that research be published in peer-reviewed journals within the discipline. Contributing to an institutional repository is not acceptable within these criteria, therefore eliminating much of the incentive to contribute to the repository. At this stage in our repository most contributions are for post-prints from peer-reviewed journals. This is not likely to change until the culture of the academe changes and the open-access publishing model gains acceptance.

The February 2008 edition of the *Chronicle of Higher Education* reported that Harvard University's Faculty of Arts and Sciences adopted a policy requiring faculty to contribute their research articles to the university's institutional repository. This decision was a major step forward for the open access movement. Despite this decision, other academic institutions have been slow to follow. Open access is the publishing model whereby research is made available freely to anyone through institutional repositories and open access databases such as PubMed. One of the goals of open access is to help reduce the upward trend of journal prices. Another goal is to break the cycle of the academy paying researchers to produce research which is given to publishers to satisfy reappointment and tenure, who sell this back to the academy in expensive peer-reviewed journals which often are reviewed at no charge by members of the academy who are reviewing in order to meet reappointment and tenure criteria.

Learning objects - An unexpected issue surfaced during conversations with faculty. Suggestions to contribute lesson plans, learning objects and teaching aids were met with strong opposition. Despite the fact that within the Libraries, syllabi, assignments and handouts are freely shared, we were informed that this was atypical. Many university departments evaluate syllabi and instructional aids as part of the reappointment and tenure process thereby creating a culture where such materials are protected and not shared among colleagues.

Quality – Concern was raised by faculty over the inclusion of non-peer reviewed materials alongside peer-reviewed materials in the repository. Non-peer-reviewed materials take many forms including unpublished surveys and reports, student research, preprints, working papers, conference presentations, poster sessions, primary materials from the university and other archives, datasets, dissertations, theses, and other forms of unpublished data. We have addressed the issue of student publications by requiring that all student work be approved by a faculty member. As for other unpublished material, the Repository Team has taken the position that lack of formal publication does not imply lack of value. The team has chosen to place the responsibility for assessing the value of an object on the contributor. If the creator believes the object to be of value to others, the object does not violate any copyright provisions, and it is in some way related to the creative and professional mission of the university (no vacation pictures allowed), then it can be contributed to the repository.

Lack of time – As Foster and Gibbons (2005) reported, one of the concerns expressed by researchers was a lack of time. Among the things that researchers "wanted most to be able to" was to "not be any busier" (p. 4). Asking researchers to take the extra step of contributing material to the repository is a significant request. It is important for those managing the repository to acknowledge this when working with researchers.

Duplication of Effort – Often researchers have contributed to their personal website and to a courseware product. They see no incentive in contributing to a repository because they consider their research to already be widely accessible. It is important for those managing the repository to explain that the repository can make the research more widely accessible than a website by improving retrievability through search engines. The repository can also shift the burden of archiving and safeguarding the work from the faculty member to the repository team. Finally, the repository allows researchers to identify relationships among the work of several researchers who have contributed to the repository. Identifying these relationships would not be possible with items posted to individual websites.

Management and Documentation

To ensure that permission to contribute to the repository has been obtained, a SharePoint site was established. SharePoint is a Microsoft product designed for collaboration and sharing documents. Utilizing a SharePoint site allows multiple people to access and manipulate the files and avoids problems that result when needed information exists in one person's email or file cabinet. The SharePoint site includes a spreadsheet used for tracking copyright approval. The spreadsheet monitors the date the letter was sent; the address used; the nature of the permission (specific item or blanket permission); whether a response was received; the nature of the response; and whether permissions were received from all copyright and intellectual property rights owners. A second spreadsheet tracks the presentations and workshops conducted to promote the repository. In addition to the spreadsheets the SharePoint site stores scanned copies of all completed author agreement forms and copyright holder responses.

To complement SharePoint a Blackboard courseware site was created. The Blackboard site contains meeting minutes, the implementation plan and all versions of the documentation. Either Blackboard or SharePoint could have been used exclusively, but we decided to implement two different approaches to data storage especially since SharePoint is a more effective product for collaboration.

Assigning Metadata

Metadata is assigned from two different avenues. The creator supplies metadata during the submission process, thereby creating a folksonomy of keyword terms. The standard Dublin Core metadata fields make up the elements of the submission form. Working from the creator supplied metadata a staff member massages this information by adding the creator's university department and reformatting data into our approved form. Our cataloger performs the final review, edits the metadata and assigns Library of Congress subject headings. The metadata fields include: creator; title, publication date, copyright subject headings, keywords, description, format, and type of publication. For more information on Dublin Core metadata see the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative at http://dublincore.org/documents/dcmi-terms.

Promoting and Marketing the Repository

A good first step in the marketing process is to identify a "champion." Find someone in a prominent position within the organization who can champion your project across campus. This will open doors that would otherwise be difficult to enter. With a champion identified, the marketing efforts can turn outward to the university community. We began with an open presentation to the university community that was co-sponsored by another university department. This co-sponsorship added credibility to the presentation and the project and allowed us to take advantage of their marketing outlets.

Subsequent presentations were aimed at the departments represented by our project partners and targeted toward the senior officers of the university. The desired outcome was to gain the support of the senior administration and to ignite interest in the project. The desired outcome was achieved and subsequent presentations were scheduled.

A strong component of any strategy is to collaborate and establish partnerships whenever possible. For us an important collaboration is with our Office of Sponsored Research. This department provides support to researchers, especially those receiving grants. With their extensive contact with researchers, they are in the prime position to inform researchers of the repository and how it can serve to make their research more accessible to the world. Partners can help inform researchers that contributing to the repository can fulfill those grant requirements which call for the free public dissemination of the research data.

In promoting the repository it is important to stress the benefits an institutional repository can bring and to tailor this portion of the presentation to the audience. An institutional repository offers benefits to both the creator/researcher and to the institution. See appendices for additional information on benefits to researchers and the academy.

Marketing of the repository has revealed that many researchers are unaware or their rights as a copyright holder. They typically sign away more rights than are legally required. As part of the marketing plan, we will include information about SPARC's author form and tips for authors.

As we move forward with our marketing efforts, we will be employing many of the techniques cited by Foster and Gibbons (2005) such as working through library liaisons, working one-on-one with faculty researchers, and stressing the repository's benefits to researchers. We will also utilize suggestions noted in the research findings of Bell, Foster and Gibbons (2005) which revealed that researchers are more likely to contribute to a repository when "librarians provide individualized information, and direct support" (p. 286). By offering to provide training and assistance with the submission process, we can acknowledge researchers' busy schedules and their desire to widely distribute their research. By making personal contact and suggesting the submission of specific objects, we can appeal to creators who may not have considered contributing to the repository.

Bell, Foster and Gibbons (2005) also stressed the importance of ensuring that the librarians' message is clear, understandable, and addresses issues of importance to faculty members rather than issues of importance to librarians. Thirdly, Bell, Foster and Gibbons (2005) emphasized the significance of understanding the role of grey literature in each discipline and illustrating to researchers how the repository can serve to promote grey literature and make it widely accessible.

Gierveld (2006) presents a four part strategy for promoting the repository. Her first strategy is the profiling strategy. This strategy is designed to convince researchers of the benefits of the repository. Strategy two is the pull strategy. The pull strategy attempts to make the repository attractive to potential contributors. The third strategy is the push strategy. This strategy's goal is to create a positive attitude toward the repository and to show "the positive effect once the materials have been deposited" (p. 7). The final strategy is the consultation strategy.   In this stage, two-way communication is the goal. This is achieved through surveys, meetings, work groups, peer-to-peer communication and other forms of soliciting feedback about the repository. As of this writing, our team has not discussed this type of approach. However, some of the ideas presented by Gierveld mirror those noted in earlier research findings.

Conclusion

Despite what may happen in the future, the creation of CONDOR has been a positive experience on everyone involved. It has promoted cross-departmental cooperation. It has provided greater insight into the unique reappointment and tenure concerns of various disciplines. It has opened the door for discussion of the open access movement. And it has sparked discussions of how the university can do a better job of organizing and distributing information, especially grey literature that resides in file cabinets and on individual personal computers.

As we move forward, the goal of the Repository Team is to continue to promote and grow the repository. To accomplish this, the team must educate the campus community, simplify the message, appeal to the needs and desires of researchers and demonstrate the benefits of the repository. The Repository Team, with the aid of library liaisons, will assist researchers, educate them on copyright retention, and introduce them to the benefits of open access publishing. With time, perhaps, the culture of the academy will be more favorable toward institutional repositories and open access archives in general. In the short term, the Repository Team can strive to leverage the repository to fulfill Foster and Gibbons' (2005) finding that faculty want to share their research with others by encouraging researchers to contribute their work to CONDOR.

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Appendix A

Central Michigan University's Online Digital Object Repository (CONDOR) Author's Depositing Agreement

Submission of material to the Repository does not change the ownership of intellectual property rights and/or copyright. Upon depositing material to the Repository, the submitter agrees to the following:

I am, at the time of this submission, a currently enrolled student at and/or currently employed by Central Michigan University;

I am the legal copyright holder of the submitted work, or have been authorized by the legal copyright holder(s) to post this document to the Repository, and its submission is in compliance with existing United States copyright laws and with Central Michigan University policies;

I warrant that the submitted document does not infringe upon or violate the rights of others, including the right to third-party privacy, nor does it contain libelous matter;

I hereby grant Central Michigan University the non-exclusive right to retain, reproduce, display, and distribute the submitted work for the purposes of the Repository;

I grant Central Michigan University the right to create and retain more than one copy of the work for the purposes of security, back-up, and/or preservation, and further allow the Repository to, without altering the original content of the material, apply metadata for indexing purposes and to migrate the work to a different medium or format for the purposes of preservation and access in the future.

I understand that it is the preference of the Repository to retain any deposited item in perpetuity.

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Print Name

____________________________________ ____________________

Signature Date

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For Student Submissions

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Signature of Faculty Advisor/Mentor

Revised January 29, 2008

Appendix B

Benefits to Researchers

- Makes research more visible through federated searching and through search engines such as Google.
- Open access has been shown to make your work more visible with higher citation rates.
- Provides (with permission) access to articles published in journals to which the university does not subscribe.
- Provides a venue for making unpublished works visible and discoverable.
- Preserves data for future researchers.
- Provides a place to showcase and coordinate student research.
- Consolidates the storage of data for easy access by everyone and eliminates the need to go to multiple websites.
- Preserves digital objects in up-to-date formats.
- Promotes open access publishing.
- Allows easy discovery of the research of your colleagues.
- Provides a place to showcase special collections, performances, and images.
- Registers ideas and establishes intellectual property rights.
- Creates an opportunity to promote collaboration.
- Shifts the burden of responsibility for preservation of files from the individual faculty to the institution.
- Allows researchers to maintain ownership of their work.

Appendix C

Benefits to the University

"For universities, repositories are marketing tools communicating capabilities and quality by **showcasing faculty and student research**, **public service projects, and other activities and collections**."
M. A. Drake (2004).

- Consolidates staff resources by providing a single place to store data.
- Promotes the creative and scholarly output of the university.
- Makes research more visible to researchers worldwide and raises the profile of the institution.
- Makes the work and objectives of university departments easy to find thereby creating opportunities for collaborations in new and different ways.
- Lowers costs to the University by eliminating redundant efforts.
- Provides a tool to facilitate research and to enhance teaching content.
- Preserves digital objects in an up-to-date digital format, thereby avoiding inaccessible files.
- Shifts the burden of responsibility from the individual to the institution by making the repository team responsible for archiving the content.
- Increases the visibility and distribution of university archives and unpublished research.
- Preserves important publications that are available increasingly in electronic-only format.
- Provides access to CMU research that is published in journals to which the university does not subscribe.