

Directors' Message: New NSF requirements for data management

Dear TDL Members,

As promised, the National Science Foundation released guidelines this month for a new Data Management Plan (DMP) requirement. The new rule, which takes effect in January 2011, will require grant-seekers to include a two-page plan for collecting, managing, sharing, and preserving the data they generate in the course of funded research projects.

The requirement is one example of a trend among funding agencies to require researchers to make research openly available (when practicable) and to preserve data collected in the course of research. It is also one reason why organizations such as the Texas Digital Library, which provides collaborative and cost-effective ways of publishing and preserving research, are essential.

TDL strives to provide researchers at our member institutions with services that support their research. That includes providing venues for online, open-access publication – such as in TDL repositories and online journals. It also includes ensuring that published research is securely stored and available for future generations through the TDL Preservation Network.

We encourage library staff and offices of research at our member institutions to familiarize themselves and their faculty members with the new requirements from the NSF and to, in turn, encourage faculty to take advantage of the tools available through TDL for fulfilling these requirements.



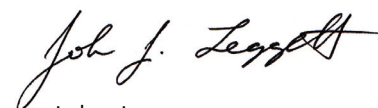
The general set of Data Management Plan guidelines is available in the NSF Grant Proposal Guide at <http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/dmp.jsp>. Guidelines specific to certain directorates or other NSF units are also available.

Additionally, TDL has relevant information and links to useful resources available in the TDL Wiki at http://wikis.tdl.org/tdl/Data_Management, and we welcome calls and questions from our members about how the TDL can serve faculty in this regard.

Sincerely,



Mark McFarland
TDL Co-director



John Leggett
TDL Co-director

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Trainers needed! TDL courses offer chances for learning, giving back

The Texas Digital Library provides low-cost training courses to faculty and staff each semester, in order to support its members in the use of TDL services and technologies. The courses are held at Baylor University, which generously provides training facilities and logistical support as part of its membership commitment to the TDL.

According to TDL program coordinator Ryan Steans, the TDL training program uses a volunteer-based model in which courses are both taught by and attended by TDL members. As a result, the TDL training program is not only an opportunity for members to get the most out of TDL services but also a chance to give back to the consortium.

"We depend on volunteers from within the TDL community to lead and assist in each of our training courses," Steans said. "We'd love for people who have benefitted from TDL training to step up and

be willing to teach a class for the benefit of other members."

In the TDL's "tag-team" approach to training, each class has a teacher and a co-teacher, both volunteers from among the TDL membership community.

The co-teacher observes the class and assists the main instructor. The next time the class is offered, the co-teacher becomes the main teacher for the class and has a new co-teacher, who will, in turn, lead the next class, continuing the training cycle indefinitely into the future.

This model offers two significant benefits to the TDL organization and to member institutions:

First, as TDL's small staff does not include a professional trainer, the tag-team model allows TDL to share the teaching load among a large group and create an ever-widening pool of potential trainers. It also allows the TDL to keep training costs low.

Second, for members, it provides an effective way to create campus-level experts in TDL technologies who can go back to their local institutions and provide training to colleagues there.

The best way to learn a technology is to teach it, according to Steans. And once a member has learned and taught a TDL technology, he/she can take that knowledge back to campus.

"The best way to provide local training is to join us in Waco, co-teach a course, and then return to your home campus ready to teach your colleagues," Steans said.

The TDL is offering courses in November (listed at left) that have openings for co-teachers. Anyone interested in attending, co-teaching, or leading a TDL training course can contact Ryan Steans at info@tdl.org or by phone at 512-495-4403.

Additional information about TDL training courses is available at <http://www.tdl.org/training>. ◇

Upcoming TDL Training Courses

November 15 —9 AM to 4 PM

[Intro to DSpace](#)

November 16 —9 AM to 4 PM

[ETD Management with Vireo](#)

December 15 —9 AM to 4 PM

[Using WordPress to Create Blogs and Websites](#)

Other courses offered by TDL:

- MediaWiki
- Open Journal Systems
- Open Conference Systems
- DSpace
- Vireo

Find more info at TDL.org/training.

Technical teams tackle Vireo enhancements, business continuity plan

Two TDL technical teams have been hard at work on two important projects for the consortium: (1) adding new embargo functionality to Vireo and (2) developing a more robust business continuity plan to ensure the availability of TDL services and data.

Vireo improvements

The TDL development team is finishing up work on a development release of its Vireo electronic thesis and dissertation submission and management system. During the past several weeks, the team has added new functionality related to embargoes, such as publication delays.

Laura Hammons, chair of the [Vireo Users Group](#) (VUG) served as “product owner” for the sprint (i.e. development iteration) as a representative of the group. As product owner, Hammons worked with the team to determine what new functionality should take priority and will sign off on the work when completed.

When the changes are released into production, administrative managers will be able to add and edit new embargo types and durations. The new functionality will also provide students and faculty committee chairs with more and clearer information about embargo options.

Because it allows institutions to establish customized embargo types, the new functionality will make Vireo even more flexible, Hammons said.

“This sprint represents an excellent set of enhancements that will benefit all of our stakeholders through greater customization and more precise communication,” Hammons said.

The team held an initial demonstration of the new features on October 13. One functional requirement was not successfully demonstrated, however, and the team returned to work to fix the bug that was causing the failure.

The new embargo functionality will be available for

Who’s using Vireo?

Usage of Vireo, the TDL’s submission and management system for electronic theses and dissertations, continues to grow. Several TDL members plan to use Vireo for the first time in Fall 2010, while others have used the software for multiple semesters.

Currently, the following member institutions or TDL friends have deployed Vireo, or will deploy by the end of the fall semester:

- Texas A&M University
- Texas A&M University at Qatar
- Texas A&M University at Galveston
- Texas State University
- Texas Tech University
- University of Houston
- University of Texas at Austin
- University of Texas at Brownsville
- University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

*University of Illinois deployed Vireo initially under a license agreement with the Texas Digital Library and has contributed development work to the project. ◇

members testing and training in their “labs” Vireo installations beginning the week of October 25. Following a week-long testing period, the TDL will release the new functionality as Vireo 1.1.0 on all TDL-hosted Vireo installations.

Precise dates for both the labs and production releases will be announced through the Vireo Users Group listserv.

Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity Plan Development

A second TDL technical team – the Installation, Configuration, and Management

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Tech teams work on Vireo, business continuity, cont.

(ICM) team— completed a development sprint on October 8 devoted to evaluating disaster recovery solutions for TDL services and data.

As a method of backing up TDL's service platforms and member assets, the team has re-created many of the TDL's scholarly communications platforms on Amazon's Elastic Compute Cloud (EC2), an Internet-based service that provides computing power on demand, much in the same way an electricity grid operates. Among the services replicated in the Amazon "cloud" during the sprint were the TDL.org

website, online journals, online conference management tools, blogs, and wikis.

Following the October 8 sprint review and demonstration, the ICM team began a sprint aimed at backing up the remaining TDL services – such as its DSpace repositories, Vireo ETD management systems, and Shibboleth federated authentication – through Amazon Web Services. Additionally, the team is evaluating other potential uses of cloud computing for TDL, such as the creation of sample environments to be used in TDL training courses. ◇

Tech Teams Update

The Tech Teams Update is a new feature intended to provide information about the work of the TDL technical staff, which includes:

- a Software Development team with members in Austin and College Station;
- an Installation, Configuration, and Management (ICM) team located in Austin;
- a Support team located in Lubbock.

Development Team

See the story "Technical teams make progress on Vireo, business continuity projects" for more information about recent software development efforts on Vireo.

Following the Vireo 1.1.0 release, the team will begin a two-week development sprint devoted to the Texas Learning Object Repository.

ICM Team

The ICM team provides systems administration and second-level production support.

Recent activities of the ICM team include evaluating cloud computing for disaster recovery backup and other purposes. See the story "Technical teams make progress on Vireo, business continuity projects" for more.

Support Team

The TDL Support team provides frontline user support to TDL members.

Recent activities of the Support team include:

- Responding to help requests as they come through the TDL Helpdesk.



Texas Water Journal launches on TDL Electronic Press

The Texas Digital Library (TDL) is excited to welcome the Texas Water Journal, a new research journal affiliated with the Texas Water Resources Institute at Texas A&M University, to the TDL Electronic Press. The journal published its inaugural issue in late September. It provides in-depth analysis of Texas water resources management and policy issues from a multi-disciplinary perspective.

The journal is hosted by the Texas Digital Library and managed using Open Journal Systems, the online journal management tool used by the TDL.

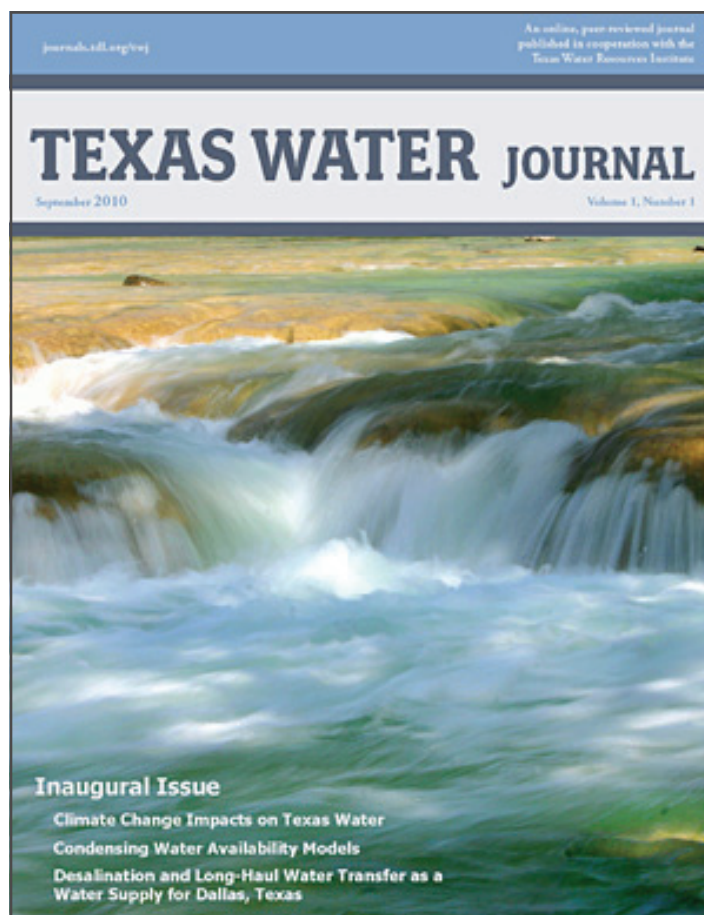
According to managing editor Kathy Wythe, the Texas Water Journal opted to host the journal with the TDL because of the resources and stability that it afforded.

"We knew that the professional technical resources available through the TDL would be beneficial to us," Wythe said. "We also felt it was important to associate the journal with an organization that could ensure the sustainability of the journal for years to come."

Articles in the Texas Water Journal are freely available and provide practical information on important water issues. "It's not a typical academic journal," Wythe said. "While it is peer-reviewed, the journal focuses on current, real-world issues facing policy-makers and others in the state."

Wythe is communications manager for the Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI), which is providing editorial support and management for the Texas Water Journal. Dr. Todd Votteler, executive manager of intergovernmental relations and policy for the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority, serves as editor-in-chief for the journal. Dr. Ralph Wurbs, TWRI associate director for engineering, and Kathy A. Alexander also serve on the editorial board.

According to Wythe, the Texas Water Journal posts articles in small batches as they complete the editorial process, in order to make new research available as quickly as possible.



The Texas Water Journal, a new academic journal hosted by the TDL Electronic Press, published its inaugural issue in September.

"Releasing articles as they are completed prevents a lag in publication and takes full advantage of the benefits of online publication," Wythe said.

The current issue of the Texas Water Journal features three articles, including works related to climate change, water desalination, and water availability modeling. The journal is considering future issues on special topics.

The Texas Water Journal is available at <http://journals.tdl.org/twj>. For more information, contact Kathy Wythe, Managing Editor, at 979-845-1862 or kwythe@tamu.edu. ◇

Texas A&M Libraries adds new collection, features to DSpace

By Molly K. Painter, Texas A&M University Libraries



What's old is new again. The Texas A&M University [Digital Library and Repository](#) has coupled a [Cushing](#) Memorial Library and Archives collection of historical African-American farming and lifestyle photos, entitled "[Toward a Better](#)

[Living: African American Farming Communities in Mid-Century Texas.](#)" with a new digital preservation technology.

The [dijatoka](#) (silent 'd') server and viewer are open-source products that allow panning and zooming of JPEG2000 images. Because the format uses lossless compression, images in the JPEG2000 format are well suited for both access and long-term preservation, according to Holly Mercer, head of Digital Services and Scholarly Communication. She said the result is large, high-quality photographs and images paired with the added bonus of smaller file sizes for easy storage and quick loading times.

"We've long been searching for a way to better share the depth and breadth of our image-based, historical collections with the public at large," Steven Smith, associate dean for Collections and Services, said. "This new visualization tool does a great job of rendering quality reproductions of our historic images, and it's also a much more flexible and extensible tool than we've used in the past."

Because the Texas A&M Repository contains many digital collections of varying nature, the Digital Library wanted customizations added to the "out-of-the-box" DSpace open-source repository system. So, they enlisted expert help from their developers to customize special themes for the various collections in the Repository.

"This is just the first of a few different interfaces we have in development," Mercer said. "We see this not only as a way to share and preserve historical photos, but also a way to display books, where you can flip through pages, view maps and study details in oversized images."

The pilot collection chosen to show off the features of the new viewer highlights 100 photos in the 7,000-photo collection acquired from the Texas Agricultural Extension Service (now AgriLife). The collection brings into focus a rich part of Texas and African-American heritage, according to Smith.

"This particular collection of photographs is especially important because it shows the great diversity of our agricultural history in Texas by documenting the lives, activities and contributions of African Americans," Smith said. "In these images, we see so many individuals as they lived their everyday lives – individuals working, striving and struggling to win a living from the land and to uplift their families and communities."

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From the Texas A&M Libraries collection "[Toward a Better Living: African American Farming Communities in Mid-Century Texas.](#)" Courtesy of Cushing Memorial Library and Archives, Texas A&M University, <http://cushing.library.tamu.edu>.

Texas A&M Libraries adds new collection, cont.

Mercer said along with the richness of the photos and the availability of the collections, others also could benefit from the technology.

"There are more than 900 installations of DSpace worldwide, and many of those have developed image collections," she said. "Because we are part of the open-source community, other institutions can benefit from the customizations and enhancements developed here at Texas A&M."

Eventually, the Texas A&M Repository collections will become part of the TDL Preservation Network (PresNet), a Texas Digital Library (TDL) service for digital preservation. Mercer said that the PresNet service will open up countless possibilities for the campus community, since Repository collections will be both accessible worldwide and preserved.

"With the unique customizations we've done, we're offering a new way to view images in Repository collections," she said. "Importance is still placed on describing items, but the focus is on the image and providing access to high-quality images that will be preserved for many years to come."



From the Texas A&M Libraries collection "Toward a Better Living: African American Farming Communities in Mid-Century Texas." Courtesy of Cushing Memorial Library and Archives, Texas A&M University, <http://cushing.library.tamu.edu>.

To see more holdings at Texas A&M University, visit [Cushing Memorial Library and Archives](#) or the [Texas A&M Repository](#). ◇

TDL Fair at UT Brownsville informs faculty, librarians about TDL services



their membership in the Texas Digital Library.

TDL co-directors Mark McFarland and John Leggett, along with communications team members Ryan Steans and Kristi Park, traveled to Brownsville for the event.

Together with John Hawthorne, Assistant Director of

The University of Texas at Brownsville/Texas Southmost College (UTB/TSC) held a "TDL Fair" on Tuesday, October 5, to educate faculty and students about the services available to them through

the Oliveira Library at UTB/TSC, they presented information about the TDL to a varied group of attendees that included students, faculty members, librarians and IT staff, graduate school representatives, and deans.

The TDL also held several meetings with groups planning repository collections or other projects using TDL services.

Among other projects, the UTB/TSC library is developing a subject repository in a TDL DSpace installation devoted to Border Studies research. The repository is a key element of a cross-institutional "Border Studies Resource Center" under development at UTB/TSC. ◇

Open Access Week, October 18-24, promotes wide availability of research

Open Access Week has come and gone. The annual global event promotes the benefits of free and immediate access to research. It is observed at institutions all over the world, this year during the week of October 18-24.

Open Access Week allows academic research institutions the opportunity to educate faculty, students, and others about the benefits of Open Access.

The Texas Digital Library provides its members with the ability to offer faculty members scholarly communication services that can be used for Open Access scholarship. These services include:

- [institutional repositories](#);
- [online scholarly journals](#);
- [blogs, wikis](#), and websites;
- [conference websites](#) for publication of conference proceedings; and



- [Vireo ETD management and publication software](#).

This year, the TDL encouraged members to use Open Access Week as an opportunity to educate faculty on the availability of new models for publishing research, including via Open Access peer-reviewed journals and deposit in their institutional repositories.

For more information about Open Access Week and the Texas Digital Library, visit the TDL's [Open Access webpage](#) or the [official website of Open Access Week 2010](#). ◇

About the TDL

The Texas Digital Library is a multi-university consortium providing the digital infrastructure to support a fully online scholarly community for institutions of higher education in Texas and to promote the widespread availability of their enormous intellectual capital.

Services provided by the TDL to its members include:

- ◆ Institutional repositories
- ◆ Electronic Journals
- ◆ ETD Submission and Management software
- ◆ Blogs and wikis
- ◆ Faculty homepages
- ◆ Online conference management

Contact the TDL

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The University of Texas at Austin*
The University of Texas at Brownsville
The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas
The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston
The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center

* *founding institution*