UPDATING A COMMUNITY METADATA STANDARD: CHALLENGES AND OUTCOMES
Texas Digital Library ETD Metadata Working Group

OUR MISSION
In 2014 the Texas Digital Library (TDL) convened a working group, charged with updating the existing descriptive metadata standard for electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs). The standard had last been updated in 2008. The metadata working group’s report and accompanying data dictionary were released in September 2015.

Texas Digital Library Descriptive Metadata Guidelines for Electronic Theses and Dissertations, v. 2.0
http://hdl.handle.net/2249.1/68437

OUR APPROACH
The working group’s mixed-methods approach to revising the standard revealed divergences between the 2008 guidelines as they were originally published and the emergent practices of librarians, repository administrators, and others involved in ETD workflows. The updated standard needed to address and recommend significant changes to the Vireo ETD Submission Management System, also developed and hosted by TDL.

Areas for further study:
- Name disambiguation
- Supplemental files
- Emerging case studies related to linked data, Fedora, preservation, and new forms of ETDs
- Implementation in the new version of Vireo and recommendations for migrating legacy data

Recommendations include close consideration of:
- Name disambiguation
- Dates
- Complex objects
- Availability and access metadata
- Crosswalking

Challenges:
- Balance between ease of use and level of description
- Balance between traditional practice and emerging technology
- Crafting an inclusive standard

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