Open Access Engagement
A Look Into University Repositories Hosted by the Texas Digital Library

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Abstract
Establishing, maintaining, and growing institutional digital repositories is yet another effort librarians make to ensure greater access and discoverability of materials. The Texas Digital Library (TDL) hosts such repositories for over 20 academic libraries across Texas and consistently seeks ways to encourage use of the associated materials within. This capstone project was conducted in an effort to understand university-wide use and understanding of institutional repositories among students and faculty, which elucidated patterns of interaction with materials created by each institution's campus community.

Interviews were conducted with librarians and archivists at TDL’s member institutions to gain greater insight into how these tools are used across higher education, as well as to provide recommendations geared toward facilitating greater use and engagement with the materials housed within the repositories.

What is a repository?
A repository is a space for institutions to house academic publications, research, and associated ephemera produced by members of the university community. Repositories localize an institution’s scholarly output, open access to these materials, encourage discoverability, and serve as a way for faculty and students to self-archive their work.

What is Open Access?
Open Access* is the free, immediate, online availability of research articles coupled with the rights to use these articles fully in the digital environment. Open Access ensures that anyone can access and use these results—to turn ideas into industries and breakthroughs into better lives.

* As defined by the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC).

Findings
Librarians understand that most researchers find materials hosted in the repositories through Google rather than via the library’s website.

Students are largely unfamiliar with the repositories unless their work is housed there.

Librarians believe that most repository users are expected to be from outside of the university.

Undergraduates are particularly unfamiliar with the repositories; graduate students are more familiar, largely because theses and dissertations are held in the repository.

Understandings of access and permissions are generally limited, and it is often the librarian’s job to discern publications’ access policies.

Faculty hesitation exists surrounding publishing undergraduate work in the repositories.

Students and faculty can self-archive and researchers can freely access scholarly works of UT Austin’s scholars.

Texas ScholarWorks is UT Austin’s open access digital repository at repositories.lib.utexas.edu/

Student Works

Collections in this community

- Texas ScholarWorks
- University of Texas Libraries

Communities in the Repository

- Conference Proceedings and Journals
- Student Works

Sub-communities within this community

- Children and Families
- Student Government
- Texas Student Media
- Texas Undergraduate Law Review
- The Texas Observer

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