

# If We Build It, Will They Come?

Katherine O'Clair, Agriculture & Environmental Sciences Librarian • Marisa Ramirez, Digital Repository Librarian  
Kennedy Library • California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

## Introduction

An institutional repository (IR) provides centralized place to preserve and provide access to the variety of research, scholarship and creative works generated by a University. Many campus entities are interested in the idea of an IR, but many libraries find it difficult to translate the campus enthusiasm into increased IR holdings. Cal Poly has been successful in populating the DigitalCommons@CalPoly due in part to efforts related to outreach and education. View online at <http://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu>.

## Benefits of the IR

### For Students

- Easy access to past student work provides a reference for current students to build upon and emulate

### For Faculty

- Increased visibility and availability of their scholarship
- Centralized, online system to view and access work from colleagues, placing department achievements in context

### For University Administration

- Supports accreditation and advancement by providing access to a variety of resources
- Supports the mission of the Provost by increasing visibility of the campus

### For Library

- Increased efficiencies in internal and external workloads
- Increased access and availability of content that reflects the institutional memory of the campus

## Snapshots from the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences

### Internship Reports

The College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Science (CAFES) expressed interest in archiving graduate student internship reports. While not previously collected by the library, these reports are of considerable value to students. After the Digital Repository Librarian gathered use requirements, set up the infrastructure and workflow for the department, students now have the ability to electronically submit internship reports to the IR. The Digital Repository Librarian and Agriculture & Environmental Sciences Librarian are providing outreach to the college to encourage ingest of future graduate internship reports.

### Senior Projects

Senior Projects are an important component of the educational experience and a long-standing tradition at Cal Poly. The Digital Repository Librarian implemented a workflow process and developed outreach and educational materials to support electronic upload of Senior Projects to the IR. Departments expressed initial concerns related to copyright and quality control of Senior Projects. The Digital Repository Librarian and Agriculture & Environmental Sciences Librarian worked with CAFES to address concerns. In one specific case, an added level of review was created to support additional verification needs of the department.

### Departmental Publications

Many departments create newsletters, documenting the activities and achievements of students and faculty. Due to cost, only a limited number of publications are produced, making the hardcopies difficult to locate and access. After promoting the digitization and uploading services offered by IR, the Department Chair agreed to archive all past and future department newsletters. The full run of the department newsletters now reside in one easy-to-access location, ensuring future continuity of these departmental publications.

## Relevance to Agriculture

The IR is relevant in several ways:

- Provides access to agricultural research and scholarship created by University scholars
- Serves as a resource to practitioners and industry professionals with limited access to proprietary information resources
- Increases visibility of the University within the agricultural community and promotes the scholarship of individuals within the institution
- Increases visibility and access to information to help foster future partnerships between agriculture scholars, professionals and industry

## Strategies for Outreach Success

Outreach activities are crucial to the success of the IR.

- Understand your users and their needs and articulate how an IR can meet those needs.
- Market the IR as a set of services instead of a technology.
- Use a diverse array of methods to promote the IR to campus.
- Word of mouth marketing is a very effective outreach technique.
- Questions about copyright and open access can be "teaching moments" about the IR and its services.