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Promoting Faculty Scholarship Through the University Author Recognition Bibliography at Boise State University

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Abstract

One of the most important contributions by any university is its faculty members' scholarship. Providing an interface to view the full scope of an institution's academic accomplishments is vital for promoting both the scholarship and the university at large. Because of their unique information skills and services, librarians can facilitate the discovery of this scholarship on behalf of their institutions. This article explores how Albertsons Library at Boise State University utilizes an institutional repository to produce a faculty publication bibliography. Processes for collecting academic scholarship and organizing the citations within a repository structure are also discussed. Library staff found that this approach not only reduced redundancy and increased the usability of researcher publication data, it also increased the profile and value of the institutional repository.

Keywords: faculty, authors, bibliographies, institutional repositories, publication lists

Introduction

Faculty member scholarship represents a significant contribution to any university. As a tangible outcome of the financial and physical resources dedicated to the creation of new knowledge, academic publications make up the scholarly record of an institution. The research conducted at an institution and the outcomes of those efforts are a critical part of a university's academic reputation. The intellectual prestige of a university greatly impacts the faculty members it can attract and the research funding it can obtain. The ability to list and access the scholarship of a university is useful for accountability purposes and to demonstrate the individual and departmental contributions made by its faculty members and staff. Showcasing these individual accomplishments as part of a complete institutional record can also increase the discoverability of a professor's work.

Although being able to see the full scope of a university's academic accomplishments is valuable, few methods exist for doing so. The dissemination of university research is typically a solitary activity as scholars must navigate the publishing process on their own. Books, chapters, journal articles, and other creative works are distributed through a variety of channels that do not necessarily emphasize an author's institutional affiliation. Without a central system collecting information about these works, it can be difficult to determine what has been produced at a university. Libraries, with their singular ability to gather, organize, and disseminate large quantities of information, are well positioned to support their institutions in capturing academic scholarship. One of the ways libraries have done this is through the creation of online publication bibliographies.

Since the existing scholarly literature about these bibliographies is limited, librarians have tried different approaches when developing lists of publications for their faculty members. The reasons for creating researcher bibliographies often vary and are localized to a specific university's needs. In 2000, Bai reported that the librarians at the University of Connecticut Health Center gathered faculty publication information to assist their university's administration for statistical purposes (189). Schwartz and Stoffel described how the staff at Illinois State University began developing an online faculty bibliography to commemorate the 150th anniversary of their institution (2). Librarians at the University of Minnesota created databases of faculty publication information to assist in collection development activities (Marsalis and Kelly n. pag.).

Through the years, librarians have experimented with different databases, citation tools, and other content management systems to organize and present publication data. In 1987 librarians at the University of Nevada School of Medicine described how they used Sci-Mate to extract and format faculty publication data from medical databases (Potter 46-57). In the early 1990s, the University of Miami and the Hahnemann University used Pro-Cite, an early citation management tool (MacCorkle 122; Fenichel 70). Later attempts at digitizing faculty bibliographies took advantage of software commonly found on many desktop computers. The Web-based Faculty Publications Database at the University of Connecticut Health Center (Bai 190), as well as

our own Boise State University Author Recognition Bibliography used Microsoft Access to host faculty publication data. Similarly Blummer noted in her survey of faculty publication databases that many libraries were using tools such as MySQL, Filemaker Pro, and Dreamweaver (42). In 2007, Connor at The Citadel's Daniel Library discussed how a wiki was used to create a faculty publications database (15-17). Institutional repositories have also been noted as tools for collecting information on publications created by university researchers. In 2002, Johnson stated that "institutional repositories capture the original research and other intellectual property generated by an institution's constituent population." (n. pag.). This idea of capturing university publication data was further developed by initiatives such as the IRRA (Institutional Repositories and Research Assessment) – RAE Software for Institutional Repositories project. Based in the United Kingdom, IRRA worked to develop a technological infrastructure that could utilize publication information submitted to repositories for national assessment purposes (Carr and MacColl, n. pag.).

Although repositories have shown tremendous potential for capturing bibliographic data, not all librarians viewed them as useful tools for hosting bibliographies for a university's researchers. In 2007 Blummer reported in her survey that although many librarians saw a connection between institutional repositories and faculty publication bibliographies, they did not necessarily think repositories would replace existing bibliography databases. She added that most librarians made a distinction between bibliographies that they assumed consisted of citations only and institutional repositories that seemed to concentrate on full-text publications (46-48).

Several authors described additional challenges faced when creating faculty publication bibliographies. Gathering citations was often noted as a major difficulty. Although faced with limited functionality due to early database designs, McKee and Feng (334), as well as Scoville, Johnson, and McConnell (10) stated that the creation of lists of faculty publications was very time intensive. Scoville, Johnson, and McConnell in particular discussed the problems their library faced in identifying publications specifically from their institution (2-10). Schwartz and Stoffel explained that due to the lengthy process for gathering citations, project staff occasionally change, requiring additional management and training (19).

History of the Boise State University Author Recognition Bibliography

The Boise State University Author Recognition events were started in 2005 by the Albertsons Library's Associate Dean who was involved with a similar event at her previous place of employment, Pittsburg State University in Pittsburg, Kansas. The events recognized university faculty members and staff who published books, articles, and other creative works during the previous year. Event activities consisted of the creation of a bibliography of university authored works, a book display, a complete list of author names and departments, and a university-wide reception. The reception included a program where the provost and deans recognized the published authors. In addition to honoring Boise State authors, the reception provided library staff an opportunity to socialize and meet with faculty members in a friendly, celebratory atmosphere. The bibliography was useful to library liaisons since it clearly identified the scholarship of their faculty members. For some authors the event was particularly appreciated as it was the only time their work was publicly recognized.

The first year the recognition event was held, an open call was made requesting that authors submit their citations for the bibliography. Although many faculty members submitted information about their publications, the bibliography was certainly not complete. It was obvious that many Boise State authored publications were not included in the bibliography. The following year the committee decided to actively search for citations to include. This process was very time consuming, as four to five members of the committee spent several weeks searching databases, websites, and other resources trying to discover all publications by Boise State authors. Additionally, since the citations came from a variety of sources and there were several individuals working on the bibliography at any one time, the committee spent a great deal of time correcting the format of the citations.

Although this approach was significantly more successful in identifying Boise State publications than simply relying on author submissions, there were several disadvantages. Finding the publications, verifying the content, and ensuring the consistency of citation format required substantial work by the committee members, and these activities were all outside of their regular job duties. Because it took a great deal of work to compile the citation list, the decision was made to base the bibliography on an academic year, September through August, to allow staff time to complete their work before the February reception. Since the bibliography was compiled using a simple Word document, the information collected could not be utilized in other ways. It was difficult to generate lists of authors, create invitations, or compile reports. The display of the bibliography was also limited to either a simple HTML webpage or a PDF document that was only accessible from a subpage on

the library's website. Even though it was valuable to have a single place that provided a list of Boise State publications, the bibliographic data was difficult to use for other purposes.

To overcome these drawbacks, a database was created to host the citation information and to generate the content for a web-based bibliography. An online form was developed for authors to submit their citations and then automatically populate the bibliography. A Microsoft Access database was built that contained a variety of publication types including books, chapters, conference proceedings, journal articles, audio recordings, videos, patents, and a generic "other" category. Author information, such as department, college, and email address, was included as well. Besides the Access database, a web form was created to provide an easy-to-use entry point for citations. Depending on the format of the work entered, the fields being displayed would change. As citations were added, the bibliography webpage automatically populated, and the author would receive a confirmation message verifying that the citation had been entered. The Access database was used to generate lists of author names, invitation lists, and some reports such as titles of books for the exhibit that showcased books by the faculty authors.

Once again, this change in approach for gathering citations provided several advantages, but some limitations. Although it was much easier to generate lists of authors and to run reports in Access, the formatting of the bibliography was still problematic. Since citations were automatically generated from the information entered into the database, formatting options were limited. There was no way to customize the citation for a unique format or include esoteric information. Additionally whatever data was entered would be displayed on the bibliography webpage. Capitalization errors, inconsistencies, typos, spelling errors, and unnecessary punctuation were all included in the citations. To help with this, detailed data entry guidelines were created to provide consistency.

Another major limitation in the design of the database was that it was not set up to handle multiple authors information. If a citation was entered, data for the first Boise State author was recorded, but all other Boise State authors were lumped into a single, plain text field. As a result, information for these other authors could not be extracted and used. Since it is very common for researchers to work together on a publication, many items on the bibliography included multiple Boise State co-authors. In an attempt to circumvent this design limitation, the committee created extensive author entry guidelines and began adding multiple entries for every work that had more than one Boise State author. By doing this, basic information for each Boise State author was included in the database allowing it to be extracted and used by the committee.

Although complete author information was now being gathered, this workaround had several shortcomings. Committee members had to spend additional time verifying and adding extra entries for each Boise State co-author. Users of the bibliography found the double entry of publications confusing, and it was particularly concerning to some of the researchers who greatly value the order of authors on publications. With the multiple entries, it was difficult to generate a clear number of works for a given year. In some ways the challenges generated as a result of this double-entry solution outweighed the benefits originally gained by creating the database.

Expanding Bibliographic Data Contained within the Institutional Repository

In 2008, Albertsons Library began working with the Division of Research and Graduate College to develop an institutional repository for Boise State. After receiving financial support from the university's Provost Office, the library took the lead in implementing the project. Known as ScholarWorks (<http://scholarworks.boisestate.edu/>), the repository was charged with capturing and showcasing Boise State scholarship. To accomplish this mission, ScholarWorks offered several core services:

- Identifying and making available in one place the documents and files produced by the faculty members, research groups, and students of Boise State University;
- Creating individual researcher pages called SelectedWorks sites that highlight the scholarly accomplishments of each faculty member;
- Distributing regular reports that provide data on the impact and usage of university publications;
- Electronic publishing of original documents, journals, and monographs;

- Promoting research efforts via a searchable database, reporting to key administrators and stakeholders, and coordinating with other research recognition activities.

Boise State's institutional repository was developed using Digital Commons (<http://digitalcommons.bepress.com/>), a hosted repository platform. In addition to rapid set up, Digital Commons provided full technical support and a variety of tools to manage and disseminate university documents.

Utilizing a mediated-deposit model, ScholarWorks staff identified eligible publications, reviewed publisher copyright policies, solicited author participation, and uploaded documents to the repository. As with many repositories, ScholarWorks placed a strong emphasis on collecting scholarship generated by its university's researchers.

Initially ScholarWorks only collected full-text documents. For faculty publications this typically meant only including documents that had a copyright policy allowing posting on a university website and where an appropriate version of the document could be located. Since Boise State did not have an open access mandate requiring faculty members to post their published works on a publicly accessible website, ScholarWorks staff also had to solicit permission from the authors before their publications were included in the repository. Although ScholarWorks staff were successful in identifying eligible Boise State publications, they were less successful in procuring full-text documents of these publications. This resulted in only a portion of Boise State's published works being captured by ScholarWorks.

As the repository continued to develop and grow, it became clear that both the University Author Recognition committee and ScholarWorks staff were managing identical faculty publication information. However, the tools and processes used to work with this data were very different and were not easy to merge. Since ScholarWorks only collected full-text documents, it was not possible to generate a complete list of Boise State publications based on the content in the repository. Finally, two completely different groups within the library were actively searching for faculty publications without the ability to share that information.

In 2010, the ScholarWorks' managing librarian had the opportunity to chair the University Author Recognition committee. From previous participation on the committee, the librarian was aware that duplicative efforts for finding faculty publications had evolved. To eliminate this redundancy, all citation identification tasks were assigned to the repository staff. Once publications were located, this information would be shared with the committee who would add it to the Access database used to generate the bibliography. This approach worked very well and alleviated the necessity of having committee members do these tasks.

During this time the ScholarWorks staff began reviewing the full-text policy which guided their efforts regarding faculty publications. Although limiting content to only full-text documents has certain benefits, it prohibited ScholarWorks from providing a full representation of all Boise State scholarship. For certain departments and researchers, it even appeared they had not produced any publications, which was inaccurate. Having complete information for what had been published by Boise State authors was an important service that no other group on campus provided.

Starting in 2011, ScholarWorks staff began adding metadata-only records for any faculty publication where it was not possible to obtain the author's permission to post their work, or where a publisher's copyright policy prohibited such sharing. The metadata-only records consisted of the complete bibliographic information about a work, but did not contain the actual document that could be downloaded. ScholarWorks staff already had processes in place to identify all Boise State publications, but there was no existing workflow to ingest only bibliographic data into the repository. Uploading processes were revised to allow ScholarWorks staff to efficiently add metadata-only records to the repository. Once the workflow revisions were completed, metadata was added for any publication that had been created during the previous three years and where the full-text document had not been added to ScholarWorks.

This change removed the final barrier for merging the efforts of the University Author Recognition committee and the ScholarWorks staff. Once the repository contained at a minimum bibliographic information for all Boise State authored publications, it was possible to begin exploring how to generate a complete University Author Recognition bibliography directly in ScholarWorks.

Transitioning the University Author Recognition Bibliography to the Institutional Repository

The Albertsons Library began the process of transferring the Boise State University Author Recognition bibliography (<http://scholarworks.boisestate.edu/uar/>) to ScholarWorks in 2011. To do this a decision had to be made on how to collocate the publications being added to ScholarWorks so that they could be organized into a complete bibliography. In ScholarWorks, faculty publications were primarily organized by college and department. Although useful for showcasing the scholarship of a particular unit, it was difficult to provide a single list of all Boise State works within a given period.

Fortunately an upgrade to Digital Commons platform provided a solution. In March 2010, Digital Commons developed a feature which would allow repositories to create filters that could automatically transfer content from one collection into another. These filters could be based on keywords, document types, or dates. Since content could reside in a department's collection while also being displayed in another series via a filter, the idea was developed to create the entire bibliography using filters. By doing this, faculty publications were ingested into the repository using the existing workflow and, if published during the given recognition period, were automatically collected into the bibliography. This filtering approach created a substantial savings in terms of staff time and energy. Not only was a single unit in the library now managing faculty publication data instead of two groups, the citation information captured in the repository was utilized for multiple purposes. Through the regular ScholarWorks workflow, it was now possible to develop the bibliography throughout the year, showcasing the university's efforts on an ongoing basis.

Filters worked incredibly well for compiling content from various collections, but there were some problems with how the dates within the filters were set up. Since the bibliography had traditionally covered an academic year, September through August, the filters were set up for a similar date range. ScholarWorks staff discovered that since books and book chapters usually only had a publication or copyright year, the Digital Commons system defaulted to a January 1st date for these items. This wasn't a problem if January 1st fell within the bibliography period. But if a book was really published in November of the previous year, it might be left off the bibliography. To solve this issue several different options were explored, including assigning full publication dates based on the day the item was added to the repository. The most efficient solution was to simply revise the dates covered by the bibliography so that it was based on a calendar year. Not only would this keep the ScholarWorks staff from having to "assign" publication dates, it was much easier to explain to authors what works were being included in a given bibliography.

Pros and Cons of this Approach

Creating the bibliography directly in ScholarWorks provided significant benefits while also generating several new issues that needed to be addressed. The first challenge was that ScholarWorks was never designed to generate an exportable list of authors or create invitations. Although data, including authors and their departments, could be extracted from the repository and compiled as needed, there were no existing reports that allowed staff to accomplish this easily. In response to this limitation a method was developed where publication information was downloaded first by collection and then filtered by date in order to identify only publications included in the bibliography. Author information was extracted and then compiled in a single Excel spreadsheet which could be utilized for other purposes such as creating guest lists, author name displays, or reports by college.

Another problem that was encountered was the inclusion of other types of creative works. One of the much appreciated qualities of the University Author Recognition events was that all types of significant scholarship were included in the bibliography. These types of works might include videos, CDs, or works of art. Since the original design of ScholarWorks focused primarily on print publications, it was not easy to include other types of scholarship. Because the infrastructure did not exist for including these works and none were identified for the 2010–2011 period, the issue was deferred until a later date when the ScholarWorks staff would have time to work with individual faculty members to determine how to best represent their work.

In contrast, one of the significant advantages to this approach was that since the bibliography was just a virtual list, new bibliographies could be created using publication information already included in the repository and then simply by changing the dates used on the filters. Additionally, instead of spending months each year developing a bibliography that was only used for the recognition events, the publication information was now used to showcase the works of a department and college, as well as the accomplishments of an individual professor through their SelectedWorks site. Repository webpages are indexed by Google and harvested by other search tools, increasing their discovery. Because ScholarWorks is so effective in increasing the visibility of a

faculty members publications, many authors have expressed how impressed they are with the number of times their documents are downloaded. Finally, since the citation identification process is a standard part of the ingest workflow, the repository serves as a single point of contact for both ScholarWorks and University Author Recognition requests.

As a result of these changes, the University Author Recognition bibliography is now a value added service of the institutional repository. Not only is faculty scholarship included in the comprehensive university bibliography, it is also showcased as part of their department's collection and on their SelectedWorks site. If a faculty member's work is part of the repository, then it is a part of the bibliography and included in all the related promotional activities. The reception additionally helped raise the profile of the repository among faculty members. If a professor wants to submit a publication for the bibliography, all the individual has to do is contact ScholarWorks. Faculty members receive the additional benefit of having their work highlighted through the author recognition activities such as displays and news releases. Similarly, all electronic reception invitations and reminder notes are sent through the main ScholarWorks email account. This service and communication approach demonstrates to the authors the multifaceted value of the institutional repository. Combining the University Author Recognition activities with the institutional repository's existing workflow has helped ScholarWorks become the place to go for publication information for a professor, department, or college.

Conclusion

By merging the efforts of the University Author Recognition committee with those of the ScholarWorks staff, Albertsons Library was able to continue its tradition of celebrating faculty scholarship while also taking advantage of the services offered through its institutional repository. The transition allowed repository staff to expand its collection development policies and revise their existing ingest processes. It also took advantage of repository features which could capitalize on the bibliographic data being gathered, thus using it for multiple purposes. As another value added service provided by the institutional repository, hosting the University Author Recognition bibliography in ScholarWorks saved the committee a tremendous amount of time and effort. Boise State's institutional repository has become the primary source for university publication information.

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