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# Report of The Ad Hoc Digital Commons Task Force

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## REPORT OF THE AD HOC DIGITAL COMMONS TASK FORCE

by  
Professor Michael Vocino, Chair and Secretary  
and  
Asst. Professor Michael Cerbo  
Professor Margaret J. Keefe  
Associate Professor Sarina Wyant

*Submitted to the Library Faculty on 5 March 2010 for discussion at the April Library Faculty Meeting.*

### Charge to the Task Force:

On December 17, 2009 in a letter to its members, the Ad Hoc Digital Commons Task Force was created by Dean David Maslyn at the request of the December 2009 Library Faculty Meeting. The charge from the Dean read: *“Based upon the motion made at the faculty meeting of 12/4/2009, the Dean appoints the following people to an Ad Hoc Task Force to “study and establish policy and procedures” for the possible establishment and implementation of a library operated Digital Commons. The Committee is to consider staffing, equipment, space and liaison with the University. The Committee shall report its findings to the faculty at least two weeks prior to the April faculty meeting for discussion at that meeting. Members are Professors Cerbo, Keefe, Wyant and Vocino(Chair.)”*

### INTRODUCTION:

Looking to better promote the work of its faculty and researchers as well as students and staff (in a cohesive manner) along with the Library’s interest in obtaining and preserving scholarly information produced by the University of Rhode Island community, a library committee was established by Dean Maslyn and the Library Faculty to investigate creating a digital institutional repository—a Digital Commons, if you will. Such a committee was formed to investigate the equipment needs, policy, and staffing necessary for an institutional repository. This committee was charged with presenting a report dealing with such issues at the March 2010 Library Faculty Meeting so that it might be discussed at the Library Faculty April Meeting. Here is that report. The committee feels that to move URI libraries to a worthwhile digitization project requires the investment in a full-time Digitization Librarian with associated assistance as outlined in this proposal.

Such a commitment to a full-time, tenure-track faculty position doesn’t seem possible at this time, and if it is, it should not be the first faculty position filled by the current library administration.

As one example, the Public Services Department is severely hampered by a lack of faculty personnel. The position that jumps to mind immediately, Bibliographer for the Life Sciences (the long vacant Kelland position) needs to be filled long before the creation of a faculty position for a Digitization Librarian. (The Library Faculty has also expressed a need for a faculty member to head of the Pell Library.)

The same lack of appropriate professional staffing is true, unfortunately, for the Technical Services Department as well. Cataloging, though performing valiantly, is being overwhelmed by more and more assignments that normally would be done by additional catalogers, either at the faculty or classified librarian rank. Although a faculty position was recently added to Technical Services, that position’s time has been required, and rightly so, by an exploding workload in serials.

Though most academic libraries of our size have moved, or are about to move, to creating a real digital presence on their campuses, URI though working rather limitedly with the idea for some time now, can hardly make a commitment as suggested in this proposal at this time without filling other pressing requests for faculty positions first -- and the first two being those in the Public Services Department.

The Committee did investigate the issues, however, and did write its report which we present here.

## ***PROPOSED POLICY FOR A DIGITAL COMMONS AT URI***

Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island is an institutional repository maintained by the Technical Services Department of the University Library. The purpose of Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island is to provide an open access publication and research dissemination service for faculty, staff, and students. The Library's goal is to provide perpetual access to the intellectual output of the University of Rhode Island (URI) as broadly as possible.

### **I. Content Guidelines**

All submissions must meet the following guidelines in order to be included in Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island. Individual departments are allowed to determine policies regarding what intellectual output can be submitted that meet these guidelines:

- The work must be produced, submitted, or sponsored by URI faculty, researchers, students, or staff.
- The work must be scholarly or research oriented.
- The work must be in digital form. If parts of the item require different file formats, all of the digital pieces will be provided as a set. (For example, a PDF document, with its associated data file(s).
- The author must be willing and able to grant the University of Rhode Island the right to preserve and distribute the work via the Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island
- Works can be co-authored by a URI faculty, staff or graduate student with non-URI authors. The article co-author is responsible for securing permission agreements from non-URI authors before content is posted in Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island.
- Bibliographic citations or abstracts are not accepted without the referenced paper.

### **II. Types of Content**

Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island accepts a wide range of digital formats, including text, images, video, and audio files. Possible types of content include:

- Articles (including those previously published and pre/post prints)
- Theses and Dissertations
- Technical Papers
- Grey literature (Unpublished conference papers, presentations, and pamphlets)
- Working papers
- Books
- Creative Works
- Peer-Reviewed Journals
- Data Sets
- Lectures and Seminar Series

### **III. Journals and Peer-Reviewed Series**

The Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island infrastructure supports publishing peer-reviewed series and journals. Please note that the same rigors that apply to publishing a journal in print also apply to those published in digital format.

#### **IV. Removing a Paper**

Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island is intended to be a permanent scholarly record of activity at URI. However, authors may request that a system administrator remove their paper, or a version of their paper. Once a paper is deposited in Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island, a citation to the paper will always remain. The exception is peer-reviewed series and journals, where removal is not allowed.

#### **V. Copyright and Author Agreements**

All materials in Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island are protected by copyright. Authors retain the copyright for all content posted in Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island. When submitting content to Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island, an author agrees to:

- 1) Grant URI a non-exclusive license to distribute and preserve the document.
- 2) Provide proof that the author holds the copyright to the work or has been authorized by the copyright holder to upload the work for distribution.

Before posting content that has been published elsewhere to the Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island, it is mandatory that the author review agreements with the publisher to ensure repository deposits are allowed. Publisher agreements can be reviewed online at <http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo> .

#### **VI. Acceptable Use**

Individuals have the right to download and print a personal copy of materials in Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island. Unless otherwise indicated, individuals do not have the right to make additional copies, post, or distribute any of the materials, unless the use meets a reasonable determination of fair use. Any use of Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island content that exceeds these exceptions requires permission from the copyright holder.

Libraries interested in printing a Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island paper for their permanent collection should contact the center, department, or research unit responsible for posting the paper. The requesting library can then gain copyright clearance from the paper's author/s.

Permission does not need to be obtained for linking to or harvesting Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island content.

#### **VII. Preservation and Perpetual Access**

URI's commitment to preserve and provide perpetual access to content in Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island applies only to material housed on servers maintained directly or under contract by URI. Links and access to content—of any format—referenced outside Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island cannot be guaranteed by URI or Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island

### **VIII. Contact**

Questions and comments regarding the Digital Commons@University of Rhode Island Policy should be directed towards the University of Rhode Island Technical Service Department.

## ***STAFFING /EQUIPMENT NEEDS***

### **Current Situation**

Digital Commons, owned by BPress, is the outsourced host of the current digital repository. Platform and metadata input is supported in a decentralized manner. Individual departments can establish own content and management with minimal interface with the Library site administrators. The site administrators may intercede with problems in document uploads and edits and do authorize initial access for dept. site administrators. Professors Wyant, Rathemacher and Cerbo are listed as having overall access and currently function ad hoc. There is no formal procedure for this mechanism.

### **Staffing**

- I. **Manager**, full time position to oversees all aspects of IR.
  - Trains student staff and URI departmental staff in submission process informally and in group sessions.
  - Administers all technical aspects of the IR, including managing, troubleshooting , and projecting hardware and software needs for both born digital and digital surrogates.
  - Works closely with ITS and serves as the Library digital projects advisor.
  - Works to promote the repository in all aspects.
  - Relays technical needs to support the IR to upper level library administration.
  - Acts as liaison between Bpress (or appropriate vendor) and individual URI departments submitting to the repository to ensure consistency.
  - Ensures compliance with copyright permission.
  
- II. **Graduate interns** (2) (or allocated to existing staff .)
  - Work closely with manager to input, edit, and check copyright permissions for IR submissions.
  - Create digital content from original copy. Manage born digital submissions as needed.
  
- III. **Advisory group** (from the university community--membership to be determined.)

- Creates oversight
- Generates ideas
- Provides input from the university community
- Establishes a “stake holder” mentality

**Equipment** (for in – library digital material or pre-arranged projects as needed)

- Large format scanner
- Document feed and flatbed scanner
- Computer and a couple of monitors
- External hard drive or a dedicated server as backup
- Software: Adobe Photoshop and Acrobat professional , Omni page or other OCR/ image software that is supported by ITS.

### **Training**

Professional and technical refresher training as needed for manager and/or staff (i.e. xml languages, latest metadata tagging, digital standards, upgrades, etc.)

### **Space**

Whatever is needed to house the equipment outlined here, and the work of a Manager and at least two assistants.

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