

Librarian as Advisor, Concierge, Press Agent: A Case Study on Faculty Profile Services (Speaker Notes)

Michelle Armstrong, Albertsons Library, Boise State University

A Seat at the Table: Reclaiming the Library's Central Role with Innovative Faculty Services

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This presentation describes how Albertsons Library has worked with authors to create online scholarly identities, share scholarship, and measure impact using the SelectedWorks faculty profile platform.

Since first launching in December 2008, the Albertsons Library repository has used a mediated deposit model, especially for faculty publications. This means library staff proactively do all the work for the professors including identifying eligible publications, obtaining author permissions, clearing copyright, and uploading the documents into the ScholarWorks system. Initially, the library focused on easily identifiable scholarship (faculty journal articles and conference proceedings, theses and dissertations, etc.) and expanded from there. This was beneficial in that workflows and internal competencies could be developed. However, Albertsons Library has continually looked for ways to expand the type of scholarship that could be included in the repository. Although there are restrictions in that the work must be Boise State produced, scholarship that is not text-based is welcomed. Finally, library staff create all SelectedWorks sites for the faculty.

SELECTEDWORKS WORKFLOW

SelectedWorks are a core service deliver through the library's Scholarly Communications and Data Management unit. Unlike the repository side which is limited to curated scholarship produced at Boise State, SelectedWorks are customized to the individual professor and focuses exclusively on their work.

Initial Contact

To initially connect with faculty and engage them in creating a SelectedWorks site, library staff used a variety of communications:

- Permission Messages: Part of our canned permission messages: "Would you like us to set up a SelectedWorks page for you? It's a great way to highlight your scholarly publications. All we would need to get it started is your vita. We work off of that and then give you an opportunity to make additions or corrections. Just let me know what you would prefer."
- Digital Measures Collaboration Project: "This email is to inform you about this initiative, and request that you participate by emailing an electronic copy of your CV...to scholarworks@boisestate.edu...We are working to make the transition to Digital Measures as easy as possible for faculty...Publication information will be pulled from ScholarWorks."
- New Faculty Partnership with Provost Office: "Welcome to Boise State! As I mentioned during the new faculty orientation, ScholarWorks staff have set up a SelectedWorks site for you..."

Basic Elements of a SelectedWorks Site

- About Information: Name, Title, Department, Research Interests, Links (Department and College as defaults)

- Photo – absolute requirement. We won't allow a page to be included in the gallery without one. I've only had one or two professors excluded because of it.
- Bio paragraph – we create them for the professor based on the CV. A bit of work, but they generally follow the same basic pattern.
 - When they joined Boise State
 - Department they work in
 - Where they got their degrees
 - Associations they are affiliated with
 - Accomplishments/publications/awards/grants - of note
- Sample documents – try to show a couple of different types of content to generate ideas for the professor. Staff will include everything from a professor's CV, upon request.

On-Going Maintenance

Once a site is created, library staff also maintain it through the general ingest process.

1. Find new publications
2. Identify and clear copyrights
3. Obtain permission and manuscripts from author
4. Upload to ScholarWorks
5. Harvest to SelectedWorks sites

This has been a very effective method and particularly beneficial for faculty who are prolific authors. Not only does this process allow the library to maintain their site, alleviated them of the burden, staff can also provide customizations based on specific needs.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Showcasing a Professor's Individual Work

One of the most important benefits of the author profiles is that they provide an individual showcase for every professor. More importantly, the sites can be customized for the type of scholarship that is valued in each discipline. The SelectedWorks platform now includes support for all types of materials including images, video, audio, and more. As a result, faculty from the arts and humanities can have their work fully represented in the system. Unlike other faculty scholarship tracking systems that favor text-based scholarship, Albertsons Library is now able to use a system that helps overcome that bias.

Increased Discovery

In addition to being able to showcase individual professors, SelectedWorks sites significantly improve the discovery of a professor's work. Open access publishing improves citation counts. However, it also greatly increases the discoverability of the works outside of academia. Boise State faculty have reported that policy makers, publishers, and other community members have found and used their scholarship as a result of their SelectedWorks site.

Most Current Collection of Faculty Profiles in the University

Because the library uses a mediated deposit model and have built maintenance into the regular ingest process, ScholarWorks is the most current and comprehensive collection of faculty scholarship information available for the university. The system provides reliable content that people can link to and are confident will remain stable and current. As a result, some departments link to their faculty SelectedWorks sites, while other faculty use their SelectedWorks links in their signature blocks.

Maintaining a comprehensive and current collection of faculty scholarship information is incredibly difficult and can create a burden for individuals and departments who attempt these efforts. Consequently, things like departmental faculty lists or faculty activity tracking systems are never consistently maintained. While other author profile systems, such as ResearchGate or ResearcherID, are not comprehensively implemented when left to individual faculty. With the staff, skills, and information systems expertise, libraries are uniquely positioned to manage such data. The bottom line is nobody does this better than us.

Usage Data

Albertsons Library is now able to provide faculty scholarship usage data. The new dashboards, both for the SelectedWorks and Digital Commons platforms, are quite effective for this.

When a professor logs into the system, they are presented with a clickable global map, downloads by institutions and countries, referring pages, downloads over time, and downloads by individual work. The data can be exported into a spreadsheet which can then be further analyzed or used in reports, tenure applications, or other documents.

The dashboard lets an author report on their accomplishment in a way that demonstrates impact. It is especially good for scholarship that does not fall into the traditional peer-reviewed journal article category that is favored in most tenure guidelines. Unlike citation counts that can take years to accumulate, download usage data demonstrates impact and relevance to a much larger, global audience who would not typically have access to closed, high cost academic journals.

MOVING FORWARD

Librarians and Researchers Have Different Perspectives About Scholarship

Librarians focus on things like long-term preservation, journal pricing, open access, and metadata. These are all good and important issues, and certainly open access is beneficial to faculty. However, they are not the ones that faculty care. Faculty have different priorities: tenure, career development, academic freedom. The reality is these are the motivators that drive faculty publishing decisions and if not considered thoughtfully, will outweigh any concerns librarians have. If we want to positively influence the people we are serving, we have to think about how we can capitalize on these differences in perspectives and develop strong partnerships.

Current Research Dissemination Model is Terrible



- Research dissemination is a solo activity
- Publishers are really the only other stakeholder
- No institutional support
- Disconnect between the library and researcher

In the current research dissemination model, sharing one's scholarship is usually a solo activity. Traditionally, researchers receive no institutional support, publishers are the only other stakeholder influencing how research is disseminated, and there is a disconnect between the researcher and library.

This "solo" model creates terrible imbalances. Research is disseminated via closed, "access for a fee" systems. Intellectual property is transferred away from the author, institution, and public. Economic publishing models harm smaller, less well funded universities, less well funded disciplines, and the general public who can not afford individual article or journal fees. This model undermines academia's research mission.

A New Research Dissemination Model



**Librarians are
equal partners in
the research
dissemination
process.**

However, a new model is emerging. Many groups who have a vested interest in how research is disseminated are beginning to be represented in the research dissemination process. It's important to remember that librarians have important and unique skillsets that we can bring to the table. Because librarians are aware of journal prices, open access mandates, and the challenges of long-term preservation, we know that faculty are limiting the impact of their research and the institution is not receiving the greatest benefit possible from the work it supports. Because of our unique vantage point, librarians can utilize their specialized skills as advocates and serve as equal partners in the research dissemination process.

Part Adviser, Part Concierge, Part Press Agent

When thinking about librarianship and the future of the profession, it's worth considering the skills needed and how our work fits into the mission of our institutions. Libraries need to build upon what is a somewhat passive model that has librarians separate from and reacting to those groups and individuals that we work with. Instead we need to expand into a research partner roles where we do things like consult on journal selection or tenure statistics, establish researcher profile systems, oversee and manage research data, or lead policy change efforts within our institutions.

If libraries take on these roles, our skillset will need to need to change. Here are some possible skills needed in the future if we are to be successful librarians.

- Collaboration
- Facilitation
- Outreach
- Information and systems management
- *Research methodologies*

- *Research technology*
- *Scholarly communications and related specializations (copyrights, publishing, usage metrics, etc.)*
- *Data management*

Extraordinary Opportunities

If librarianship evolves as a profession in this way, we will have incredible opportunities to benefit our institutions. Libraries will be invited to bring their expertise, resources, and services into an area where they are not typically engaged.