Promoting the First Year Experience Program by Publishing Digital Student Scholarship

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Digital Commons@WOU, Western Oregon University’s institutional repository, collects and provides open access to published and unpublished scholarly and creative works, research, publications, and reports contributed by WOU faculty, staff, students, and others. Digital Commons@WOU promotes the collaboration, ongoing development, and discovery of knowledge.

First Year Experience Symposium

- 10 out of 13 FYE classes participated
- Approximately 100 projects presented
- Over 200 people in attendance, including President and Provost

Library partnership included expertise in digital documentation, sampling presentations, gathering student permission, and making available online as a digital collection

- Total number of items from pilot project (FYE Symposium series) 12
- Average number of downloads per item 44
- Over 50% of traffic is result of Google searches 50
- Total number of downloads in FYE Symposium series since January 2012 533

Examples of published student work
http://digitalcommons.wou.edu/fye/

“The FYE Symposium is important because it gives first year students an opportunity to present their work in an educational context beyond the classroom. The FYE digital collection is important because it documents this event and gives students an opportunity to go one step farther in publishing their work so others beyond the symposium can see it.”
-- FYE Committee

How is the digital collection published?

Digital Commons is an open access, hosted, institutional repository (IR) software platform that includes a suite of tools and services that enables institutions to manage, display, and publish scholarship to the web in a highly visible showcase.

138 colleges and universities currently use this software to promote scholarly activities.

Measured Outcomes

- Assists FYE with advising, talking with faculty & administration
- Usage statistics from digital collection
- Continued funding for program and symposium
- Improved marketing and promotion of both the FYE program and institutional repository
- Increased number of students and classes

Potential Impact

- Increase in student academic confidence
- Increase in student retention after first year
- Administrative buy-in and support
- Reusable data for marketing, promotion, outreach, accreditation, reporting, etc.