

**Title:** Reducing metadata errors in an IR with distributed submission privileges

**Authors:** Colleen Lyon, Gilbert Borrego, Melanie Cofield

**Abstract:**

The distributed submission policies of many repositories makes standardizing metadata input very difficult. At The University of Texas at Austin, there are over 50 people who have permission to submit content to the UT Digital Repository (UTDR). Out of that 50, two full-time staff members have management responsibilities for the repository. This limited number of managing staff means that frequent metadata clean-up isn't possible. We are taking a pragmatic approach to addressing the issue of limited clean-up capacity by transforming our training process. Training focuses on clearly communicating repository-wide metadata standards, collaboratively creating collection-specific metadata guidelines as needed, and providing detailed input guidelines for each Dublin Core (DC) metadata field. We are working one-on-one with student workers to familiarize them with the new guidelines and are communicating with repository submitters via listservs and in-person meetings. The new guidelines were rolled out recently, and we expect to see a decrease in the number of records requiring editing. We will present examples from our new guidelines, suggestions for successful communication methods with stakeholders, and provide information regarding the incidence of errors since implementing the new training.

**Overview of project:**

With little staff time available for metadata clean-up, UTDR administrators fix mistakes as they are noticed; there has been no comprehensive effort to clean up records. Over the summer and fall of 2014, the Scholarly Communications Librarian noticed more errors than normal, and was spending time either notifying submitters or manually fixing records. Recent hiring of a Metadata Coordinator and a Digital Repository Specialist in the fall of 2014, signaled an opportunity for group work towards improving the quality and consistency of the metadata being submitted to UTDR.

First we created a set of repository-wide metadata guidelines applicable to all works submitted. Examples include: using sentence or title case rather than all caps for titles and abstracts, and entering author names in a consistent way. Then we examined the list of Dublin Core fields being used in UTDR and came up with detailed input guidelines to improve the consistency of usage across collections with multiple submitters. We sought out feedback from stakeholders outside the library to make sure the new input guidelines made sense to them. Fields not being used were deleted from the submission form to prevent improper usage. While we have always had collection-specific metadata guidelines for those collections that fall outside the typical metadata requirements, those guidelines hadn't been shared widely. We're now striving to make those collection guideline documents more accessible and to explain their importance.

**Next steps:**

We are currently working with students and repository submitters to communicate the new guidelines. We will be monitoring the number of records that require editing after submission and will compare that to editing statistics before the guidelines were adopted.