Modernization at LAC

In spring 2009 Library and Archives Canada embarked on a modernization process in order to adapt to changing information and social environments, to ensure that LAC continues to serve the public good effectively and to remain relevant, trusted and valued by Canadians. It is regarded as another step in the institution’s continuous adaptation to the digital information environment, while at the same time fulfilling its mandate with respect to analogue material.

Since the summer of 2009 LAC has examined all its collecting activities. Theses Canada currently acquires theses and dissertations from Canadian universities in two streams. Through the more traditional stream universities send theses and dissertations to LAC via ProQuest, which digitizes and reproduces them on microfiche under the terms of its contract with LAC. LAC has decided to eliminate the traditional program in 2014 in favour of a digital model of theses acquisition through its already existing harvesting program. It will be necessary for those universities that have not yet implemented ETD submissions programs to do so in the near future if they want to continue to participate in the national theses program.

Canadian ETD and Open Repositories Workshop

A Canadian ETD and Open Repositories Workshop took place at Carleton University in Ottawa on May 10 and 11. The first Canadian regional symposium on ETDs to be held, it was co organized by LAC, Carleton, the University of Ottawa and the University of Victoria.

In order to provide a structured learning experience the program was carefully designed and all speakers were at the workshop by invitation. A list of stellar speakers included Dr. Ed Fox who gave the keynote address and spoke on the Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD). Sessions related to ETDs included metadata and workflow best practices, systems best practices, training for graduate students and an update on Theses Canada.

Since ETDs in Canada comprise approximately 80% of the content of institutional repositories it seemed a good idea to combine the two topics in one workshop. The Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) started an institutional repositories (IR) program in 2003, in which all Canadian universities can participate regardless of whether or not they are CARL members. Theses Canada and the CARL IR program try to share information whenever possible and many staff at universities are involved in both programs.

Sessions related to open repositories included presentations on various IR software programs, i.e. EPrints, Digital Commons and Fedora, a status update on IRs in Canada and a comparison of Canadian IRs with those in other countries, and strategies on how to encourage faculty to contribute to IRs. There were also sessions relevant to both ETDs and IRs on copyright and digital preservation. All sessions attempted to provide
practical information and to encourage people not to reinvent the wheel but to build on what other universities have already done.

Over 100 people attended the sessions from both large and small universities all across Canada. The workshop was bilingual and 15% of participants represented francophone universities from the province of Quebec. The majority of participants were from university libraries but a significant turnout represented graduate schools, a group that is often missing from symposia about ETDs.

Workshop organizers received extremely positive feedback from registrants who indicated that they had learned a lot and had developed great networks of contacts at other universities. In order to help people maintain those contacts I will be setting up a listserv for Canadian universities to share questions and information specific to Canada and a wiki for sharing more technical information.

**Current Status of ETD Initiatives in Canada**

Currently LAC is harvesting metadata and ETDs from seventeen universities, seven of which have mandatory submission programs. Six more universities have ETD programs, which for various reasons LAC is not yet harvesting. Pilot projects are taking place at six universities with pre-pilot discussions taking place at ten more. By the end of the 2010-2011 fiscal year it is likely that 60% of Theses Canada participants will have ETD submission programs in place.

**ETDs harvested by LAC (17):**

Alberta, British Columbia, Concordia, Dalhousie, Guelph, Laval, Manitoba*, McGill*, Montréal, University of Ontario Institute of Technology*, Québec à Montréal, Queen’s*, Royal Roads, Saskatchewan*, Toronto*, Victoria, Waterloo*

**ETDs not harvested by LAC yet (6):**

Acadia*, Calgary, École polytechnique, Lethbridge*, Simon Fraser*, Windsor

* denotes mandatory submission (10)

**Pilot projects (6):**

Carleton, Lakehead, McMaster, Mount Saint Vincent, University of Ottawa, Regina

**Pre-pilot discussions(10):**

Atlantic Veterinary College (UPEI), Brock, École de technologie supérieure, Memorial, Québec à Trois-Rivières, Ryerson, Sherbrooke, Western Ontario, Wilfrid Laurier, York