

Bethany Sewell

Course-related materials at the University of Denver

A collaboration: Why collaborate?

At the University of Denver's (DU) Penrose Library we offer a robust electronic reserves service, which includes a two-week turn around time, copyright clearance, and retrieval and digital reformatting of requested materials. All that is required of the requesting faculty member is to submit citation and course information, and we do the rest.

Although the reserves operations at the Penrose Library were being inundated with e-reserves requests, library staff knew that faculty members were using many different approaches for providing students with course-related material.

We, all too often, experienced both new and tenured faculty members' amazement as they learned about our electronic reserves services. We have also encountered the frustration that faculty members feel when trying to navigate the appropriate place for course-related materials. And although we are very proud of the library's services and are constantly exploring new technologies and streamlining workflows to provide better service, we are aware that not all course-related material is appropriate for electronic reserves and, on occasion, need to refer the faculty member to a different service point, such as the bookstore.

After an initial investigation, we inventoried at least ten separate venues in which course-related materials were being prepared and distributed across campus, despite the various means of marketing our services to the faculty.¹

The task force

As we began investigating the multitude of the resources, services, and products available on the DU campus available for the faculty to produce and deliver course-related content, we discovered numerous instances of duplication of these services and products. The time had come to formally collaborate with other service points on campus to effectively define, streamline, and provide our services to the faculty. The Reconceptualizing Reserves on the University of Denver Campus Task Force was formed. The task force included representatives from each of the stakeholders from the University Library, the campus bookstore, Blackboard, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), the University Technology Services (UTS), multimedia services, and the faculty.

Charge

We began with the goal to investigate and develop recommendations to create an efficient, sustainable, and scalable course-related content system for the DU community. Keeping in mind the goal of integration with existing systems, this group was to review the capabilities of current systems and recommend any necessary changes. The task force considered as many formats and types of course-related content as possible for inclusion along with other issues, including communication with

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faculty, copyright, access/retrieval, delivery, storage space, and management of documents and their use.

Milestones reached

Getting to know each other and our services. Our first and greatest accomplishment so far is the networking of the members. We have now all met each other and have begun very productive discussions about both our unique and our shared core purposes, values and ideologies, missions, and services. This is a *major* outcome, since we have a decentralized campus and very busy departments.

One-Stop Course Materials Guide. Our first physical product is a Web page for faculty that links all of our resources and states that DU offers instructors a variety of tools and resources for course support and creating and delivering course-related materials to students.² The creation of this Web page was a good project and gave us each a chance to engage in self-analysis in light of the others' services and a chance to look at our respective Web-based presentation of these services.

Expanding models already in place: An organic evolution. After our second meeting and the One-Stop Course Materials Guide was created, the collaboration across all units really began. The members of the task force began expanding the model and seeing where their services fit into a bigger picture, and, best of all, we began calling on each other to creatively work towards our goals between meetings. As a result, several initiatives are already underway:

1. *Single log-in.* Due to students' frustration with remembering separate e-reserves passwords, UTS had previously worked out a way for students enrolled in a class to centrally authenticate by logging on through webCentral. We'd also had some faculty member feedback that they don't use library e-reserves because they already have to go so many places to set up their courses, and it was simpler to add their own documents to Blackboard. The Blackboard administrator

and the UTS programmer worked together to use the same LDAP pass through to give students access through Blackboard, as well. After this enhancement, the benefit of other services such as DU VAGA³ was added in Blackboard.

2. *Referral to related course content.* Next, the librarians and the programmers started thinking about the degree to which course-related content lists and finding aids are visible to faculty. We realized that the faculty should be able to easily request from the universe of material available to digitize and deliver. A linked search was made to the library OPAC directly from DU VAGA resulting in a unified approach to finding images and videos across the DU VAGA galleries managed by CTL and the library catalog. Faculty members now see the question: Can't find the video(s) you want? Search the library Peak catalog to locate videos, with a link to do so. Our dynamic video genre searching guide is also linked.⁴

3. *This interlinking continues.* The One-Stop Guide has been linked to the faculty course reserve toolkit in webCentral, and the library has linked to the CTL pages and plans to link to each others' sites in unique ways continue. This enhances the knowledge of all the staff in each service point and increases effective referrals.

Looking into the future: The big goal

At our third meeting, we discussed our successes and where to go next. We had each received positive feedback about the One-Stop Guide and the other areas of integrating information about our services. However, there was much more that we could do and our big goal would be a clearinghouse of course-related content: create one universal requesting process designed with the principle of ease of use and access by having forms automatically populated, sent out, tracked, and confirmed for the requesting faculty member and the students retrieving the materials.

A subcommittee began to discuss case scenarios and a potential design for the process

and requesting form. An initial form in web-Central (accessible only to faculty) was then developed with all aspects that are common to each of our different request forms (Bookstore, Blackboard, Library) and automatically populated, such as name, course, quarter, and contact information. The requesting faculty member then sees a choice of options. Each option takes the faculty to the appropriate service provider and service request form. The last option takes the faculty to the One-Stop Guide.

The groundwork has now been laid for a unified campus system of course-related content; however, it is clear that we need to continue to meet and collaborate to reach our goal. There are many more things to discuss and develop such as sharing copyright responsibilities; sharing the use of equipment, such as a new library-owned planetary for e-reserves and interlibrary loan processing; expanding the text access model to e-reserves with OCR and audio reading for students with disabilities; allowing the faculty to easily request content from the universe of information much like patron initiated requests for interlibrary loan; managing the work through software and systems; making the system intuitive, with appropriate testing from all types of users.

Challenges

DU is a decentralized campus, so many of us had been operating without much formal collaboration for a long time. We had all developed our own multiple forms, vocabularies, and rules for different offices and services. Our task force had to spend time deciding where

our unified form and information should live and whose standards and models to follow. We realized that as long as it is possible to find and use the new process from any access point, it doesn't matter from the user perspective where it actually lives. While this still needs to be determined, we are working collegially and realize that we can all point to the form, wherever it lives, with appropriate explanations.

This also means that we need to be consistent in our joint and individual advertising and marketing to the campus. By collaborating on the marketing of our services, we will better manage faculty expectations. We also need to address copyright issues and develop common approaches to shared rights issues, such as how we will deal with publications with use restrictions in the license like the *Harvard Business Review*.

When we initially began our discussion, we focused on what seemed impossible (automating copyright management processing and control was at the top of the list). This really bogged us down, and we decided that at the next meeting that we would focus on what we *can* do.

Success elements—Lessons learned and unexpected outcomes

1. Make objectives and projects sustainable and ongoing by formalizing agreements to work together and getting buy-in from the directors of each participating department.

2. When you realize you need to include new parties/stakeholders, do so as quickly

Tips from the One-Stop Course Materials Guide

- Place library items, such as books, videos, CDs and DVDs, on a physical reserve shelf.
- Make articles, book chapters, syllabi, and/or other documents available electronically.
- Reactivate electronic reserves material previously used for a course.
- Request textbooks, course packs, electronic texts, and/or custom course materials.
- Create course portfolios in Portfolio.
- Create Web-based course content.
- Organize and present high-quality images and videos or video clips.
- Convert text, video, or audio to digital form for use in a course.
- Do something other than one of the above.

as possible. (We added two units midway through the conversation.)

3. Don't get bogged down about what is *not* possible.

4. Encourage free association outside of the meeting times by setting up a virtual place where conversation continues or by setting up a fast-response e-mail network.

5. Realize that while collaboration is challenging, it is needed and people all the way up to the chancellor will be happy with the results!

Notes

1. **Service providers:** The library, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), the bookstore, faculty themselves (do-it-yourself Web sites), webCentral (the student portal), University Technology Services (UTS), multimedia services within UTS.

Services provided: Checking copyright and paying permission fees; and identifying, obtaining, delivering, maintaining, reformatting (including digitizing), creating, and supporting course-related materials.

Venues for distribution of course-related content to students: DU VAGA (a visual material viewer created and managed by CTL), Blackboard, Portfolio (student and faculty assessment and document-posting environment created by CTL), course packs and textbooks provided by the bookstore, faculty personal Web pages, in-class handouts, the library e-reserve software, webCentral, and the library circulation desk.

Products available electronically: library tutorials, reference guides, journal articles, assessment materials (forms, tests, bluebooks), book chapters, calendars, communication forums (e-mail, discussion board, chat), electronic books, forms, images, video recordings, presentations, PowerPoint, lecture notes, sound recordings, student work, syllabi, Web links.

Products available physically: journal articles, assessment materials (forms, tests, bluebooks), book chapters, books, forms, images, presentations, PowerPoint, lecture notes, student work, syllabi, video recordings, Web links.

2. Visit the One-Stop Course Materials Guide at ctl.du.edu/resources/course.cfm.

3. DU VAGA is a courseware tool for organizing and presenting high-quality images and videos to course participants. Instructors have access to more than 20,000 art and world history images and more than 200 library reserve videos.

4. The video search guide can be found at library.du.edu/FindIt/ResearchGuides/rg_main.cfm?rg_id=187. *ZZ*

(“ACRL in Washington, D.C. continued from page 497)

increased focus on how we organize and teach visual information.

A virtual poster session focusing on practical applications of the intersection of visual and information literacy was developed in conjunction with the program, and is available at eye2i.wordpress.com/. *Kevin Unrath, Western Carolina University, Unrath@email.wcu.edu* *ZZ*



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and the
Teaching/Learning Process**

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of Evan Ira Farber
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