

*“Towards A Virtual Sixth Branch”*

**Digital Scholarship Initiatives Steering Committee**

**Recommendations to the University Librarian**

*19 October 2012*

**IN GENERAL:**

1. Develop and implement **ONE** set of common practices, processes and standards across all Dalhousie Libraries, in respect to digital collections, journals, theses, images, and other like material.
2. Concentrate on established projects, upgrading as necessary, in which we already have an investment (including the former ETC projects), or to which we are committed, and migrate these from former configurations/platforms so as to consolidate and optimize server space, and to facilitate access, usability and forward migration.
3. Provide the necessary support, intervention and education so as to showcase and promote the use of these assets and resources.
4. Ensure adequate, consistent and appropriate staffing and support through the Operational Review and strategic initiatives investment to effect the foregoing recommendations and to build a “virtual” sixth library for Dalhousie

*“Publishing, whether print or electronic, done well, requires people and time.”*

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#### **INVENTORY:**

##### Collections & Web-sites & Digital Objects

- We offer digital collections now in excess of 50 in total, under the aegis of DUASC (17), Kellogg (32), Sexton (2) and the former ETC (5) in as many as twelve different formats lodged on a variety of servers (Joomla, CQ5, Util, ETC, etc).
- Some of this content (primarily the Kellogg collections and objects) can be migrated to the Institutional Repository/DalSpace. Other projects will require upgrading and reformatting to current standards and practices. The details of these upgrades vary from project to project, but all will require staff time and IT support.
- There are many more potential projects to be pursued:
  - Dalhousie University Archives
    - Thomas Raddall and the West Nova Regiment
    - *Halifax, Warden of the North* – an interactive e-book
    - Dalhousie University calendars and convocation booklets
    - Dalhousie yearbook *Pharos* and faculty-based yearbooks
    - Dalhousie University Presidents
    - the 1818 -- 2018 Anniversary project – “Virtual Dalhousie”
  - Special Collections
    - further Kipling material
    - rare 19th century poetry broadsides
    - 19th century botanical engraving by Maria Morris
    - 19th century Nova Scotian sheet music
    - images of 19th century Maritime seaports (engravings from deVolpi et al., a focussed print collection showcase)

- MacRae Library
  - migration of Agricola collections
  - Edith Zillig Sheep fonds
  - the Atlantic Canada Co-operative Archives
  - at least four other collections, of a textual and image nature
  - a unique opportunity to develop a 3-D collection

## Journals, both current & retrospective

- *Dalhousie Review* back to 1984 is now available, with the rest of the run requiring more work, perhaps one half-person/year; back to 1921 in PDFs and images occupies some 60 GB for storage and work space. The person formerly working on this project has now been seconded to the President's Office.
- *Dionysius*, an annual, is available from 2003 to 2011; the average volume takes up 1 to 1.5 MB.
- The development of the above plus creating space and establishing templates for *Belphégor* and *Nabokov online/NOZh* required one FTE intern (an exceptionally highly-qualified instance) for four months working with open journal software.
- *NSIS Proceedings* is now complete up to 1984, involving sundry interns' time over 5 years, the most recent of these addressing some 2800 pages at full-time for a month; 16 years (up to 2000) remain to be addressed and deposited into DalSpace.
- *Dalhousie French Studies* student help is now funded and ready to begin, once the work-room is prepared.
- There are several current & potential projects out there: *Compendium*, *Initiales*, current *NSIS Proceedings*, the *Canadian Journal of Law & Technology* archive, the *Journal of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada*, the *Dalhousie Gazette*, the *NS Medical Bulletin*, and the Royal Institute of Architecture journal.

## Theses

- Dalhousie theses are now averaging 5 MB each; we can expect some 450/year, which translates into approximately 2 GB annually. We foresee growth in individual size here, given supplementary material (images and data) more frequently included.

## Data

- Our plan is to participate in and collaborate with whatever incipient national initiatives/repository system, perhaps Research Data Canada. In the meantime, a useful initial project might be the development of data dictionaries. Also, we recommend library involvement in a consulting capacity either in the grant preparation process per the VP Research Office or in post-award support.
- Data Archiving Services @ Dal – recent report
  - need for data archiving service at Dalhousie University clearly
  - challenging issues regarding access, confidentiality, control/security
  - diversity of storage methods extant
  - sheer volume, potentially, in view of Dal & granting agency policies
  - issues posed by re-purposing
- the Data Repository Environment Scan, recently compiled by Daniel Yule, a CompSci/SIM graduate student, includes some helpful recommendations.

## IR profiles/bibliographies/holdings

- A Law Library project this summer to deposit published materials for the Law Faculty into the Social Science Research Network (SSRN) online repository, encouraging faculty participation and teaching them how to make their own deposits to SSRN involved some 200 hours librarian & intern time for 32 faculty.
- Hence a rough estimate of a year's work if tackling all of Dalhousie, with faculty co-operation/input; collaboration of staff and subject librarians is essential here.
- As researchers' scholarship and data are deposited, pursuant to granting agencies' requirements and VP Research Office policy, this area will grow considerably and quickly. Ample space must therefore be earmarked for this purpose, with staff designated and services developed to assist clientele as necessary.

## GIS collections/projects

- This area presents a unique set of challenges, sometimes of a different order of magnitude, respecting staff skill sets, technological needs, and financial support.

- There are excellent opportunities presented for collaboration with government, such as in the HRM sea level rise impact assessment and the Church map project, and with NGOs, such as the LaHave project, as well as internationally.
- Our projects are at a variety of stages: pilot, nascent, on-going, and complete.
- Our projects present a variety of size and scale and complexity, as for instance:
  - measurable in gigabytes, for example
    - the History of the Book with Fiona Black of SIM
    - the HGIS project – oldest maps of Halifax and the coast – with Rob Summerby-Murray, FASS Dean
    - the Manta Ray global survey
    - the LaHave watershed monitoring project
    - some smaller Dalhousie initiatives, such as Dal Alumni & Dalplex
  - measurable in terabytes, for instance
    - the HRM sea level rise impact assessment
    - the Caribbean slavery and plantation changes & climate project
    - the Coastal Atlas project (collaboration with ICAN)
    - Science Sphere (collaboration with NS Museum et al.)
  - measurable in petabytes, for example
    - the Atlantic PATH project
    - the Ocean Tracking Network
- We observe that the demand for geospatial services will only continue to grow as other disciplines recognize the value that this type of information can contribute to their own research.

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**NEEDS:**

hardware & storage

- scanner ever-greening programme
- PCs for DSI work-room, and for staff
- on-going support for storage area network (SAN)
- server renewal
- additional substantial server space upgrade for Maps/GIS/data

software

- licenses

staffing

- re-allocated staffing (see Operational Review)
- SIM & NSCC interns on practicums/course projects
- additional FT developer in Libraries IT
- additional FT systems administrator in Libraries IT
- additional FT archives staff
- additional FT cartographer/GIS/data staff

space (room 5609 – Digital Scholarship Initiatives work-room)

- furniture & décor, minimal shelving
- possible wiring upgrade

administrative

- financial flow
- grant administration
- personnel management
- PR and promotion

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#### **SERVICES:**

We envisage three levels of service involved in supporting digital scholarship with our clientèles. Some specialized staff would be involved in offering these.

- self-help/point-of-use material

This will entail the design and maintenance of LibGuides or web-pages or tutorials or forms relating to thesis deposit, IR deposit of scholarship/publications or data, submissions to an OA journal, and the like.

- intervention/consulting

We observe that some aspects of digital scholarship necessitate more intervention and support than others; this is most manifest on the Maps/GIS and data curation fronts. Journal hosting will also involve some staff support. Maps/GIS currently devote considerable time to staffing a desk for this purpose, among others; data consultation is offered more on an *ad hoc* basis, with a LibGuide introduction. With more awareness of these resources, the need for this kind of support will likely increase.

- teaching, both credit and non-credit

A staff member in Maps/GIS estimates that half her work time is devoted to collaborating in two courses (Planning and Biology), offering the Lunch and Learn series, and consulting at/from the Desk. It is likely that more formal teaching will be undertaken by this unit in the future.

The Map Curator regularly teaches INFO 6681 – Geospatial Info Management in the SIM programme (cross-listed with MGMT 4681).

The Libraries might usefully collaborate with SIM in offering a course in core competencies for a digital publishing world, using our open access journals and our digital collections as a point of departure. In time, participation in a course in data management/curation might also be envisaged.