

Collaborating to Upgrade UVicSpace

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<https://dspace.library.uvic.ca>



Abstract: The Copyright and Scholarly Communications team at UVic Libraries recently undertook a major upgrade of our institutional repository to DSpace V7. In this presentation, we'll give a tour of the newly refreshed UVicSpace, outline the collaborative process of upgrading the site, discuss the successes and challenges we faced, and share insight into the value of community-led infrastructure. We'll conclude with some ideas about possible next steps for UVicSpace and how strong collaborations within the library community can help make them happen.

Outline

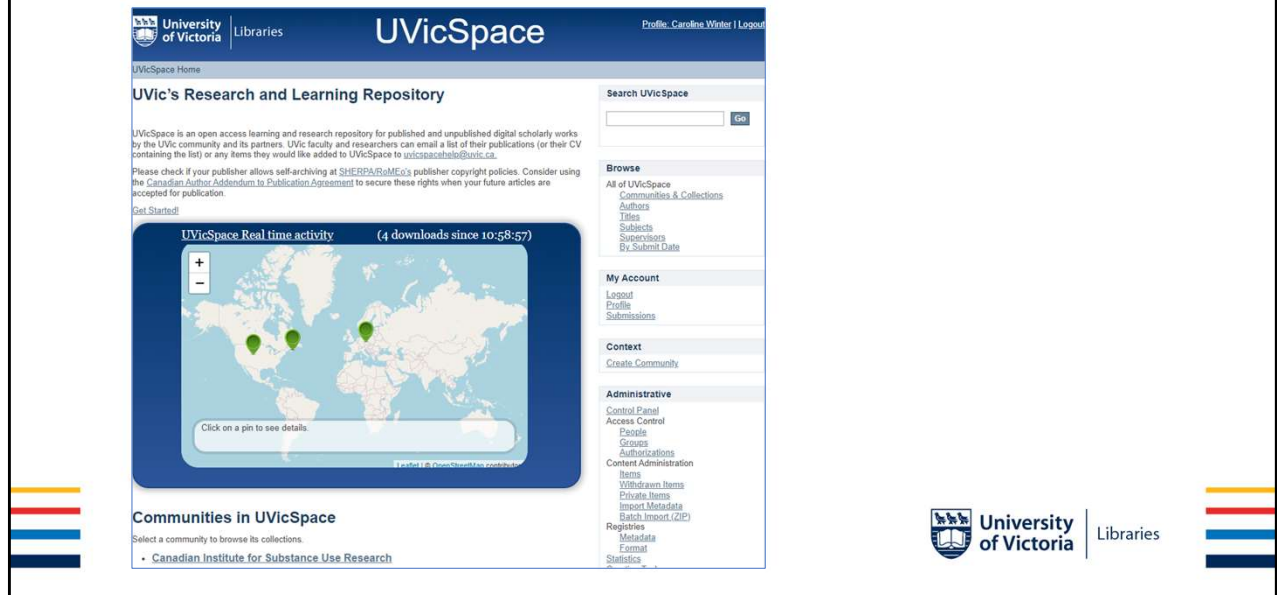
- UVicSpace overview
- Why upgrade?
- Timeline of the upgrade
 - September-October: environmental scan
 - October–January: workflows & submission forms
 - January–February: training
- Launch & future directions
- Closing reflection



Here's an outline for the session.

We decided to approach this presentation based on the timelines we worked with.

September–October: Previous Version



UVicSpace Overview

- UVicSpace is our institutional scholarship and learning repository
- It's an open access digital archive of works by UVic faculty, students, staff, and partners
- It's an initiative of UVic Libraries, administered by the Copyright & ScholCom Office
- In terms of size, more than 15,600 items, ~23,000 authors
- It's built on DSpace software: free, open source repository software that has been used by for more than 20 years (developed by MIT and HP Labs, launched 2002), including by many institutional repositories in Canada. It was developed to support open scholarship, making scholarly work more discoverable and sharable, where possible.

Why Upgrade?

- We were working with DSpace 6 version, which had reached its end of life and was no longer supported as of July 2023
- We upgraded to version 7.4 – a major upgrade – V7 has a different backend as well as a new UI (huge thanks to Ben Sheaff, Programmer and Corey Davis, Digital

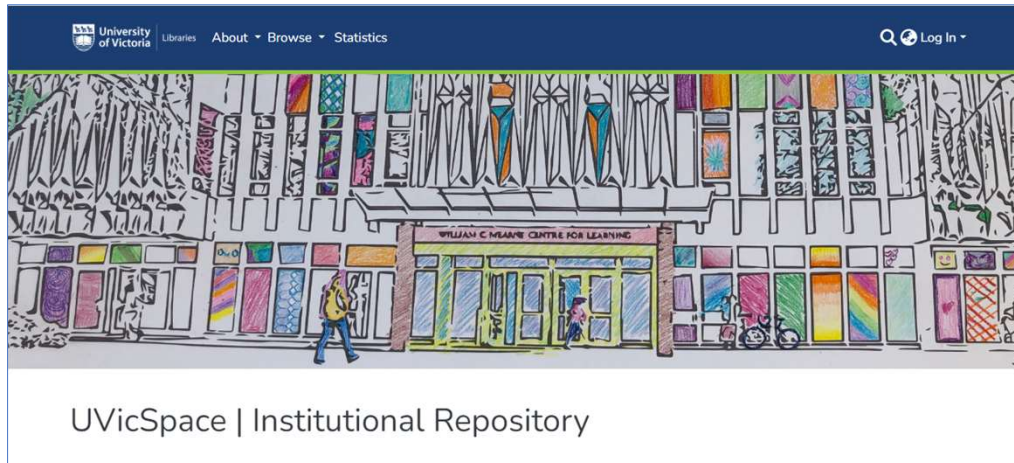
Preservation Librarian)

- There were many advantages to upgrading:
 - Better security and privacy
 - As time went on, some of the V6 features broke
 - Some new features, e.g., embedded video player to better support multimedia; batch metadata importing and exporting (rather than uploading items one by one)
 - Refreshed front-end design, more attractive and user friendly
 - Some other advanced features that we're looking at for the next iteration

Timeline

- The upgrade project took about 7 months, from initial planning in August 2023 to launch in late February 2024
- Our team was primarily responsible for the UI aspect, including the design and functionality, e.g., workflows for submitting and vetting items before they're archived
- Timing was a challenge
 - Capacity of the CSCO team and the Systems team
 - Amelia's internship was from September to March
 - Caroline joined the team in October
 - Both teams juggle multiple projects and responsibilities
 - We all had to learn how the new software worked, how to customize it, how best to train users in a variety of stakeholder groups
 - The upgrade required a few days of downtime for the site
 - Working around busy periods, e.g., when graduate students submit their theses and dissertations
 - It was essential for the site to be operational during those times

September–October: Environmental Scan



<https://dspace.library.uvic.ca>

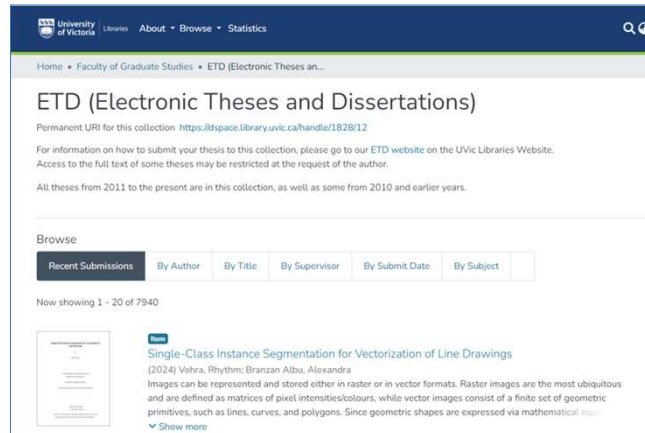
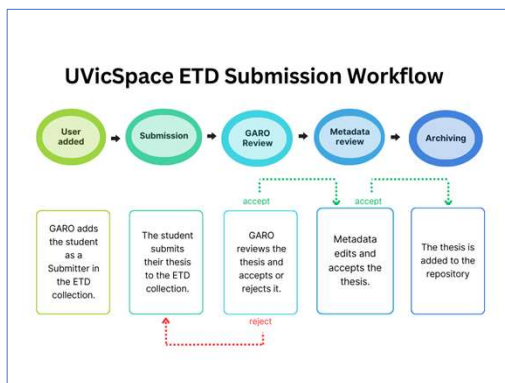


Environmental scan

- We started with an environmental scan and reviewed other Canadian university's institutional repositories (or IRs for short) to decide on what features and designs we wanted for the new user interface. In total, we looked at twelve IRs from across the country and returned to these IRs throughout the upgrade process to obtain new ideas and information. One of these IRs was Vancouver Island and Royal Roads University's shared repository called VIURRSpace.
- The review provided information on what was possible in the new system.
- Specific aspects of each IR we identified:
 - Initially
 - Nav bar
 - Communities & collections
 - Footer
 - Home Page
 - Text
 - LibGuide
 - Non-exclusive distribution license
 - To be added later

- ORCID
- DOIs
- CC licensing
- Thumbnails
- Other
 - Including SSO, 3rd party analytics, clickable/linked author names (Guelph, UCalgary, Laval),
- After making decisions about what customizations we wanted for our IR, we sent these customizations to Ben, our programmer, who then told us if what we wanted was possible and/or feasible in our timeline.
- At this stage of the upgrade we also identified and worked with several internal partners at UVic Libraries. We consulted with the Web Integration Librarian (Caitlin) for advice on the design of the site so that it fit seamlessly into the libraries' pre-existing web presence. The amazing cover image was identified with the help of the Libraries' Communications Officer (Lisa A.).

October–January: Workflows



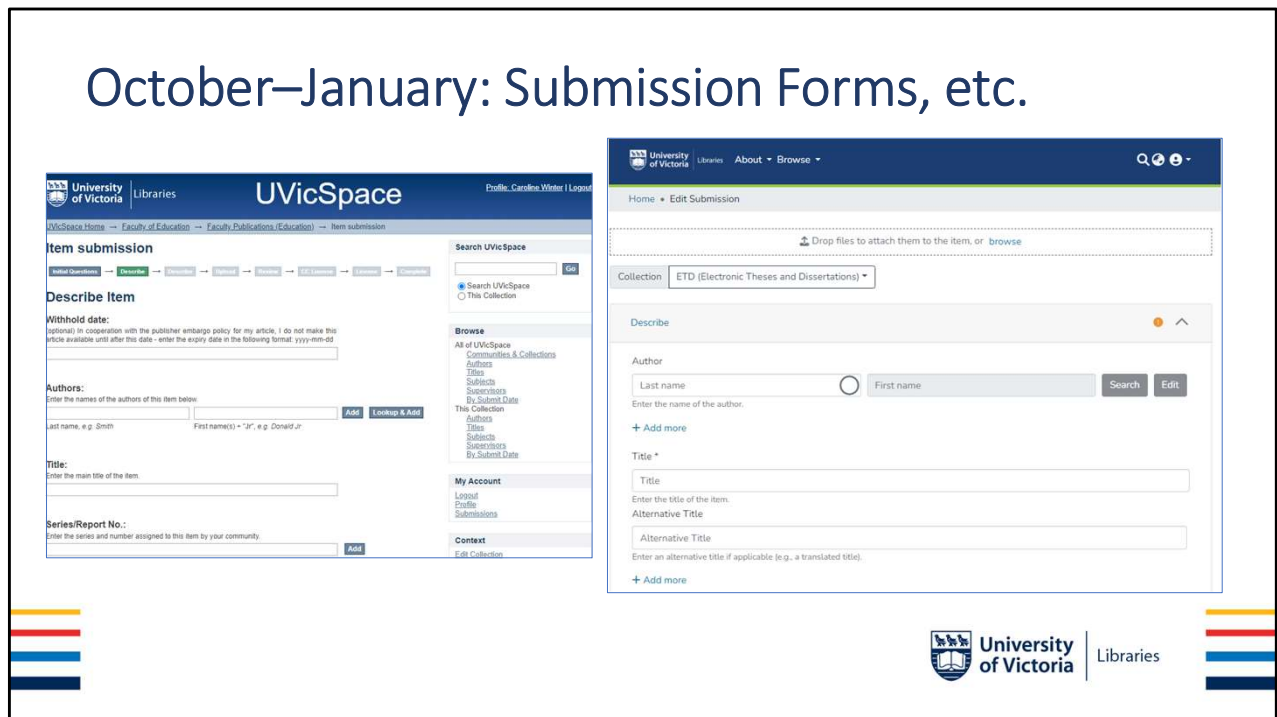
We started the implementation project by implementing a sandbox version of the latest version. Ben uploaded some test data for us to work with.

Submission Workflows

- The next stage of the project involved two major, related tasks: updating our submission workflows and our submission forms
- Consulting with stakeholder groups, we thought about how we could improve our submission workflows
- What do I mean by submission workflow? Example of the workflow for theses – the most complex one involving ETD submissions
 - Student submits thesis
 - Graduate Admissions and Records Office (GARO) does the initial review of the submission file, which can involve a few rounds of revisions with the student
 - Next, the Metadata team does a review of the metadata in the submission form
 - Theses are open by default, but students can request an embargo if they're planning to publish or patent their work; Metadata checks that any embargoes are applied correctly

- The process occasionally involves consultation with the UVicSpace admins
 - Metadata archives the item into the collection, which then appears in the ETD collection
- After consulting with GARO and Metadata, we eliminated a step from the previous version of the submission workflow that didn't really add value

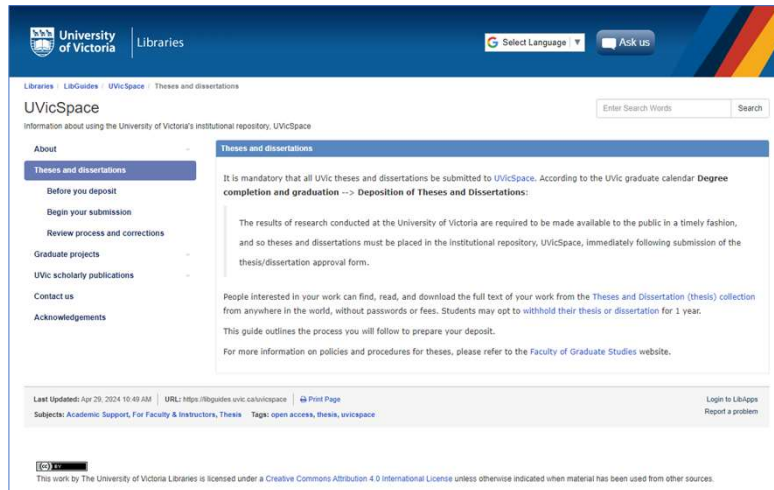
October–January: Submission Forms, etc.



Submission Forms

- On the UI side, our submission forms underwent the most change during the upgrade
 - Our team did the work of editing XML files
 - Working in a sandbox version of the site, we collaborated closely with our programmer to make sure things worked the way they needed to
 - This involved a lot of trial and error and back and forth – we're grateful to Ben for working with us in this way – getting our hands dirty with the XML really helped us understand how the system works, which has helped us use it to best advantage and train other stakeholders as well

January–February: Training



<https://libguides.uvic.ca/uvicspace>



Training

- Sharing information about the downtime (also relied on UVic Libraries team to do so)
- Training with stakeholders (GARO and Metadata), also the CSCO team for faculty pubs
 - Created training documents, worked with the teams to refine things
 - These sessions were really helpful in informing us how they use the system in their day-to-day work, so that we could make sure the system would work well for them
- LibGuides
 - Staff and public ones
 - Used environmental scan – we collected links to each schools LibGuides
 - Identified: structure of the guide, use of images/screenshots or training videos, information included (e.g., how to deposit and/or how to search)
 - After crafting new content for the LibGuide, Caroline & Inba refined the guide over several working meetings, and then on the day version 7 went live, Amelia updated the current guide

Launch & future directions

- Launched in late February 2024
- Future directions
 - Minting DOIs
 - ORCID integration
 - Altmetrics integration
- Closing reflection



Future Directions

- Launch went pretty smoothly, with some glitches and bot attacks
- During the upgrade process, we were already starting to think about the next iteration –
 - DOIs – DSpace has built in system for minting handles – another type of persistent identifier, but DOIs have become the standard in the scholarly ecosystem
 - Altmetrics – ways of measuring the reach and impact of scholarly work other than measuring citations in academic journals, e.g., in social media posts, blogs, podcasts, influencing policy, etc. DOIs are necessary for this.
 - ORCID – ORCID iDs are persistent identifiers for scholars, and while V7 has ORCID implementation used by early adopters (data can be pulled from and pushed to ORCID records), it's still in development – we're waiting for some of the bugs to be worked out before implementing

A recent development is that UVic has signed onto DORA (San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment) – all of these features would help us support that commitment and support open scholarship in our community.

Closing Reflection from Amelia

I'd like to wrap up our session today with a few personal reflections on the upgrade process. My internship with UVic Libraries began in September 2023, and this project was one of the first projects I was assigned. The project continued all the way until my contract ended in March. This upgrade process taught me so much, not just about institutional repositories and technological infrastructure, but also about project management and, importantly, about collaboration. Understanding the nuanced relationships between our unit and other UVicSpace stakeholders across campus – and working together in those relationships to gain feedback, solve problems, and build a more effective repository – has been such an important learning journey for me.

To me, institutional repositories are sort of a microcosm of many areas of academic librarianship. Upgrading this IR was a great opportunity for me to exercise my understanding of the scholarly communication ecosystem at UVic and beyond. I learned about copyright and permissions, as well as facets of scholarly publishing, the lifecycle of a journal article, metadata, web design in libraries, digital preservation, research and scholarly impact, publication statistics, principles of open access, software and technologies that enable research dissemination, and much more.