

Scanning the Stacks: How CSUSM digitized their print thesis and dissertation collection.¹

In 2012, Cal State San Marcos completed its first year of going digital with theses, projects, and dissertations. Prior to this, students were required to bring two copies of their thesis or dissertation to the library to be bound. One copy would go in the main stacks, the other copy would go into the University Archives. At this time, CSUSM had 1,028 print theses on hand with an approximate total number of 93,509 pages. The shift to electronic brought along the desire to digitize the rest of the print theses and dissertations that the library had on its shelves. Carmen Mitchell proposed a workflow that had the circulating copy disbound, scanned, and then recycled after digitization. The thesis would then be available electronically through ScholarWorks via a link in the catalog record. The theses in the University Archives were only digitized when the circulating copy was missing -- and only digitized in a non-destructive manner by an outside company with proper handling techniques.

CSUSM modeled their process after the University of Florida: cms.uflib.ufl.edu/etd/rds Six weeks before the first theses were scanned a letter with an “opt-out” form was sent to each student that we had contact information for. This meant that the library worked with the alumni affairs office, and sent letters explaining the project. It helped that CSUSM is still a fairly young campus, and only had 1,024 theses to digitize. (And Carmen Mitchell signed every single one of those letters!) Included with the letter was an optional form. Out of all the letters, only about 50 forms came back wanting to opt out. Most of them came back with enthusiastic notes of encouragement, stating that they were excited we were doing this. Some letters came back as undeliverable.

For the students that wanted to “opt out”:

They are embargoed until 2999 in our system. They are still available to the campus community, but require authentication before access. When trying to get the word out to alumni, the campus communications department also did a news article on this and sent it out to local media. In the years since, there has only been one additional alumni contact CSUSM, wanting to opt out. It was easy enough to go in and change the settings to accommodate them. The retro ETDs are all OCRd and have been formatted (as much as possible with PDFs) for ADA compliance.

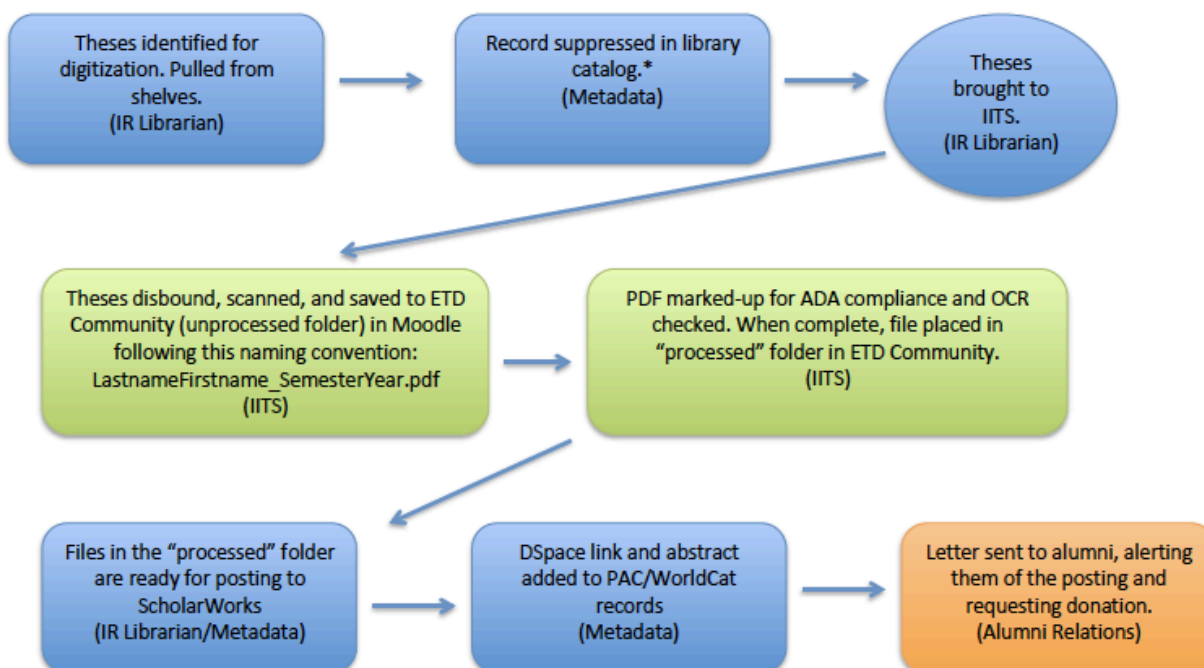
¹ Please note, this document isn't meant to be the *only* way to do a thesis digitization project. It is meant only as an example for one way that a thesis digitization project might be done. Your campus might decide to do things differently.

Here's the CSUSM workflow:

- Pull from stacks
- Disbinding
- Scanning
- ADA compliance formatting
- Quality control
- Upload PDF into ScholarWorks
- Recycle pages (upon confirmation of successful ingest into ScholarWorks)

CSUSM Thesis Digitization Project Workflow (Circulating)

Assumptions: IR Librarian is sending letters to all CSUSM Alumni notifying them of the project and possible "opt-out" form. If a thesis is not available through the circulating collection, then the archives copy is digitized using Luna Imaging. Until the digitization project is completed, **ALL** circulating theses will be blocked from ILL requests.



[sample letter]

October 22, 2012

Student name

Student address

Dear [student],

The Library at California State University San Marcos is undertaking a project to digitize all print theses for public access and preservation. It is our goal to make the theses searchable and easily located online, allowing the full breadth and scope of student scholarship produced at CSUSM to be available across the world quickly and easily.

We are going to include your thesis, *[thesis title here]* submitted in [year accepted] in the project. If you would like to be provided with a link to the digital version once it is available, please return the Public Access Option Form with your current contact information by [date required]. If you do not want your thesis made available for public access, please select "Opt-Out" on the Public Access Option Form on the following page and send it to us by [date required]. Your thesis will still be digitized for preservation, and for campus use.

I'd like to extend an invitation to you to visit the library if you are on campus. The current library exhibit *More Than Casinos: California Indian Culture, Contributions and Communities* will be on display September 25-December 14, 2012.

If you have any questions, please contact me via email at cmitchell@csusm.edu or call me at 760-750-8358.

Thank you,

Carmen Mitchell

Institutional Repository Librarian

Public Access Option Form

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM BY [date required]

In reference to the following thesis:

AUTHOR:

TITLE:

DATE:

☐ I would like my thesis made publically available online. Please send me the link to the digital version and any updates to the address below.

☐ Opt-Out: I do not want the digital version of my thesis made publically available. I understand that my thesis will still be digitized for preservation purposes, and campus use.

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION:

Name:

Address:

Email Address :

Signature:

Please return to:

Carmen Mitchell

CSUSM Thesis Digitization Project

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