Reset: Scholarly Communication at IU East

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The Indiana University Institutional Repository (IR), IUScholarWorks, is available to the Indiana University regional campuses. In 2013 I began reviewing this tool to discover how it could impact the IU East regional campus. IU East Faculty and students produce scholarly work. A goal of my work includes, how could IUScholarWorks (IUSW) and the associated IUScholarWorks Journals provide services to increase the impact of overall IU East scholarly work. In July 2019 a title change to Research Librarian recognizes my work and enlarges my role to formally include Scholarly Communication.

OA (Open Access) provides a recent option to freely share knowledge results through institutional repositories, and as required of tax and grant funded research. Many at IU East are just discovering the ideas and possibilities of OA. Sharing the outcomes of Scholarly Communications at IU East is in Reset, to adapt to this changing landscape. The active scientific and creative energy of faculty and students is continuous. The new factor is the ways that the work can be featured, celebrated, and shared to a broader audience. While faculty rely on proven sharing models, undergraduates at Indiana University East are just beginning to share their work to broader audiences. Students practice research, scholarly, and creative activities through formal and informal work. As IU East matures these diverse opportunities can be consolidated under scholarly communications. Future questions include: How does more formalized approaches to student research affect student outcomes? Will a broader audience impact faculty work?

Initially, I worked with faculty through email, school and department meetings, and individual conversations to communicate the opportunities of IUScholarWorks. The repository provides excellent information and structure to support IU scholars. The licensing, copyright information, and record creation of the system are thorough and offer faculty self-service or an opportunity to work with a campus coordinator. I worked with several faculty to consider providing their scholarly outcomes in IU ScholarWorks-East Collection. Initially, faculty hesitance related to sharing work and having it taken by other scholars, the newness and unknowns of Open Access, and lack of understanding of their own copyright privileges. I created several LibGuides to educate and encourage faculty to consider IU ScholarWorks-East as an archive for their scholarly work. I provided information about publishing and metrics. I highlighted the possible outcomes of greater access to their scholarly work through use statistics and wider influence. I created a collection for library scholarly work. The creation of the Tom Thomas Remembered collection identifies ideas and methods to provide vignettes about the campus’s early faculty and scholars. Going beyond IUScholarWorks, I assisted Professor Gene Cruz-Uribe to identify long term archive and access for photographic materials used in collaboration with two monograph publications: The Archive of Tikas [60 images] and Demotic Graffiti: Temple of Isis [502 images]. These collections reside in IU’s Image Collections Online (ICO). These examples demonstrate early efforts to encourage faculty to archive scholarly works in the IU East community of IUScholarWorks.
As a Reset, faculty are gradually taking advantage of these opportunities. IU East’s School of Business and Economics is considering adoption of IUScholarWorks-East for accreditation purposes. This happened as a result of a chance encounter during a new faculty orientation in August 2019. I introduced the opportunities of IUSW to the faculty present, and Bret Bogenschneider, faculty in the School of Business and Economics, excitedly asked for more specific information. The library director remarked that was the first time she had seen Bret smile. This faculty collaboration and interaction with the new Dean, Denise Smith of the School of Business and Economics provided the Reset. The addition of the first five articles with additional articles in process, provides opportunities for scholars to be more broadly discovered through IU and Google Scholar, open access for individuals interested in the topics, and may lead to increased citing of a scholar’s work by their peers. This new opportunity renewed my interest in creating and adding to the cycle of academic work. In 2018 IU East began a practice of celebrating faculty scholars through the Faculty Scholarship Celebration. A natural fit was to create a collection to archive the shared work and the Faculty Scholarly Celebration collection offers glimpses of scholarship using presentation materials and notes. Each of these newer initiatives resulted from individual collaborations with administrative support. A valuable insight is that academic need and administrative support, encourages sharing through IR scholarly communication.

Faculty work is shared, creating the "engine" of the knowledge creation cycle; once realized products and results continue the cycle of use, critique, new need, and new scholarly work. The rewards of Open Access (OA) offer more opportunities for faculty research to be a model to undergraduates. The modelling of scholarly activity provides undergraduates with examples of authority they personally know, can follow, and adapt to fit their needs. A natural next step is for the student to become their own authority as acknowledged in the ACRL (Association of Academic and Research Libraries) Information Literacy Framework, Authority Is Constructed and Contextual. As academic libraries work with the ACRL Information Literacy Framework (1), undergraduate learning is enhanced using the Framework. Student authority is an example of using these concepts to support student learning. Students who adopt their own authority intrinsically practice other higher order skills of evaluation, critical thinking, problem solving, and planning.

In 2014 an undergraduate collection of Honor's program capstone projects became the Indiana University East Students’ Scholarly & Creative Works Collection. This early success developed from a working relationship with the Honor’s Director, Alisa Clapp-Itnyre, and helping in judging the Capstone Honor's projects. As follow-up, several practices of students’ scholarly work were encouraged to add to the collection and include: SRD (Student Research Day), Honor's, and Capstone projects. I worked mainly through email and personal contacts with faculty to encourage student deposits to the IUSW. For students there are some pivotal issues to publish their work and the main one being the waiving of Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) rights for the publication of their student related work (FERPA is a federal mandate). Marketing opportunities to students has found limited success. Some observations in making these connections to students is that faculty buy-in is important to help students understand and begin to share their work, students need to see value in these activities. An important consideration is providing practical reasons for students to publish. A visible reason for publication in an IUSW is for future employers and institutions to observe a student’s higher order skills of reasoning and critical thought.

Indiana University’s support is key to efforts to develop student collections and the shared technologies provide advantages in allowing creative ideas to solve issues. New technologies are intriguing and the IUSW Journal platform was new and opened a path to possibilities. An immediate thought was that the student writing and creative arts publication Tributaries could use the journal...
platform to produce the yearly work; after consultation with the faculty sponsor we placed the journal in the archive IUSW-E, with the possibility of future issues going into the Journal platform. It occurred to me that IU East had additional student scholarly and creative outcomes and the tangible products were basically lost and unshared. After doing some research, I verified the lack of associated, public-collections of student works. Tributaries was the only student product that consistently provided access.

This conclusion identified the need for IU East student research to be published, archived, and shared. After reviewing a variety of student research journals, articles about student journals, related practices, and outcomes a plan for creating a student research journal at IU East took form. I spoke with colleagues, the IUSW-Journal staff at IU-Bloomington, I asked my Director Frances Yates, and spoke with other faculty regarding student research activities. Frances called a meeting together of key faculty and staff to discuss the possibilities of developing a new journal for student research. The work for this group is collected in the LibGuide Journal of Student Research at IU East. The idea was to create a student research journal to celebrate and share excellent student scholars’ products through the Open Access IUSW-Journals platform. The support of a small group allowed the journal to reach gradual fruition and two issues have been published. The first, a promotional issue of the Journal of Student Research at IU East established the concept; the second issue to be published is the first issue, a fully edited group of student articles of research, scholarly, and creative work. This achievement is the first of many future issues and the work involved for a single issue is massive. Several faculty members have been co-editors of the journal, Lora Baldwin, Ange Cooksey, and Tanya Perkins each as journal co-editors helped move the journal from concept to reality. Today the journal is a work in progress.

The reset for undergraduate research begins with the development of the grouped student research activities at IU East. Through collaboration with the journal’s co-editors, the members of the Students Research Day (SRD) committee, and Associate Vice-Chancellor TJ Rivard, JSRIUE is established. Ideas are in discussion about where to go next with campus student research. One idea was prominent, IU East student research activities should have a common source for information on the website. Through TJ’s support and the co-editors work this centralization provides interested students a central focus for student research and associated activities, Student Research at IU East. The development of the web-presence encouraged additional ideas such as a mentor/student researcher database, sharing of conference presentation opportunities, materials supporting why students do research, and how students can do research at IU East.

As a member of CUR (Council on Undergraduate Research), Indiana University (IU) provides membership to all IU campuses. I joined CUR as an individual member in 2017 and found several opportunities and practices to support student research. The articles and information on the CUR website and publications lead to consideration of all thing’s student research at IU East and a better understanding of why students need these experiences. A pertinent question is how does a librarian support the campus to develop strong student research, scholarly, and creative programs to help students develop deeper engagement and a stronger sense of their capabilities as they graduate. While researching aspects of student work, questions repeatedly came to mind, “how can universities help more students become active researchers, scholars, and creators; how can libraries support these efforts; and what do students need to participate? Institutional support and key efforts may help students be an authority on the skills they acquire and then can use throughout their lives. Undergraduates engaging in scholarship, research, and creativity, "...bring “skills in demand” with them to their first job and are better prepared to apply them successfully.”(2) These questions, findings and ideas provide opportunities for my role as Research Librarian.
The reset for student research at IU East is in the “what-if” stage. I submitted a proposal titled: IU East Student Research, Scholarly, & Creative Experiences (SRSCe) to Associate Vice-Chancellor Rivard. Further progress is on pause while IU East’s staff considers the possibilities. At a recent meeting about the proposal, psychology professor, Greg Dam suggested developing levels for a meaningful student researcher certification. IU provides a possible technology support option with IU Expand: to use to house the experience like the student’s CANVAS (IU’s Learning Management System) experience; provides a method of self-selected registration; provides a transcript that reflects achievements; and provides a space to support online and in-person workshops. Additional ideas for summer “boot-camps” and online research fairs further expand students’ possibilities. Students gain an optional pathway toward self-authority. There are many questions and processes that need to be designed for best practices and assessment. I am pursuing answers and designing processes to exemplify the possibilities. If we build it will they come?

Scholarly communication is ongoing and beneficial to the academy and ultimately society. To gain broader impact undergraduates should be welcomed into the cycle of knowledge creation and use for the best outcomes for individual students. IU East has the potential to move forward with a holistic student research program. A key feature of the results will be focused assessment that can be used to measure student and organization success. A functional plan will recognize that the activities need to meld with the everyday life of student, faculty, staff & administration. According to the current research this transition has the potential to impact admission, retention, minority students, graduation rates, and employability of IU East graduates. The benefits are multiple for me: I gain valuable skills in pursuing a fascinating project; learn methods to adapt my librarian professional skills to a new age; proactively support students; and share knowledge with my peers.

Endnotes & References:

Five Years of Open Access Policy Implementation at IUPUI