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The Urban Serving University

Gauging an Emerging Digital Scholarship Program

Universities located in urban settings have complex, rich interrelationships with their host cities and locally influence social issues, economic vitality, and quality of life. Libraries too contribute significantly to this dynamic, to the extent that they support and engage with the mission of these same universities. In this chapter, we address a gap in the literature about academic libraries with urban serving missions by offering a case study of the digital scholarship program at the University of Washington Tacoma (UWT), one of three campuses of the University of Washington, and a campus that has relied on its urban serving university (USU) designation to shape its identity.¹ To contextualize our study, we also conducted an environmental scan of digital scholarship programs at other urban serving universities and reviewed the literature around scaling and institutionalizing digital scholarship programs. Through this process, we seek not only to understand how the urban serving university values articulated at our institution have influenced and oriented our approach to digital scholarship, but to discern the past, present, and future direction of our work at UWT so that we might more consciously and strategically align staffing, resources, and projects to these values. As an initial foray into the intersection of digital scholarship at USUs, we believe our

inquiry will be useful for making visible the thought processes necessary for aligning activities of urban serving or community-oriented digital scholarship programs.

BACKGROUND: UNDERSTANDING THE UW TACOMA CAMPUS

UWT first opened its doors to 187 students in the fall of 1990. The campus was established as a direct result of synergy between local community activism to establish a public university in Tacoma and statewide efforts to expand access to higher education. Initially, the University offered only upper division classes in an interdisciplinary Liberal Studies program and primarily served “placebound students” seeking to complete bachelor’s degrees. Over the years, the University has expanded significantly, becoming a four-year campus in 2005 and adding twelve graduate degrees.² As of 2017, UWT has 5,185 students enrolled in eight schools or programs.³ The student body is exceptionally diverse, with the majority of students identifying as minorities, and continues to draw primarily from the greater Tacoma area.⁴ UWT began to formally identify itself as an urban serving university in 2011, based on the terminology and values established by the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities, an organization of thirty-seven public urban universities that was formed in 2005 and now focuses on enhancing student and community success through local partnerships.⁵

BEFORE AND AFTER UWT

Located on a 46-acre parcel in Tacoma’s historic warehouse district, UWT has played a pivotal role in revitalizing and transforming the city’s urban core. Figures 10.1 and 10.2 show views before development, and figures 10.3 and 10.4, after. The university moved to its permanent site in 1997, relocating to previously derelict industrial buildings that it renovated. At that time, an estimated 33 million dollars in public financing were invested in downtown Tacoma; since then, the University has continued to rehab old buildings to accommodate growth. From the very beginning, the University has rented out commercial spaces to local businesses and organizations. The campus has a porous boundary that makes it difficult to determine where the University and the city begin and end.⁶

The UWT Library (hereafter “Library”) has expanded and evolved along with campus. The UW Libraries “operate[s] as one library serving three campuses,” and as a result, the resources and expertise available from the wider system have consistently served as invaluable assets for extending our work



Courtesy of the University of Washington Tacoma.

FIGURE 10.1
BEFORE: Intersection of Commerce St. and S. 17th Ave. in 1994, Snoqualmie Falls Transformer Station (Powerhouse) is located on the right.



Courtesy of Jill Carnell Danseco/University of Washington Tacoma.

FIGURE 10.2
AFTER: Intersection of Commerce St. and S. 17th Ave. in 2010



Courtesy of Brian Anderson/University of Washington Tacoma.

FIGURE 10.3
Last Burlington Northern freight train passing through campus in 2003



Courtesy of Cody Char/University of Washington Tacoma.

FIGURE 10.4
Opening of the Prairie Line Trail in 2014

locally.⁷ From a modest collection on a single floor of a downtown building, the Library now occupies most of two central buildings on campus. The Library's largest quiet study area and reading room is located in the iconic Powerhouse, a historic building that once held transformers that provided electricity for Tacoma's street cars. The staffing has increased from two librarians in the early years to seven full-time equivalent (FTE) librarians, eight FTE staff, and approximately seventeen student workers. It is important to note that although the campus has more than doubled in size over the past decade, the number of library staff overall has remained about the same. As a result, the Library has had to consider how to strategically respond to increasing demands.

Over the past few years, the Library has started consistently to use the term "digital scholarship" to describe the work that supports our digital repository services and support for digital collections. We use the term out of pragmatism and convenience more than any other reason—it unites our work to a larger community of practitioners in the UW Libraries and the wider professional community. Many faculty members are still learning what digital scholarship means at UWT, but they understand and appreciate it when contextualized by the past, present, and future work we and others on campus are doing.

UWT Library Staff currently supporting the Digital Scholarship Program

- The *Associate Director/Head, Digital Scholarship Program* provides leadership for the digital scholarship program in the library and supervises librarians and graduate students carrying out work and guiding overall direction; oversees and administers the campus digital repository; and participates and contributes to the tri-campus Digital Scholarship Group. This role requires expertise in digital oral history. The associate director/head seeks to create more opportunities for faculty development and make contacts with partners in the community and has served as point of contact for setting up digital collections in bepress and CONTENTdm.
- The *Instructional Design Librarian* assists faculty with using digital tools and resources in classroom instruction and working with digital pedagogy; contributes to the program's communication strategies, program design, and scaling efforts; and participates in the UW Libraries Scholarly Communication Outreach and Education Team; and provides information regarding Open Access and Open Educational Resources; and coordinates campus events and workshops focused on digital tools and resources.

(cont.)

- The *Data and Digital Scholarship Librarian* is currently an open, unfilled position that will provide much-needed expertise in data services and management. The full scope of activities will be determined by the hire, but the Library foresees the data and digital services librarian participating and enhancing every aspect of the research lifecycle. Other duties will include acting as a liaison to the Urban Studies Program and the Milgard School of Business and enabling deep relationships with faculty doing community-engaged research and/or using data in innovative ways.
- *The Digital Projects Specialist* keeps faculty profiles and publication data up-to-date, cleans up metadata for digital collections, writes blog posts for the Tacoma Community History Project blog, performs digitization as needed, and performs many of other tasks. This position has been consistently filled by an MLIS candidate at UW iSchool who seeks a career in digital scholarship or archives/special collections.

FOUR ELEMENTS OF AN URBAN-SERVING UNIVERSITY: THE INFLUENCE OF URBAN SERVING VALUES ON THE UWT DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Although the landscape and architecture of the campus are perhaps the clearest signs that “the mission of an anchor or an urban serving university is indeed within the DNA of UWT,” there are others as well.⁸ For instance, in 2016 the campus also explicitly defined the urban serving mission of the University and articulated the following four elements of the USU mission at UWT:

1. Expand access to higher education in an environment where every student has the opportunity to succeed.
2. Foster scholarship, research, and creativity to address the challenging problems of our time and place.
3. Partner and collaborate for common good.
4. Catalyze the economic and social vitality of the region.⁹

To underscore how this mission has shaped the development of the Library’s digital scholarship program, we will review the program according to these four elements.

1. Expand Access to Higher Education in an Environment Where Every Student Has the Opportunity to Succeed

When it was founded, the intent of the University was to serve adult transfer students whose commitments to jobs and families made it impractical for them to travel to existing public universities in the state to complete their degrees.¹⁰ Although the campus has grown significantly since then, and now

includes first-year students, dorms, and services for residential students, “access to education and opportunity” is still identified as UWT’s central value, along with ongoing commitments to diversity, community, innovation, and excellence.¹¹

The campus also sees equity as an impact goal for its new strategic plan; reducing disparities in achievement across diverse groups and increasing both the number and satisfaction of traditionally underrepresented faculty and students are indicators of success.¹² More than half the student population at UWT is made up of first-generation students.¹³ Ensuring that such students have equitable access to the support systems and practices designed to facilitate their success is part of this work. For example, to improve student success and retention, the UWT campus has initiated a number of efforts to adopt High-Impact Educational Practices (HIPs), that is, a set of ten practices introduced in 2008 by George Kuh, the founding director of the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment. HIPs were developed using data collected from the widely used National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and reflect approaches to active learning that “have been shown to be beneficial to students from many backgrounds.”¹⁴ These include support for undergraduate research, including culminating projects or experiences in degree program requirements.

When first developing its digital scholarship program, the Library specifically sought to incorporate values of access and equity, most notably through partnerships with specific programs to make visible student work online. We also engage directly with HIPs by gathering and providing access to culminating and exceptional student works through the UWT Digital Commons institutional repository, thus expanding access to research produced at UWT for all.

In 2012, the UWT Global Honors Program became the first to openly share capstone projects and theses via Digital Commons. This collection now has over sixty-one papers, many of which are listed in the repository’s top ten downloads. Since then, we have set up an additional ten repository collections, with several others in development. Some collections—such as the Gender and Sexuality Studies Collection—gather exceptional student work at the discretion of a department or faculty member, whereas others—such as the *ACCESS*: Interdisciplinary Journal of Student Research*—are journals with a formal review process.¹⁵ In all cases, these works were collected and stored offline prior to a partnership with the Library. By providing a platform in which student work can be shared online with anyone, not just other members of the University, the Library encourages engagement between students and the surrounding urban environment. This is especially important for programs like the Geographic Information Systems certificate, in which UWT students often create detailed digital maps based on local issues, sourced through direct engagement with community members.

Although the Library’s Digital Commons offers many benefits in relation to access and equity, the logistics of using it to showcase student work

can sometimes be tricky. Right now, we have a highly flexible and distributed approach to integrating student work into our digital repository. In many cases, students upload their work directly to the repository, and then a faculty or staff member reviews and posts their work. This process shares the labor with digital scholarship stakeholders outside the Library, although at times our digitization specialist does the batch uploading on a student's behalf. With this hands-off model, we have been able to develop a large number of student-focused collections, but as a result, we've lost some quality and consistency in the repository's metadata.

Even with the significant progress we've made incorporating student work in our digital repository, the UWT campus has not yet fully embraced or prioritized open access when it comes to the culminating works of graduate students, let alone undergraduates. Individual departments currently decide whether or not culminating student work is openly shared, and we have encountered reluctance to sharing it. Some departments do not want to release proprietary information, although others question what the quality standard should be for sharing student work. Still others are hesitant because their students' projects fall outside of traditional thesis or paper formats. Ironically, one key sticking point comes directly out of the urban-serving values of the University: quite a few culminating student projects originate in collaboration with local partner organizations, and some departments fear that these partners might not want sensitive information about them shared online.

These concerns raise larger questions about the accessibility of student work that the campus as a whole has not yet considered. How does online open access to student work alter the nature of that work, and how does the student's relationship to the work change if it becomes available online? To what extent do these practices affect student privacy and agency over their work? And what new and novel relationships to audiences does open access sharing of student work enable? Further conversation about these issues is needed, especially because each UWT program will likely have its own answers and approaches. Although the Library's digital scholarship program is developing the capacity to lead such discussions, it is challenging to find an appropriate venue to propose a systemic approach that recognizes the mutually beneficial relationship between the campus' urban serving values and the larger principles of open access.

One of the opportunities that the Library has identified in furthering the scope of student digital scholarship is to offer more faculty development related to open access. Faculty members who advise students need to know the benefits of open access on the potential reach of student work. They must understand the pedagogical implications of employing digital technologies to create and share student work and become versed themselves in the affordances and risks platforms offer. The Library has valuable insight to offer here, particularly by collaborating with faculty to create learning experiences that

integrate digital scholarship tools and openly shared student work throughout the process rather than including them as an afterthought.

Policy represents another area in which UWT has an opportunity to promote the benefits of digital open access to student work. In conducting an environmental scan of other USUs, we found a number of examples of institutions that have prioritized access to student work this way. Georgia State University, for example, has passed an open access policy for all theses and doctoral dissertations. The policy seeks to “unlock the underutilized result of graduate education for the scholarly community” with the goal of “having graduate students learn about electronic publishing and digital libraries, applying that knowledge as they engage in their research and build and submit their own ETDS.”¹⁶ The wording in this policy, though not aimed specifically at the urban environment, expresses values that align closely with HIPs and the value of student success.

2. Foster Scholarship, Research, and Creativity to Address the Challenging Problems of Our Time and Place

School violence and mass shootings, landslides caused by climate change, food insecurity in Tacoma, Lushootseed language revitalization—follow the news stories of faculty research on the UWT homepage, and the many different ways that faculty engage in research that responds to the unique challenges of our time in place become clear. The UWT Strategic Plan further underscores the importance of this type of “current” research in its promotion of community-engaged scholarship. According to Virginia Commonwealth University—another officially designated USU—community-engaged scholarship “addresses community needs through research, teaching and service in a mutually beneficial partnership.”¹⁷ To support faculty who do this type of work, the UWT campus offers a Collaborative Publicly Engaged Scholarship (CPES) Fund, which has funded six faculty teams for research projects in a variety of areas.¹⁸

Within the Library, we have always evolved our services to partner with faculty in their research and creative work, including community-engaged scholarship. In the context of the digital scholarship program, this includes our efforts to digitize and amplify the products of faculty activity, such that others locally and globally will be able to better discover and benefit from their work. For instance, in 2011, a faculty member in the Urban Studies program approached the Library to start an occasional paper series to be made digitally accessible with the aim of bringing together work from a wide range of contributors that would explore the “inherent dynamism and vitalities of cities and urban processes throughout the world,” and much of the work that would appear in it would engage with issues and developments merging from

Tacoma and other cities.¹⁹ The need for a digital platform to host this content prompted an investigation into digital repository solutions.

We explored a number of options before ultimately settling on bepress and its Digital Commons product as the most viable. Many factors influenced the decision, such as the SelectedWorks author profiles, which enable faculty to feature their publications, and the bepress service model, but the Library leadership group at the time was particularly attracted to how it would support UWT's distinct identity and scholarly mission. UW Tacoma Digital Commons launched in 2012, populated with publications and profiles for twenty-four faculty members included in the IR Kickstart package offered by bepress. Since then, with the help of interns and graduate student workers, we have significantly grown the number of faculty members with profiles. As of October 2017, 193 faculty (57 percent) had profiles, while 148 did not have profiles.²⁰

In developing profiles and related collections of published scholarship, we generally take the initiative to reach out to faculty and make it as easy as possible for them to keep their information up-to-date. Also, rather than emphasizing open access, we recognize that faculty members want to offer access to their entire publication record, not just those works that can be shared openly. As a result, we create comprehensive profiles, linking to licensed electronic versions whenever possible. Although not every faculty member is doing publicly engaged research with community partners, we recognize that enabling open access to content unlocks the research and can enable the bidirectional scholarship described in a case study of UWT published by the Coalition of USU.²¹

Just as the repository has connected us with published scholarship, it has also enabled emerging forms of scholarship that are directly community-engaged. For instance, the repository hosts the teaching materials of the Lushootseed Language Institute and the Puget Sound Environmental Justice Interviews, both of which have strong connections to the local community.²² More recently, we have recognized the need to move beyond capturing the artifacts of scholarship to participating in the whole lifecycle of scholarship and creative work and are initiating efforts to encourage a culture of digital public scholarship at UWT. Library staff have begun offering faculty development opportunities, such as hosting a quarterly book discussion group on digital scholarship, organizing trainings on topics such as digital storytelling, and engaging the public with social media, among other topics of interest. These projects provide opportunities to contribute to the evolving discussions of community-engaged scholarship on campus and advocate for the central role open access can have in making the products of academic research available to the general public.

Recognizing our common interest to promote and share the whole lifecycle of faculty scholarship, in the last year, the Library has begun partnering with UWT's Office of Research. The Office of Research wanted to better

capture and share the scholarly output of campus, and because we already had a workflow in place for systematically gathering citations, it seemed a natural collaboration. Now, the Office of Research sends out quarterly calls for new publications, referring faculty to our online form, and we provide a formatted list of citations that can be shared with the campus and make sure that publications are also gathered in our digital repository. One faculty member recently pointed out that this was a significant coup for UWT Digital Commons and represents its further institutionalization as a platform for faculty scholarship. It also makes it much easier for us to keep faculty profiles up-to-date.

Although we can point to impressive strides made in support of digital scholarship, a closer look at the faculty publications, collections, and specific projects also illustrate some of the limitations of our current approach. As of 2017, for instance, only 12 percent of the faculty publications in the UWT Digital Commons were shared open access (203 out of 1,683 total). Also, nearly all of the faculty profiles in the repository were created and are maintained by Library staff. We have at least three schools or programs that only have only partial coverage in the faculty profiles because of the complexity of the outreach that must be done to accomplish this work.

Recently, the UW Faculty Senate that governs all three UW campuses passed an Open Access Policy that will apply to all scholarly articles published by faculty. As a result, there are many questions within the UWT Library about the infrastructure and services that will support faculty as they make their future work digitally available: how will the development of Libraries-wide systems and procedures change our local branch's digital scholarship activities? What is the future of the local UWT digital repository for supporting faculty publications? What kinds of outreach needs to occur to educate local faculty about the Open Access Policy? Many of these questions were also brought to the fore by Elsevier's acquisition of the bepress platform in August 2017 and will become more central to our work over the next few years.

The Library seeks to position itself as an advocate for the ways that digital scholarship practices and open access framework can significantly enhance community-engaged scholarship and is therefore approaching this as a rare faculty development opportunity. Faculty are conducting outstanding and interesting work, often relying on a wide array of digital technologies and tools, but most of the campus discussion tends to focus primarily on the core elements of this work—locality in the Tacoma/Pierce County area, involvement of local partners, and the scholarly impact—without clearly delineating the ways that open access and digital technologies might enhance and extend this work. Yet even as we encourage communities of practice among the faculty, the Library is only beginning to formalize its own local infrastructure, staffing, and service models to effectively interface with faculty research teams.

UWT can look to USUs throughout the country that are engaging with faculty scholarship in innovative ways that support the full scope of scholarly

inquiry, from applying digital tools to support traditional scholarship to actively participating in emerging forms of scholarship. The University of New Mexico has a series of services that help in this area, including consultations with its Digital Scholarship Services office and introductions to current issues from its Office of Innovative Scholarly Initiatives.²³

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte facilitates collaboration with its Faculty Connections tool, which helps individuals with shared interests find each other.²⁴ This type of tool is particularly intriguing because of UWT's origins as a highly interdisciplinary institution. A version of this tool could be just as valuable for helping faculty members from different departments create collaborations as it could be to connect them with important community stakeholders. Having it housed or supported by the library increases the interdisciplinary feel of the resource and ensures that librarians and non-faculty experts may also be "connected" to interest groups and projects.

3. Partner and Collaborate for the Common Good

As a USU, UWT is characterized by many strong institutional partnerships at multiple levels of the University. The Center for Urban Waters, a partnership of the campus, the City of Tacoma, and the Puget Sound Partnership, is one of its signature examples. Specific UWT faculty members also engage in numerous, complex partner activities. One Psychology professor, Chris Beasley, is creating a "pipeline" for formerly incarcerated students to go from prison to higher education, including institutions like UWT;²⁵ Anne Wessels, an Urban Studies faculty member, is codirecting the Livable City Year in Tacoma, a broad-based initiative to make more sustainable communities.²⁶ To champion, and to some extent, coordinate these kinds of efforts, the campus also has established the Community Engagement Council, and is now applying for a Carnegie Community Engagement Classification. The campus has entered into this process so that it will be "more intentional and systematic as an institution about how we develop community engagement infrastructure in alignment with national best practices."²⁷

UWT's partnership culture has provided key opportunities for the Library to become an active part of research groups with digital scholarship components. For example, one of the Library's initial forays into digital scholarship, the Tacoma Community History Project, was born out of a mutually beneficial partnership of the Library, faculty and students, and members of the local community.²⁸ Professor Michael Honey has taught the Doing Community History Class since the early 1990s. In this class, students learn oral history methodology and conduct an oral history project on an organization, institution, neighborhood, event, or prominent individual. The collection now includes over eighty interviews with individuals who represent the diverse and under-represented voices of Tacoma: civic leaders, ethnic and indigenous groups, the LGBTQ+ community, labor unions, military personnel, and veterans, among

others. It contains a trove of primary sources on the lived experiences of peoples in Tacoma and the wider region.

In 2010, Professor Honey received a grant from the Puyallup Tribe to digitize existing oral histories, and these funds—combined with additional support from the Friends of the UW Libraries—went toward hiring student workers to digitize the projects and make them available online in a public collection. Up to this point, the projects were created in the class and then deposited in the Library at the end of the quarter. Students received little to no oversight or guidance about the specific recording technologies, and as a result a wide array of media formats and recording qualities were in the collection.

The challenges of digitizing this material and making it available online underscored the importance of consistency and guidelines for the students conducting oral histories in the future. We developed a LibGuide for the class that not only provides links to resources but offers templates for the documents and guidance for creating digital files.²⁹ More recently, we have introduced a blogging component to the course; after the students have conducted their oral history, they also select clips from the interview and write a brief blog post about it.³⁰ The Library features these posts in its social media, and we were surprised that some of these posts became the most popular items in our feed.

The Library's digital scholarship program has built on its experiences with the Tacoma Community History Project and is now engaged in several other collaborative partnerships with faculty that use oral history to document the history of Tacoma and the south Puget Sound. While we look forward to our involvement in these additional oral history projects, the digital scholarship staff recognize that we will likely have to alter the ways that we support them, perhaps shifting to an approach that assists the overall design and implementation of projects.

As our perspective broadens to include the multiplicity of research projects and partnerships occurring at UWT, determining the role of the digital scholarship program can be both inspiring and daunting. On one level, we observe a high degree of community-engaged scholarship already occurring on campus, but on another, it raises questions about how far the Library can extend and enhance this work through digital scholarship approaches without more extensive infrastructure and staffing. How do we prioritize projects that engage with the community? With limited staffing, how do we do outreach to demonstrate the value that intentional digital scholarship approaches can have in the lifecycle of projects? To what extent do we participate in the planning and implementation of projects?

At the same time that we are tracking community engagement initiatives and conversations on campus, we also are beginning to expand the culture of digital scholarship by establishing some of our own partnerships with local museums, public libraries, and heritage organizations that may lead to new

and novel digital scholarship activities. Some of these partnerships are relatively small one-time events, such as the Tacoma History Keepers event for a local ethnic heritage organization, although others are much larger projects, such as grant applications with local institutions to respond to community needs. Yet threaded through all of these projects are a host of complex questions: How are formal partnerships established at UWT? Is the partnership with UWT or the UW Libraries or both? The UWT Library tends to focus on supporting the academic side of the University, yet it does not regularly offer or teach any classes, so to what extent can faculty and students become involved in these partnerships?

Many of the digital scholarship programs we examined in our environmental scan of USUs have established mutually beneficial partnerships that have significant impact on the region. Cleveland State University, for instance, hosts the Center for Public History and Digital Humanities, which has incubated a number of local history projects, notably Cleveland Historical, an interactive website that features narratives of the city's built environment.³¹ It is important to note, however, that this project comes out of the history department rather than the Library and reflects the importance of tying work to faculty research and teaching.

We also found a number of larger institutions that have clearly delineated digital scholarship services that enable partnerships to benefit the common good of their surrounding regions. Some, such as Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, Temple University, and the University of Memphis, have well-developed services that emphasize the metropolitan or regional emphasis. The Center for Digital Scholarship at IUPUI identifies extensive list of partners that range from local historical societies, public libraries, museums, and government agencies, and these partners have contributed to a wide variety of collections.³²

4. Catalyze the Economic and Social Vitality of the Region

The Coalition of USUs was created in part to “to leverage the intellectual capital and economic power of urban universities” and its commitment to this idea is still apparent in initiatives focused on workforce development and partnerships with prospective employers.³³ In the case of UWT, the assessment of the University's economic impact reveals that the campus tends to focus on the built environment, grant funding, and the educational opportunities the University has generated. Tacoma and the larger Pierce County region in which it sits are now seeing dramatic population and economic growth, and many news articles credit the University for its impact.³⁴

In March 2018, the Tacoma Economic Development Board gave the campus a Golden Shovel Award for its role as an economic engine in the region.³⁵

The award recognized the campus role “in downtown Tacoma’s physical transformation to a thriving urban hub” and specifically identified the influence of the Milgard School of Business, the Institute of Technology, and the Urban Studies program. This announcement reinforces similar themes in the Anchoring for Change case study of UWT.³⁶ The roles of student learning and faculty research and scholarship may be acknowledged, but its actual economic contribution remains unclear and unquantified, perhaps because of the difficulty of defining the scope of this impact. Of the four elements of an urban serving university, this is perhaps the least developed for the UWT digital scholarship program. Yet we do have several projects underway that reflect our growing awareness of this element. We also acknowledge the conflict that prioritizing economic development can bring to models of higher education and hope that our efforts retain a strong sense of social consciousness and emphasis on scholarly inquiry, community, and student well-being.

To the extent that the digital scholarship program supports the full spectrum of scholarship and learning across campus in meaningful ways, it also functions as an “economic and social vitality.” Libraries are usually seen as social or cultural assets, but their economic functions can also be significant. Most studies of economic and social impact have been conducted in public libraries, but a body of literature recognizes the key roles academic libraries play in student success and retention and faculty research, among others.³⁷ Because the digital scholarship program connects and collaborates with faculty and students in novel ways, it has the potential to extend the innovation, creativity, and inquiry that contributes to the region.

One example is the UWT Oral History: Founding Stories project, which uses digital scholarship practices to document and share the economic and social impact of the University. The oral history project, which is being co-led by Professor Charles Williams and Justin Wadland, head of the Digital Scholarship Program, is collecting interviews with founding faculty members and staff, community leaders, and (eventually) students of the University. Many people can easily observe the dramatic transformation that UWT has brought to the urban core. Less visible are the political, social, and educational exchanges that occurred within these buildings and are now being carried out into the city and beyond. The oral history project takes advantage of digital tools and technologies so that the materials can be openly shared.

As the program continues to evolve, we can foresee developing initiatives that more explicitly recognize the economic, social, and cultural impact of digital scholarship activities, especially in terms of those that better prepare students for employment in the region. Yet it is important to note that the intersection of economic development and the educational and research mission of UWT quickly draws us into larger debates about both the future of universities and the role of digital scholarship in the academy. As state funding has decreased and tuition dollars have increasingly funded the University,

how does the campus serve students seeking skills and competencies that will make them employable? How do faculty balance the economic realities of higher education against their academic freedom to determine the curriculum and research agendas? Since most of the digital scholarship projects are carving out new virtual and physical spaces at UWT, as well as new staff positions, how might digital scholarship activities ensure academic rigor and social value against the entrepreneurial drive that inspires projects? How does the digital scholarship program reflect the positive values of the institution without replicating its disparities?

The faculty, staff, and administrators we work with at UWT hold a spectrum of opinions on these perspectives, but there seems to be unity—and pride—in the access mission of the University. It was centrally placed in the values compass, also created in the strategic plan.³⁸ As this review has revealed, there are multiple ways the digital scholarship program has supported this value, but in planning, access should be a guiding principle.

In our environmental scan, we didn't find any examples of digital scholarship programs that articulated their specific economic or social impact, but we did find attractive approaches that could enhance both economic and cultural development. The first is providing students (and faculty, for that matter) clear venues to develop the skills of digital scholars. For instance, Temple University offers a Digital Scholars Program for graduate students.³⁹ It provides funding and training for students to design and implement projects. The second approach involves partnering with local institutions to digitize and share regional history. The University of Central Florida launched a Center for Humanities and Digital Research that has incubated and supported cross-institutional collaborations that have focused on its region. In addition, Virginia Commonwealth University has a particularly well-developed program focused on the history of its host city and offers a Community Digitization Program.⁴⁰

PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE

As evidenced above, these four elements of a USU, as defined by UWT, have laid the foundation for the UWT Library's digital scholarship work and brought it in sync with the mission and values of the institution as a whole. However, a number of challenges remain for our emerging program, especially with regard to how to work within the institutional constraints to communicate, institutionalize, and scale these efforts that are central to much of our current work.

To address these challenges and help strategize next steps, we have looked to the existing literature on how to grow and sustain library digital scholarship work. All of the literature and professional conversations about establishing and sustaining a digital scholarship program emphasize that there is

no template to follow. Yet there are some discussions and bodies of literature that can serve as sign posts.

Two works in particular have been useful for establishing a framework as we move ahead. The first, Kathryn K. Matthew's blog post, "Biscuits vs. Granola: Innovative Ways for Libraries, Archives, and Museums to Scale Up," suggests a process in which program development is divided into four main phases—testing, piloting, scaling, and mainstreaming.⁴¹ Although more established elements of UWT's digital scholarship program, like our institutional repository, have reached the point of scaling or mainstreaming, other elements are still very much in the testing or piloting process, including upcoming trainings for DS tools and resources. The other work that we have found helpful is Dan Cohen's closing plenary speech on institutionalizing digital scholarship at the 2017 CNI-ARL Digital Scholarship Planning Workshop (as summarized by Craft). In it, Cohen presents a related perspective to Matthew's, which includes the suggestion that libraries find ways to routinize, normalize, and depersonalize their services in order to institutionalize and sustain our work.⁴² Keeping this framework in mind, we have identified and summarized three key areas for future development.

1. Drafting an Effective Communication Strategy and Mission Statement for an Urban Serving Digital Scholarship Program

Communication is one of the main areas of focus as we grow our digital scholarship program. The literature suggests several priorities for effectively communicating the scope of a digital scholarship program: defining digital scholarship terms and practices to establish a shared vocabulary, clearly describing the library staff roles and responsibilities, providing a meaningful framework for collaboration and partnerships, and creating means of formally sharing faculty development and training opportunities.⁴³ Communication strategies are also an important part of scaling a program. Libraries need to make clear decisions about their capacity (in terms of space, equipment, storage, hardware, software, and staff) to support digital scholarship work and convey that to stakeholders.⁴⁴

Equally important to the future of UWT's digital scholarship program is a public-facing mission and vision statement that will clearly tie our program activities to the priorities of UWT and its urban serving focus. The Digital Scholarship Center at IUPUI Library offers a particularly useful example of this, not only because it is located at a USU but because it provides bullet-pointed lists of the center's objectives, activities that will help the center achieve those objectives, and selection criteria the center will use to assess digital projects.⁴⁵ The literature generally recognizes that a clearly articulated mission can enable a program to convey how it engages in the entire cycle

of research activities, keep it from getting bogged down with highly local or short-term goals, and help with the overall sustainability of the program by establishing its relationship to long-term, strategic goals.⁴⁶ This has obvious importance to UWT and its urban-serving focus.

2. Strengthening and Formalizing the Relationships of an Urban Serving Program

Although relationships are arguably already a strength of the UWT Library's approach to digital scholarship, we must remain conscious of their importance as we continue to scale and grow our digital scholarship program. The literature consistently highlights the tension between traditional client or service models with emerging partnership models, which position libraries as experts on and contributors to the projects they support. Some authors argue that the partnership models have more "positive, sustainable" results than traditional models. These models require digital scholarship programs to delineate roles and manage the expectations of partners.⁴⁷ That said, it will come as no surprise that strong interpersonal relationships (both inside and outside the library) are frequently cited as critical aspects of fostering this work.⁴⁸ In this respect, UWT faces challenges for depersonalizing certain aspects of its partnerships so they do not rely too heavily on the presence of a particular individual to survive;⁴⁹ communicating and fostering new partnership models with campus constituents; and creating strong internal support networks so that new staff and library liaisons feel empowered to pursue digital scholarship work.

3. Fostering the Flexibility of an Urban Serving University Digital Scholarship Program

Digital scholarship work can be fast-moving, challenging, and difficult to predict. In general, keys to a successful program include teamwork, responsiveness to changing needs or constituent requests, and attentiveness to emerging tools and technologies.⁵⁰ Flexibility is helpful when dealing with these and other common challenges to digital scholarship work. We must plan for resources years in advance even as digital tools and trends rapidly evolve and we must find inspiring, innovative ways to collaborate while also continually shifting our own mental models of scholarly practices along with faculty, staff, and administrator allies.⁵¹

The UWT Library hasn't had the personnel to accommodate as many program needs as we might hope. Craft's recommendation for working with these challenges is to hire for aptitudes and attitudes rather than a particular skill set. Libraries should work to establish a range of different skills and expertise on a team rather than in an individual.⁵²

CONCLUSION

Through this chapter, we have gauged the past, present, and possible futures of the digital scholarship activities at UWT, and we have evaluated them against the core values and characteristics of the urban serving university as articulated by UWT. Together, all of this creates a contextualized, nuanced portrait of our program, circa September 2018. However, talk to us six months or a year from now, and things will inevitably look different. As we consider these different priorities, we see them less as a sequence and more as series to be braided over the near and long-term. Their ultimate shape will be governed by intention, emergent opportunities, unexpected outcomes, accidents, and failures.

We open up our thought process in this public way so that it might serve as a model for others. The approaches of USUs, we believe, can serve as a helpful framework for institutions of higher education with strong community orientations, even if they are not formally a member of the USU coalition. USUs provide novel ways for understanding the roles of a student learning, faculty teaching and research, community partnerships, libraries, and digital scholarship within an urban context. The university and the city become inter-related and even in some ways interdependent, and a strong library-based digital scholarship program can better position both the institution and the community to achieve their shared goals.

Takeaways

- The Urban Serving University model provides a valuable framework for any digital scholarship program located at an urban university.
- Open access and digital scholarship can contribute to campus-wide efforts to enhance community-engaged scholarship and student success.

NOTES

1. The only article we could find on the intersection between USUs and libraries was Tom Bielavitz, “A Content Analysis of the Strategic Plans of the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities’ Academic Libraries,” *Urban Library Journal* 17, no. 1 (Spring 2011): 1–19.
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3. University of Washington Tacoma, “UW Tacoma 2017–18 Facts,” <https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/about-uw-tacoma/uw-tacoma-2017-18-facts>.
4. Ibid.

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6. Justin Wadland, “UW Tacoma Opens Permanent Location in Downtown Warehouse District on September 27, 1997,” HistoryLink.org, November 11, 2017, www.historylink.org/File/20471.
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8. Andrea Craft et al., *Anchoring for Change: The Deepening Role of Urban Universities* (Coalition of Urban Serving Universities and Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities, 2016), 12.
9. These values have been shortened and have also been incorporated into the mission statement of the University. For the sake of consistency, we refer to the shortened versions throughout this chapter. See UW Tacoma, “What Is an Urban-Serving University?,” <https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/strategic-planning/what-urban-serving-university/> and UW Tacoma, “Vision, Mission and Values,” <https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/about-uw-tacoma/vision-mission-values>.
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16. Georgia State University, “Mandate for Deposit of ETDs: University Policy 2.10.16 Electronic Master’s Theses and Doctoral Dissertations,” https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/univ_lib_dadocs/6/.
17. University of Washington Tacoma, “Community Engagement Terms and Definitions,” www.tacoma.uw.edu/community-engagement/community-engagement-terms-definitions.
18. “UW Tacoma Collaboratively Engaged Public Scholarship Fund,” <https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/office-research/uw-tacoma-collaborative-publicly-engaged-scholarship-cpes-fund>.
19. The occasional papers series was name *Conflux* and launched in 2014; see <https://digitalcommons.tacoma.uw.edu/conflux/>.
20. For more about the extent of faculty sharing of open access materials, see Justin Wadland, “UW Tacoma Faculty Profiles and Open Access,” UW

- Tacoma Profiles in Research* (blog), October 26, 2017, <https://blogs.uw.edu/taclibdc/2017/10/26/uw-tacoma-faculty-profiles-open-access/>.
21. “Imagined in this manner, the educational, research, and development goals of the campus move from a unidirectional model (of experts to non-experts) to a bidirectional model in which the University and its activities are shaped by regional stakeholders as much as the University affects its external constituents.” In Craft et al., *Anchoring the Community*.
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47. See Cox, 2016, p. 138: "Managing the library's involvement in digital scholarship is challenging and there needs to be clarity around what can and cannot be done within finite resources in a climate of high expectation and demand . . . Without clear communication strategies, resources will be spread too thinly, or invested inappropriately, and the library's reputation as a key player in digital scholarship will be compromised."
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49. Craft, "Digital Scholarship Planning."
50. Lippincott and Goldenberg-Hart, *Digital Scholarship Centers*.
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