**Slide 1: Title**

In 2014 the University of Florida (UF) and the University of North Texas (UNT) began a collaborative process to each complete a full self-audit using the Trusted Repository Audit Checklist (TRAC). In addition to the self-audit, each institution agreed to participate in a peer review process evaluating and scoring each other’s self-audit and supplied documentation. The goals of the project were as follows: demonstrate the maturity of repository services, infrastructure and governance at both institutions, increase collaboration among project teams at UF and UNT, and pilot a peer review option that aims at offers more rigor and external feedback.

In this presentation, representatives from UF and UNT will share on their work in collaboratively creating a pilot peer-to-peer process for TRAC to build towards becoming a Trusted Digital Repository, and how the process supports other concerns including needs for different types of collaborations and scales of collaboration for achieving TRAC goals, with peer-to-peer style collaboration for peer review of TRAC offering an important option for building capacity locally and as a community. In 2014 the University of Florida (UF) and the University of North Texas (UNT) began a collaborative process to each complete a full self-audit using the Trusted Repository Audit Checklist (TRAC) for both institution’s digital repositories.

In addition to the self-audit, each institution agreed to participate in a peer review process evaluating and scoring each other’s self-audit and supplied documentation. The goals of the project are as follows:

* Document the current repository services and systems, technical and human infrastructures, and overall operations following the TRAC process
* Demonstrate the maturity of repository services, infrastructure and governance at both institutions
* Share information and knowledge to support increasing the collaboration between project teams at UF and UNT
* Pilot a peer review option that aims at offers more rigor and external feedback than a self-audit, but which also does not have the same financial requirements as a full external certification by a third party
* Leverage the process internally at each institution to share information and knowledge to support increasing collaboration among different internal and external groups, including Research Computing and High Performance Computing groups at each institution

**Slide 2: Background**

Background 1:

Why UF and UNT had the conversation on this:

Shared philosophies and values, shared approaches and methods, and shared beloved areas like GovDocs

Peers and very parallel in digital library operations:

* Size, scale, scope, complexity
* Partner-community digital libraries
* dLOC and Portal
* State newspaper digital libraries, and those for outside the state
* All types of materials / aggregation model
* Not separate systems:
* 1 system for IR, newspapers, community/collab dl, archival collections, library collections, museum collections, data, everything
* Production
* Digitization and digital curation
* Distributed/modularized production
* Broad user base

**Slide 3: UNT and UF**

Background 2:

Last slide was: “why us.”

This slide is “why now.”

UNT and UF are highly mature repositories based on the maturity of socio-technical (people, policies, technologies) infrastructure, services, governance, and operations.

Highly mature is a great place to be, but it can be harder to further improve with so much that simply works, and so many things that are not a problem.

Also, highly mature means that problems can be difficult to define and demonstrate. At UF, we had significant staff changes in our digital and IT groups. We experienced impacts from these changes in our digital curation workflows in production, and it was not as easy as we wanted it to be to pinpoint the problems and demonstrate the impacts for resolution. The impacts were felt internally, and only by some who work closely with digital concerns, so this was a good situation in terms of robustness and resiliency. But, we’d like to have an even more robust overall organizational and operational setup so that we are all the more unlikely to have problems and impacts.

**Slide 4: Collaboration at Scale**

Background 3:

Slides on why now, why us, and now “so why would we pursue this together?”:

UNT & UF: already a great relationship

* Opportunity to increase collaboration among project teams at UF and UNT
* Opportunity to do what we both do best
* Leverage capacity where it exists to further benefit the larger community
* UNT and UF: already are central hubs/hosts supporting many others for ongoing, and for incubation
* Leverage need/opportunity for TRAC for UNT and UF to establish a process that benefits others and that creates a framework/model for TRAC at different scales
* Add option to complement existing (costly) external review
* Through collaboration, improve rigor and receive external feedback
* By reviewing
* Learn about other ways of working
* Gain insight for assessing and improving local operations

In this presentation, representatives from UF and UNT will share on their work in collaboratively creating a pilot peer-to-peer process for TRAC to build towards becoming a Trusted Digital Repository, and how the process supports other concerns including needs for different types of collaborations and scales of collaboration for achieving TRAC goals, with peer-to-peer style collaboration for peer review of TRAC offering an important option for building capacity locally and as a community

**Slide 5: Process**Outline for remaining:Project 1: framing and set-upProject 2: kick-off and activity since Project 3: unexpected results so far: good and less good

**Slide 6: List**

Project 1: framing and set-up

**Project Goals**

Document current repository services & systems, technical and human infrastructures, and overall operations following TRAC process

Demonstrate maturity of repository services, infrastructure and governance at both institutions

Share information and support increasing collaboration between UF & UNT

Pilot a peer review option for more rigor and external feedback than a self-audit, and with lower financial requirements

Leverage the process internally at each institution to share information, support increasing collaboration among different internal and external groups

The leveraging to support others is very clear in our process. As soon as we decided to do this, we submitted to

DLF to share what we planned to do with the community, and because we knew presenting would add further

demands for reflection and insight, in addition to helping keep us closely to schedule.

**Slide 7: Project Process**

Project 1: framing and set-up

**Project Charter** (http://ufdc.ufl.edu/l/AA00024188/00003)

Created one as a communication device for the project team, allowed for commitment by stakeholders (Laurie: my Dean mentioned talking to Mark’s Associate Dean before the project started, and my Dean was excited; we had buy-in, so it was more to support the team and do the process the best way)

Also, UF needed another example of a long project charter for the project charter training and writing with UF’s Digital Humanities Library Group, so this presented an opportunity to create that needed example.

The Project Charter was a new document for UNT but it helped to clearly communicate the project, scope, and expectations among local team members and other administration who were to get involved during the project. It is something that will be modeled in future projects at UNT between the Digital Libraries Division and other entities on campus as we begin working on a wider array of digital scholarship and humanities projects.

**Project Tools:**

UNT already uses and supports Basecamp, and graciously offered to support for UF and UNT, and both agreed.

The project team will test the Drupal module for TRAC Self Assessments created by ICPSR a few years back, hopefully it will provide an easy framework for local and external audits when we reach that part of the project.

**Project Plan:**

TRAC has 3 sections: a, b, and c.

Dividing the planned year-long project to have 4 months on each section was arbitrary. It seems simple, and without already having done TRAC, there doesn’t appear to be a better way. Six weeks in, it still seems fine, but we may have thoughts and suggestions on this in the future.

Laurie: UF wanted to start with section A, and I am very happy that we did. We’ve had many staff changes, and so we really needed time and energy on new people learning what and where core documentation was, and much more. And, those of us who knew needed to remember to make sure the documentation was really there, and really usable/actionable by someone new.

Mark: UNT had the most concerns about section A because it seems full of the things that we typically “punt” on, this gave us a solid reason to really look into local practices and documentation and fix/create instead of ignoring them.

**Slide 8: Kick-off**

**Project 2: kick-off and activity since**

Knew we needed mini-deadlines in addition to each section having 4 months, and so decided to be opportunistic.

Planned deadline of 10/17 to have materials in for DLF presentation preparation.

Neither ready on 10/17; but in email contact on it with materials shared soon after.

**Local Process**

Lots and lots of internal work to get towards this deadline.

TRAC spreadsheet allows institutions to list evidence as text/links in the boxes next to the categories, which is easy to do. UF elected not to start with the spreadsheet with so many new people, and instead worked from a Word document, and we’re creating short narrative text for most of the sections with links to the resources/evidence. This approach allows us to ensure the people on our team know the resources, and processing/synthesizing many resources into narrative text requires a different level of attention when reading the resources, offering opportunities for refinement and questions that will improve our documentation and hopefully result in improvements in operations. Others going through TRAC have found that it benefitted developing greater competencies locally, and we hope and expect that to be the case at UF.

UNT found the process helpful to divide the various sections among the team members who would be responsible for their preparation. In local team meetings we had conversations about all sections among the members which let us see where there was considerable overlap.

**Slide 9: Activities**

**Project 2: kick-off and activity since**

**Local UF Process**

Chelsea and Laurie are reporting regularly on TRAC to the Joint Chairs/Library Admin group. We’re sharing highlights on activities, and information on TRAC. This is a community competency building process, and it’s meant we’ve gotten incredibly strong buy-in and great questions.

**Local UNT Process**

Local team meetings have happened every two weeks where we have divided the section among members who have then worked to research and suggest options for further work. This has been helpful to strengthen local knowledge in areas that might not be as well understood by all participating. Mark has kept upper administration informed of the process during informal project updates in both Dean’s Council and to the Dean and Associate Dean.

**UNT and UF**

Submitted a proposal to CNI to present, again because we see this as a very important process for a model for collaboration at scale. We also know that big teams and big projects (and small ones, too) benefit from framing and structure, including deadlines. Submitting to CNI was a deadline, and now presenting to CNI will be a deadline for having deliverables.

**Slide 10: Activities & Results**

**Project 3: Results so far**

UF process and results are mixed together, with so much of the TRAC process to date just being getting documentation together and, in some cases, creating the documentation.

UF’s maturity level and age also meant that UF needed TRAC. UF has over 800 aggregations that represent different institutions, collections, and communities. Some of these are legacy collections. UF has many legacy collections starting from the 1990s. Whether newer or older, the collections or aggregations didn’t always have a known-owner.

In TRAC section “A3. Procedural accountability & policy framework (documentation)” is “A3.1 Repository has defined its designated community(ies) and associated knowledge base(s) and has publicly accessible definitions and policies in place to dictate how its preservation service requirements will be met. Evidence: Mission statement; written definitions of the designated community(ies); documented policies; service-level agreements.” Designated communities are critical, essential components of trust for repositories, and yet UF had collections where the curator at UF wasn’t known. Thus, the connection to the designated community also wasn’t known.

UF saw this as a first and essential step to properly orienting the process for TRAC. We began with a list of all 800 aggregations in a spreadsheet with the aggregation code, title/name, curator name, alternate curator, notes on processing if an active project or if it shouldn’t be an aggregation and was really a project tracking flag, notes on the main group email for questions, and general notes. The vast majority of collections were or were likely to have the curator in Special & Area Studies Collections. The Associate Chair of SASC is the primary contact for digital projects, so we sent him the list for review and updates. We then scheduled a special meeting with the full SASC department. We sent the list out prior along with instructions for feedback, updates, and changes. The response level was low, and we thought about how to improve it in the in-person meeting.

In initially planning the meeting, we’d thought we’d use the digital list and present at a screen. Looking over all 800 entries and just how much text it was, it was overwhelming for people to try and parse. So, we printed the spreadsheet and cut the rows for each curator and put them in folders for them to review. We printed a full copy of the spreadsheet with all rows and sorted the same way by primary curator. We printed another copy of the spreadsheet with all rows and sorted by alternate curator.

With two copies of the full spreadsheet with different orderings, and folders for each curator with only their aggregations, we met with the department and asked them to review, make notes on the listings, or use notecards that we’d brought for notes.

The response was fabulous with lots of discussion, many updates, and many people who wanted to review their own and then look at the other listings after they had a better feel and grounding for what they were looking at.

In pursuing TRAC, UF hopes to improve its internal operations, including the level of involvement of curators for their digital collections, and this was a great experience to see how TRAC was helping us to develop capacity and building with our community.

We’re now in the process of scheduling meetings with our other curators for confirmation on collections, assignment or process to figure out and assign science collections, and process to handle collections in dispute. We now have several in dispute, and it’s great because the dispute is from different curators wanting to have input on how to support the collections and to do it with the other curators. This is an ideal problem from our perspective.

UNT also has roughly 800 “aggregations/collections/partners” that it works to navigate during the process. Large stakeholders have been informed about the process and as there is further need for discussion they will be involved in the process. Much of the UNT discussion has resulted around questions such as “what is the unit we are actually trying to certify, repository, department, library, university”, and how do answers to the various parts about section A either inform or conflict with that.

Additionally the question of how you represent the information for the TRAC Audit in a reasonable way in a large academic library. We want these documents to be meaningful themselves and be something that can align with traditional documentation, policies, and frameworks used within the library, with the assumption that this will promote more buy-in to the project if it is understood how it aligns with other “traditional” activities.

**Slide 11: Activities and Results**

UF found gaps for TRAC section A. The experience of finding gaps—nothing significant, but still many—has been awkward. UF is a mature repository, so finding gaps is just odd. It’s not embarrassing and does not represent a risk of negative impact to trust. Because finding gaps could be more significant for some institutions, UF is happy to share that we found gaps, to help share that this is good and normal. The TRAC process seems to shine light on all areas, and is a great aid in finding gaps and fixing them.

UNT again is in a very similar situation related to gaps identified in Section A. There are of course things that we’ve found that we are patting ourselves on the back for as we look back, signed partnership agreements which include statements about not only rights but also what happens to content in the case that UNT is no longer to manage its end of the bargain. Additionally memorandums of understanding with local, state, and federal agencies are in place which cover large portions of the collections and thus can stand as a type of escrow for an unexpected event within the repository such as it being un or under funded for a significant period of time. There were collections identified which will require new agreements to be created with other institutions around the state but this is being seen as a way of strengthening existing relationships around the state and region.

**Slide 12: peers, towards peer review**

For most of this presentation, we’ve focused on goals, deliverables, and activities. This is the work we’re doing right now, and we’re doing it to succeed on the project level. More importantly, we’re seeking to use the project to deliver on significant outcomes for the larger community.

Our early findings are already very positive from the process of piloting peer-to-peer process for TRAC to build towards becoming a Trusted Digital Repository. We’ve used the process to identify and correct gaps in local operations, we’ve gotten closer as peers, and we’ve approached the process and work with a different perspective because we know that our peers will be reviewing our work to critique and rate, and also—and this is significant—for their work and learning process. Knowing that our work at each institution is meaningful to our reviewer for their own needs brings a different emphasis to the work overall.

At the end of this process, we will have completed TRAC for both UF and UNT, peer reviewed each others repositories using TRAC, and documented our processes and experiences for this work. The overall results will offer an important option for building capacity locally and as a community.

Looking ahead, our next stages include completing Section A. which we are on schedule to do (or substantially complete) by the end of December. Chelsea and I requested funds from the newly created travel funds allotment for research, and so not tied to a conference or event. We will soon be scheduling a site visit to UNT for early 2015.

The UNT team is planning on visiting the UF campus for a site visit sometime during the late spring, early summer of 2015 assuming travel funds are available locally (looking pretty good). I think the site visits will be a way of further strengthening the relationships between the two teams.