



George A. Smathers Libraries

Retrospective Dissertation Scanning Project

The UF Library is working to make the intellectual heritage of the University of Florida available on the Internet.

The goal of the Retrospective Dissertation Scanning project undertaken by the UF Libraries is to make available the vast wealth of institutional knowledge contained in dissertations written by UF Ph.D. candidates that were originally submitted in print format. The Preservation Department is contacting authors for permission to scan their print dissertations and, working in conjunction with the Digital Library Center (DLC) and Internet Archive, to make them available worldwide through the RDS page at Internet Archive (<http://www.archive.org/details/UFRDS>) and the UF Digital Collection (UFDC) at <http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/UFDC>

The project is well underway. From April 1, 2008 through June 1, 2010, the Preservation Department has sent out 5,972 permission forms and received 3,106 replies. There are currently 1,820 scanned dissertations available online (301 scanned in house and 1,519 scanned at Internet Archive). There are 8,163 dissertations in the overall scope of the project. A database was created and maintained by Preservation Department Staff that matches contact information supplied by UF's Alumni Association with dissertation records. Using this database, permissions are requested from authors via e-mail or US mail, as resources allow. The database is also used to track the progress of dissertations through their transformation from print to digital.

Due to copyright restrictions, at this time a release form must be signed by the author, (or copyright holder), granting permission to scan the dissertation and post the content online. Once permission is received the dissertation is retrieved from the stacks, removed from its binding, and sent to Internet Archive to be scanned using high speed scanners. When the scan is complete, the digital files are harvested from Internet Archive and placed into the UFDC. One of the original tasks of the UFDC was to revitalize collections by bringing them online and making them text-searchable. Another was to help preserve access to the University's intellectual product. The Retrospective Dissertations project brings the two goals together nicely.

To help promote the project, we have established a website at:

http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/digital/procedures/copyright/retro_diss_scan/DDDCA.htm, announced the project in Florida Magazine, and discussed the project in an edition of Inside UF <http://insideuf.ufl.edu/2007/09/27/digital-library-center/>. For more information on the UF Libraries Retrospective Dissertation Scanning Project, please contact Christy Shorey (chrshor@uflib.ufl.edu) or Robert Parker (rparker@uflib.ufl.edu).