



Co-op Work Term 2017

Digital Projects Student Librarian – UBC cIRcle

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HOW MY WORK TERM STOOD OUT

By starting my work term in the beginning stages of the 6 year long *From the ground up* project, I was able to see how projects start out and the development process associated. I genuinely feel like I wouldn't have learned as much if I had started when the project was a few years in.

When things went as planned:

- Learned how to collaborate remotely with project members
- Developed digital library skills

when things didn't go as planned:

- Able to use my creativity and education background in developing materials and workflows for future submitters.
- Developed critical thinking skills in interpreting the metadata and communicating with cluster leaders
- Developed intercultural communication skills in communicating with cluster leaders who did not have English as a first language

CONNECTIONS TO WORK & STUDY

Working with a digital repository allowed me to build on the skills I learned in my advanced cataloging class.

Being able to take information I had learned and apply it to real life situations really helped to create a well rounded view of cataloging and digital libraries.

next steps: improve on my skills developed though cIRcle and incorporate digital libraries into future class projects.

IMPACT ON FUTURE GOALS

Career goals

Before starting my work term, I had always pictured myself in a public library setting. After working at cIRcle I now feel more open to working in an academic library setting and have developed a passion for digital libraries. I also plan to become more active in academic library associations and attend conferences related to my newfound interest.

Academic goals

I now plan to add digital library content wherever I can within my studies, whether it be taking academic library courses or focusing projects on digital libraries.

OVERALL LEARNING & SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Technical Skills: Working in a digital library landscape provides many opportunities to expand technical knowledge.

- *I learned how to navigate DSpace, use OpenRefine, create UBC wiki pages, use a batch metadata editor, and submit records.*

Workflows: Since I was the first student librarian focused on this project, creating workflows for future librarian use was very important.

- *I created multiple workflows explaining the context and specific instructions on how to review data/metadata and perform submissions.*

Communication skills: Keeping close communication with the cluster leaders out in the field was very important as they are experts in the material.

- *I developed strong communication skills via email by communicating in a professional tone and creating respectful relationships with the team having never met them in person.*

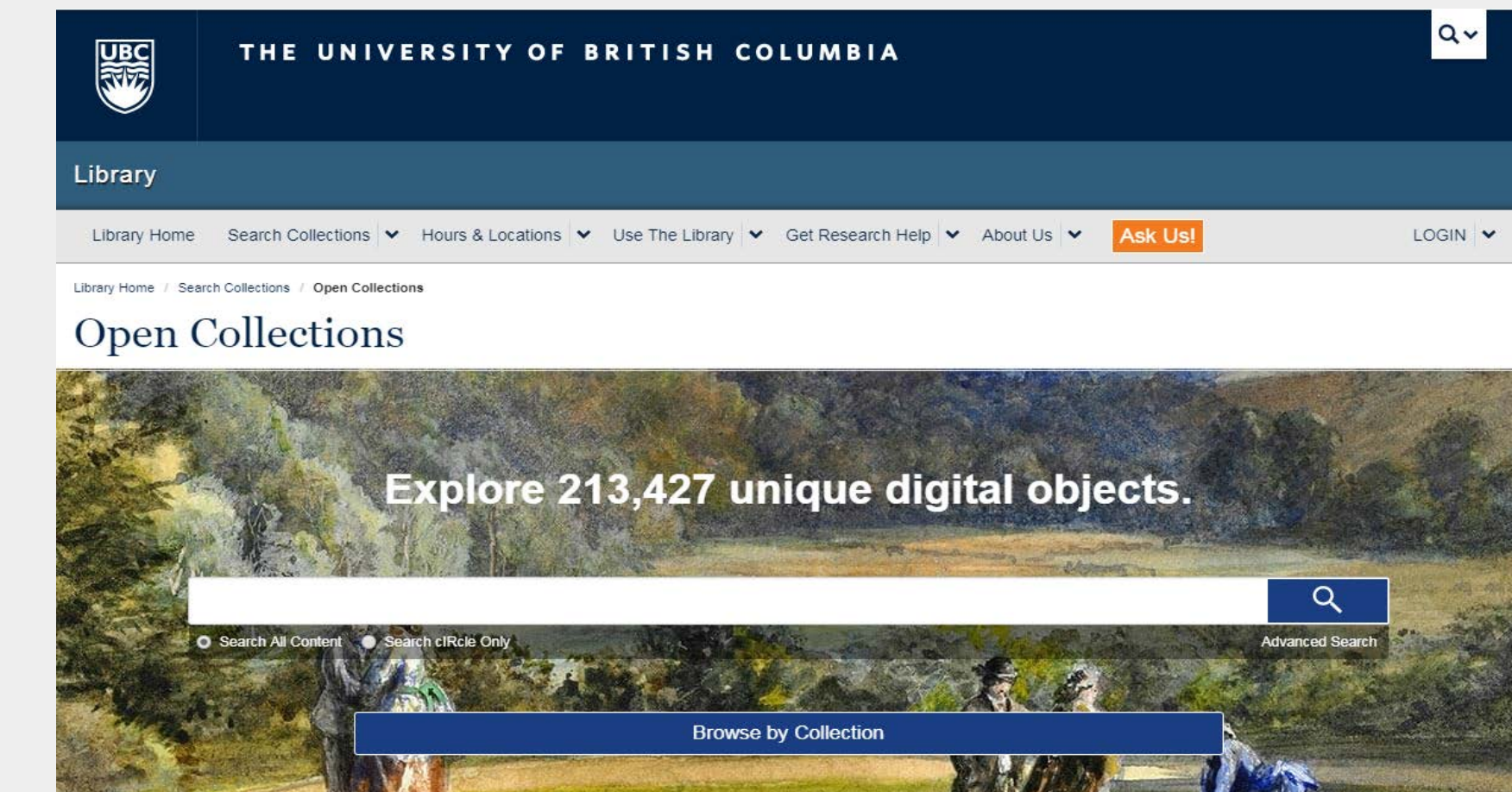


Figure 1: UBC Open Collections (<https://open.library.ubc.ca/>)

CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNED

By working on this project in the beginning stages, I was exposed to both the opportunities and challenges within a project in a digital library landscape.

Communicating with individuals who did not have English as their first language was a challenge, as I was unsure how to ask questions in a respectful way.

lessons learned:

Not everything goes smoothly in beginning stages of projects - communication is key!

WHY YOU SHOULD APPLY

Working at cIRcle provides many opportunities to further your technical learning, communication and critical thinking skills.

the atmosphere is really great! the people in the office are very helpful and great teachers as they ensure that you understand the concepts before you start working with them.

RECOMMENDATIONS & ADVICE (FOR FUTURE STUDENTS)

- Having a background in cataloguing and/or an appreciation for the importance of standardization and following metadata schema really helps.
- Having a general understanding of the importance of organization in regards to retrieval of information is key.
- Don't let perfection be the enemy of progress!



Figure 2: FTGUP content



Figure 3: FTGUP content

Instruction: Since the project team was still learning how to best go about things, I was given the opportunity to edit existing materials by creating instructions in order to enhance clarity.

- *I created instructional graphics, edited existing documentation and created UBC wiki pages in order to make instructions more clear.*

Accuracy and Attention to detail: Revising record data and metadata requires full attention to detail. This ensures the record information is accurate as it may be used for research.

- *I developed detail oriented skills by revising and editing data and metadata while exercising professional judgment by deciding the metadata is correct and fit for inclusion in the repository.*

Critical thinking skills: In order to ensure the records are fit for inclusion, it is necessary to exercise critical thinking as not all content was relevant to research.

- *I developed critical thinking skills by reviewing records as a whole and deciding whether it is fit to include in the digital repository.*



Figure 4: FTGUP content

CONTEXT & IMPORTANCE OF WORK

Making information free and open to everyone through UBC open collections is important as it provides access and furthers future research.

For the specific project I worked on, I collaborated with the *From The Ground Up* team in making previously undocumented religious objects from Buddhist and East Asian religions available online for free.

My position consisted mainly of:

- Reviewing data and metadata
- Editing data and metadata
- Submitting project records
- Keeping close communication with the collectors
- Creating instructional materials for collectors

My position ensures that the record information scholars use is correct, therefore it is essential in the uploading of these records.

Accomplishments

- Created 166 records
- Created learning tools that will be used for the rest of the project (graphics, UBC wiki pages)

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