Digital Dissertations

What is a "digital dissertation"?

We classify a "digital dissertation" as a non-traditional, born-digital dissertation. This means that a student's final work is beyond a simple PDF submitted to the University Graduate School. This could be as simple as including an extra video or data file- or as complex as having a dissertation hosted on a dynamic web platform.

Here are some examples of interactive digital object dissertations:

- Infinite Ulysses: http://infiniteulysses.com/
- Unflattening: http://spinweaveandcut.com/unflattening/
- My Gothic Dissertation: https://www.annawilliamsweb.com/my-gothic-dissertation.html
- Vanishing Leaves: https://www.gc.cuny.edu/News/All-News/Detail?id=48615

Note that many of these dissertations are built as websites hosting a variety of content- and sometimes, the navigation of this content in this exact medium is part of the dissertation itself. While we will be unable to perfectly preserve such work with out current technical capabilities, we can host a majority of the content through alternative methods.

> ✅ Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD)plus Toolkit is an excellent tool for students interested in creating, preserving, and sharing digital dissertations!

What materials can IUScholarWorks host?

Unfortunately, not all file formats are supported by our repository. Here's a quick guide to content that can be shared, and what format it is best shared in:

- **Traditional file formats**: including PDF, Word, text documents, Open Office, slide decks, image formats, etc. Here's a formal list: http://nopr.niscair.res.in/help/formats.jsp
- **Script/code**: Script and code can be saved, as long as it it preserved in a text file.
- **Video**: We do NOT preserve video directly, although we can host video on MCO and then create an item record in IUSW: Adding Video to stream from MCO (Media Collections Online)
- **Data:** Datasets under 200 MB can be directly uploaded to IUSW, while larger files are stored in SDA and then linked to the item record: IUSW Large File Deposit Workflow
- **File archives**: ZIP and TAR files, which hold a large archive of content, can be stored as a single file. This is good for a single item that has many files, allowing readers to only have to download content once.

Noticeably, the only major type of file that can **NOT** be shared is **dynamic web content**. This means that webpages themselves can not be saved- although **the various HTML, CSS, JS, and other files that make up the web page can be preserved in those formats as text files**, the entire page as it appears can not be preserved- as it requires these various files to interact in a way not possible within the system.

The ETD Toolkit has a helpful guide on saving digital objects in the proper file formats: Module 3: File Formats

How can IUSW host non-traditional file formats?

- Look for options to export XML, RDF, or other text files of the digital object codes. This will not preserve the item visually, but it might save vital information, and could possibly be used with the proper tools to recreate the dissertation in its entirety.
- Record a video walkthrough of your dissertation using screen capture software, and store the video in IUSW using MCO
- May discuss archiving content with IU Archives and the Archive It tool: https://libraries.indiana.edu/iu-websites-archive-it

The ETD Toolkit has a helpful guide on preparing non-traditional dissertations for storage: Module 5: Storage

Where will the dissertation files be stored?

In order to be cataloged in IUCAT and WorldCat, an item record for each dissertation and thesis must be placed in the University Graduate School Theses and Dissertations collection: https://scholarworks.iu.edu/dspace/handle/2022/3086. This item record will have a PDF version of the dissertation if available- if not, the PDF will host the abstract, author info, and references. This record must be as identical to the standard as possible for the purpose of matching ProQuest. Supplementary files will be linked in the description if necessary.

> ✅ If a dissertation is published with the **Public Health, School of Education, or Jacobs School of Music**, it may go in a different collection. Check See Special Case ETDs for exceptions

Digital Dissertations community for supplementary files (PENDING)

- Utilizing this collection, all supplementary files can be stored in a collection named after author, allowing for each item to have unique metadata and DOIs.

How will the dissertation look in IUScholarWorks?

Potential examples:

https://scholarworks.iu.edu/dspace/handle/2022/21139

What should the metadata look like?

Dissertation Metadata Template:

```
dc.contributor.advisor: Dissertation's advisor
dc.contributor.author: Author of dissertation
dc.date.issued: Date of dissertation initial publication/approval
dc.description: Link to supplementary files, general description of work and structure
dc.description.abstract: Description of work from academic perspective
dc.description.methodology: Methodology for creating the dissertation, including tools and software utilized
dc.identifier.doi: DOI minted with DataCite after item record is created
dc.language.iso: Language ISO code (English is "en")
dc.publisher: Always [Bloomington, Ind.] : Indiana University
dc.relation.isversionof: Link to other online version of dissertation
dc.relation.uri: Link to media in MCO or data in SDA
dc.rights: Description of attached license or use rights
dc.rights.uri: Link to license description (for CC licenses)
dc.subject: Keywords
dc.title: Dissertation title
dc.type: "Thesis" or "Doctoral Dissertation"
```

For each file that is not a PDF or video, authors should also upload a README file to explain the methodology and access to the scripts, code, or data. an example of a quality README is below:

```
README FILE FOR Title

Created by:

---------------------------------------
LOCATION
(item handle in IUSW)
---------------------------------------
DOI

---------------------------------------
FOLDERS AND FILES LIST

---------------------------------------
FILE INFORMATION

---------------------------------------
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

---------------------------------------
RESEARCH QUESTION(S)

---------------------------------------
CHANGELOG

---------------------------------------
COPYRIGHT & LICENSING INFORMATION

```

README files will need to be deposited after the item record has been created in order to mint a DOI.