

Mediated access use cases at UCI: an exploration for Omeka-S

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Introduction

This document is adapted from the [Mediated access: UC use cases](#) which was developed in 2019 and presented to the CDL to illustrate current and envisioned near-term needs to provide mediated access to archival collections across various UC campuses. The use cases in that document provide the foundation for this document which outlines updated scenarios to reflect considerations for providing mediated access to:

- Remote researchers;
- Long distance researchers;
- Collections with copyright, PII, PHI, and donor-imposed restrictions or embargoes;
- Collections with culturally sensitive materials;
- Large-scale projects; and
- Community partnership projects.

Relevant UCI specific use cases from that document are illustrated in this document as well as new use cases that broaden considerations for the following needs and scenarios:

- Faculty research and project support
- Digital exhibit platform support

I. Servicing collections that cannot be made available without mediated access

Use case #1: Servicing copyrighted material to remote researchers

SCA: Any collection material that is not accessible online due to copyright

The COVID-19 lock down has impacted the way SCA is able to service its research and patron communities. Being unable to provide physical access to our copyrighted or not digitized collection materials is a stark example of the need to have a ready platform that will allow for authenticated or mediated access support to service these materials while not infringing on copyright.

Use case #2: Servicing copyrighted material to long distance researchers

SCA: [Christine Tamblyn papers](#)

In 2019 we received a request for access to optical media and audiovisual materials from the Christine Tamblyn papers by a researcher in the UK. Her email reads:

“I visited the Tamblyn papers in the Special Collections archive in Spring of 2016. At the time it wasn't possible to access much of the artwork, video tapes and CD ROMS and thus experience these works as the artist intended, or as close to that as is possible when viewing in an archive... is there any option for me to view Tamblyn's artwork online? I am wondering if any work has been done on digitising the CD ROMS or the video tapes? And if not, enquiring what the process would be for getting this work done? I ask because I realise this work is time-consuming and costly but with me being so far away continual trips to the States is not always so easy.”

If we are able to provide mediated remote access to copyrighted materials, we would not require researchers to physically come into our reading room to research born digital content. For our local researchers who are already in our reading room (pre-COVID), we would service these materials through the same centralized platform.

Use case #3: Donor agreement stipulations

SCA: [Jacques Derrida papers](#)

This collection necessitates authenticated mediated access as stipulated in our donor agreement. All requests for reproduction of materials need to be approved by the Derrida estate designates. Since we currently do not have a way to restrict downloading this content, we are treating each request for digitized and born digital content as a reproduction request; each request needs to be authorized by the designates before we are able to provide access. It would be helpful if we can point researchers to centralized access for this content instead of managing individual requests, downloading them on our staff workstations (content is now on Nuxeo but was previously on hard drives), and sharing them via a third-party platform.

Use case #4: Considerations for culturally sensitive materials

SCA: [Schill \(James A.\) collection of photographs and a pocket diary of Southeast Asian refugees](#)

This collection comprises digitized photographic imagery taken in refugee camps, and includes photos of nude children whose identity is unknown and the context of the situation is unknown. These items are just one example of sensitive imagery scattered throughout our Southeast Asian Archive collections. It would be helpful to have a warning message acknowledging that this imagery is graphic and sensitive in respect to the subjects depicted and our researchers.

Use case #5: Digital collections with embargos

SCA: [Viet Stories oral histories](#)

This collection is currently serviced through the Virtual Reading Room and accessed via Calisphere. This is the only collection we are currently adding new content to in DSpace due to DSpace's functionality for embargoed materials. We understand that there is no guarantee that this feature will be sustained over time which makes it difficult to manage long embargoed time periods.

There are a couple of suggestions on how to manage this content over time. One suggestion is that the embargoed period be described on the finding aid rather than relying on this feature on the VRR. If we decided to phase out of using the VRR and decided to use Nuxeo as our one centralized platform for mediated access, we would be

able to better manage where this information lives and reduce the systems we need to maintain.

Use case #6: Mediated access at scale

SCA: [Jacques Derrida papers](#)

SCA just completed a large-scale digitization partnership with Princeton University to digitize *Series 2: Teaching and Seminars* of the Jacques Derrida papers. As stipulated in the Memorandum of Understanding, the first phase of the project entails UCI managing vendor provided digitization then allowing Princeton the opportunity to create an open access portal to the complete texts and documents. The later phases, that are independent of the Princeton/UCI collaboration, allow UCI to provide remote access to this digitized content through the VRR or another platform.

Because this content will be large in scale and projected to be high research demand, it would be helpful if we can point researchers to centralized access for the content instead of managing individual requests, downloading them on our staff workstations, and sharing them via a third-party platform.

Use case #7: Managing access to born digital content stored in Merritt only

SCA: [Critical Theory Institute records](#)

On July 15th, 2019, we received a request for access to content (CDs and reformatted audiocassettes) from the Critical Theory Institute records. The Critical Theory Institute did not secure speaker release forms, which puts the repository in a precarious position when it comes to providing access. Some of the requested materials were previously disk imaged, packaged, and ingested to Merritt, which necessitated finding and downloading a number of items from the collection object. Other requested materials were not previously processed and necessitated on-demand disk imaging and extraction. For all, there are no access copies on Nuxeo. I resorted to providing access via a third-party platform solution (Dropbox). It would be helpful if we would be able to provide mediated access to this content on Nuxeo so that we do not need to pull anything from Merritt for access.

Use case #8: Planning and managing access for newly processed born digital content

SCA: [Alfred Bork papers](#)

On July 5th, 2019 we received an in-person (and email) request by faculty member in the reading room for access to digital content:

“I think the best floppy disks to try to from the Bork papers would be the Scientific Reasoning Series disks in Box 16. They were produced by IBM and have program requirements etc., so perhaps the easiest to try to get up and running! There are two 3.5" floppy disks (“Families” and “Batteries and Bulbs”) and I think 10 bigger disks (5.25"?). We can try the 3.5" floppy disks.”

As the case above for UCI with the CTI records, it would be helpful if we could rely on a Nuxeo/Merritt pipeline for all newly processed born digital materials in the future, where access copies are stored and shared with researchers on Nuxeo and preservation copies are ingested to Merritt from Nuxeo.

Use case #9: Mediating community partner access

SCA: Transforming Knowledge, Transforming Libraries community partners

UCI Special Collections & Archives has now concluded a three-year IMLS grant that sought to investigate how academic archival repositories can partner with community archives vis-a-vis a post custodial model to maximize access to their holdings. UCI staff worked with Brian Tingle to develop a web-based form for community archives to ingest their materials to Nuxeo. As non-UC contributing members to Nuxeo, the current Shibboleth-only log in restriction poses a barrier for community partners to manage their own content in Nuxeo. It would be helpful if community partners can log into a platform that allows them to more sustainably manage their own content. Additionally, for materials community partners do not wish to make openly available on the web, having mediated access to these materials for end users would be helpful.

II. Faculty research and project support

Use case #10: Anticipation of faculty led COVID-19 archive projects

SCA: School of Social Ecology, COVID-19 archive projects

From EAR email to Adrian Petrisor, 07/27/2020

“Thuy and I have been tapped to help the School of Social Ecology plan a large archiving effort led by Susan Bibler Coutin who is interested in working with a couple of faculty members to assign building a "COVID-19 pandemic archive" project in the fall. These professors are thinking creatively about the fieldwork requirements students need to graduate and so they are considering assigning a COVID-19 documenting project to students in lieu of doing physical field work.

The conversation is in the very early stages right now, but what I envisioned (on my own, I have not shared any of this with faculty) is exploring OmekaS in a similar way DSS helped guide Ian Straughn's Anthro 169: Egyptomania course (Winter 2020): <https://omekas.lib.uci.edu/s/egyptomania/page/Introduction>. For this site the professor assigned metadata creation to the students, which at this point SCA wouldn't be able to provide a platform for students to do (outside of populating a spreadsheet). Not counting on having OmekaS ready for the fall, we are advising faculty to store archival materials and metadata spreadsheets on Google Drive. Once the project is completed, SCA will consider transferring content over to the University Archives. It would certainly provide a more enriching and empowering experience for students to utilize a platform directly instead of just storing on Google Drive and see their archive taking shape as they go.

It would be worthwhile to test out OmekaS soon to see if its functionality is a good fit for this project. I recognize that CDL's exploration into a Nuxeo-OmekaS integration is a different leg of the larger project. But I think UCI should at the very least begin to explore use cases for using this platform. I have many questions about user permissions and how to organize the different sites on each OmekaS instance. Will we need to have two separate instances for each unit (SCA & DSS)?

Ultimately because of the pandemic SCA anticipates significant interest in UCI and OC community members inquiring about starting a COVID-19 archival project. Some of these projects we will want to proceed with acquiring into SCA's archival collections. But we might want to just provide a platform and guidance on best practices during the creation of the project. At the end that project's lifecycle we can offer to web archive the site so it is available for posterity and take down the site. It helps free us up to offer the

services during the project's lifecycle without having to promise that we will keep it forever.”

Use case #11: Supporting grant partnerships with faculty -- metadata creation and exhibition support by community curators

SCA and DSS: Sharing Comfort and Care: Intergenerational Story-Mapping in the Cambodian, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Communities of Orange County (AY 2020-21 & 2021-22)

From Thuy:

Abstract/Summary. “Sharing Comfort and Care” is a faculty-led grant project that seeks to promote intergenerational and intercultural sharing of stories related to migration, health care, and food. We focus on two of the most underrepresented groups within the Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) category, namely Cambodians and Native Hawaiian Pacific Islanders, based in Orange County (OC). The oral histories, digital maps, and cookbooks will be preserved at the UCI Southeast Asian Archive as a means of encouraging the continued production of knowledge about Cambodian and Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander communities. We want to emphasize that we see the physical and digital products -- interviews, digital maps, cookbook, website, physical exhibits--as different components of an integrated whole.

This project represents a collaboration across three academic institutions and two community partners. The University of California, Irvine, Coastline Community College, and Irvine Valley College are federally recognized AANAPISIs, higher educational institutions that serve Asian American and Pacific Islander populations. Since spring 2018, the three schools have formed an Orange County AANAPISI Consortium and co-hosted the Western Regional AANAPISI Summit in spring 2019. This project is inspired by this consortium collaboration and is being proposed by faculty in UCI’s Humanities Center (formerly the Humanities Commons), the Asian American Studies Department, and staff in the UCI Libraries, specifically the Southeast Asian Archive (SEAA) and Digital Humanities.

Need: metadata creation and exhibition by UCI student and community curators

III. Digital exhibit platform support

Use case #12: Providing platform support for UCI Libraries digital exhibits

DSS: UCI Libraries *Queering the Orange* exploration as a digital exhibit

Early explorations with the DSS OmekaS instance of translating a physical exhibit into a digital exhibit. A platform that will enable other UCI Libraries staff outside of DSS and SCA to curate their exhibits.

Use case #13: Supporting grant partnerships with faculty -- exhibition support

SCA: THROUGH OUR EYES, HEAR OUR STORIES: Asian American and Pacific Islander Communities in a Time of Pandemic (AY 2020-21)

From Thuy:

Abstract/Summary. This project will train UCI faculty, staff, and students to become photo-ethnographers, documenting the experiences of marginalized AAPI members, and be shared through exhibitions, presentations, research papers, and policy recommendations. Our project will better equip UCI researchers - students, staff, and faculty from the Humanities to the Health Sciences - to understand the impacts of COVID-19 through a creative research project utilizing Photovoice. The results will be shared through virtual and perhaps physical exhibitions (depending on shelter in place orders), academic and public presentations, and research papers and policy recommendations to improve social services and government responses. The [Photovoice method](#) represents a powerful process to capture community-level information through the eyes of its residents. The three objectives of Photovoice are 1) to empower and engage community members to document their COVID19- related concerns through taking photographs within their own communities, 2) to use the photographs as the focal point of group discussions and dialogue about underlying community issues, and 3) to share their photographs with students, faculty, community and policy makers to create awareness and change.

Need: metadata creation and exhibition by UCI students and faculty members

Use case #14: Supporting student curated digital exhibits

SCA + DSS: It would be fantastic to have a platform that helps support student-led curation of Special Collections & Archives materials. The SCA exhibit program already encourages student curated exhibits in the physical sense and extending this into the digital realm will bolster our public programming and outreach to students. This is an envisioned use case for the moment but if it were to be possible I can see this being a popular way students interact with our materials.

IV. Guiding questions about our current needs

Technical / functionality needs:

1. Where does DSpace end of life fit in this work?
2. Will Omeka-S be the platform for our next generation Virtual Reading Room?
3. Do we need to have separate instances for SCA and DSS?
4. Will Omeka-S help support student curated projects/exhibits?
5. CDL question: will the Nuxeo-Omeka-S pipeline work the other way around (e.g. Omeka-S to Nuxeo)?

Administrative needs:

6. Regarding faculty researcher support -- what kind of mechanisms will be put in place to help bolster faculty researcher support with clear terms of support and phase out from the Libraries (e.g. the need to enter into a MOU with clear and agreed terms where UCI Libraries will agree to host Omeka-S projects and have a sunset date, transition to a web archived site)