OPEN ACCESS, OPEN ARCHIVES AND LEARNING CONTENT

Gino Roncaglia
Università della Tuscia
Open Archives and Learning Content

- Open Archives provide a model for institutional repositories of research content
  - institutional = universities, research centers...
  - many of such institutions have as their mission research and teaching
- But... do Open Archives provide an effective model for institutional repositories of learning content?
  - may be they should (and they are often used this way)
  - but they don’t (it is not easy to implement non-DC metadata such as LOM; OA are not ‘learning content oriented’; no tool for using learning content within OA)
Learning Content Repositories

- Learning content repositories are often LCMS, i.e. active part of a learning environment
  - but LCMS are usually built for ‘well-formed’ LO, distributed within on-line learning courses
    - it is not easy to fit there all our courseware
  - moreover: should we really implement two (almost) completely different models of institutional repositories?
    - it is often not easy to implement even just one of them!
    - and... should we really split apart so harshly research and teaching content?

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A preliminary question: what is learning content?

Learning Objects (LO): small, focused, self-contained, easily reusable, well-described (LOM), aptly packaged (SCORM), discrete chunks of information

- ready to be used in Learning Content Management Systems (LCMS)

...but also a plurality of disparate, incomplete, not self-contained, badly described, but potentially useful learning and teaching resources

- sometimes connected with informal learning
Case Study: Unitus MasterEL

- DSpace as institutional repository
- Learning Content arranged in SCORM packages
  - the need for easy-to-use SCORM packages
- LOM description within SCORM packages
  - specific LO metadata are in imsmanifest.xml
- separate eXist database for imsmanifest files
  - used for queries on LO metadata
  - might be automated (by harvesting imsmanifest files)

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Toward Integrated Repositories

- We need integrated repositories
  - with the ability to handle both research content and learning content
  - with the ability to easily implement LOM metadata alongside with DC metadata
    - and allowing harvesting for both metadata sets
  - designed for easy integration within research environments and within learning environments
  - capable of automatic production and distribution of SCORM packages

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Open Learning Content

- Added benefit: extending open content models to learning contents
  - there is a need for open learning content
    - MIT OpenCourseware
    - Open University OpenLearn
    - ...
  - but the available tools are poor, not standardized, and non-naive solutions require specific, high-level skills
  - ...they need our help!