Using Persistent Identifiers to Enhance Thesis and Dissertation Services

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Conference Themes

- Institutional repositories and platforms
- Open Scholarship - Open Access - Open Science – policies, practices, use cases

Abstract

In the 10 years since the first student completed a thesis at the then newly founded King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, the university library has developed our thesis and dissertation archiving service from a temporary home in Sharepoint into the foundation of a healthy and expanding institutional repository using DSpace. This presentation will introduce the steps in this progression, with the primary focus on two initiatives to better weave our theses and dissertations into the scholarly web through the use of persistent identifiers.

The first of these was the decision in 2014 to become an early adopter of ORCID identifiers and to require an ORCID iD be attached to the student author on all new thesis and dissertation submissions. Through ORCID membership, this integration also supported posting metadata about the ETD to the student's ORCID record, connecting it to their publication record as they start their careers. In combination with this work, we also enabled searching faculty advisors and committee members to ETDs on the basis of their ORCID iD, allowing repository users to easily identify all the items in the repository related to a professor, not only the items where they were listed as authors.

Secondly, while we have used Handle identifiers to provide persistent links to ETDs since 2012, in 2018 we decided to also register DataCite DOIs for each thesis or dissertation. Through registration of metadata with DataCite we can make additional connections between the ETD and the student's ORCID iD, as well as to related items such as datasets and cited publications. In addition, we will show how the use of DOIs can make our ETDs more discoverable, while also providing more avenues to track the resulting usage.

To conclude, we will also discuss areas where we are working to further improve our thesis and dissertation archiving service, ranging from supporting research data management by students to connecting with additional external systems such as Wikidata and Semantic Scholar.