

THE UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND JOINS SKEMMAN

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Skemman (<http://www.skemman.is>) is an open-access repository serving four universities in Iceland. The project was originally started by the University of Akureyri library in 2002. In 2006 the library of the Iceland University of Education joined and a project group was formed to continue the development of the repository, which uses DSpace software. In February 2008 the University of Iceland's University Council voted to join Skemman and to collect electronic copies of students' theses as well as the paper copies that had traditionally been preserved. On 1 July 2008 the Iceland University of Education was merged into the University of Iceland as one of its five schools. It was then decided that the management and technical administration of the system would be moved to the National and University Library (NULI) and that thesis collection would begin with the school year 2008-2009. In December 2008 Bifrost University and the Iceland Academy of the Arts joined Skemman, as did the University of Iceland as a whole.

So far Skemman houses mainly student dissertations and theses. In the future the plan is to include articles and other material by university faculty and staff members.

The University of Iceland has three graduation dates: in October, February and June. As the technical staff at NULI encountered problems in setting up the DSpace software, both the October 2008 and

February 2009 theses had to be collected by e-mail or on CDs, since the repository was not yet set up for self-archiving by students. This caused an immense amount of work for librarians at NULI who have had to take on the work of inputting the theses. (This work is still underway.) Most students graduating in June 2009 were able to self-archive their theses, but not all have entered their theses into the system yet. When Skemman was introduced to the University of Iceland, it was thought of as an open-access repository. However, it was decided that each student should be free to choose whether access to their thesis, in part or whole, should be open or closed. It has been a considerable disappointment to librarians at NULI that quite many students choose to deny electronic access to their theses. Some even choose open access to begin with but change their mind later and ask for access to be closed.

So far 1759 students have submitted their theses. Of these, 809 belong to the School of Education. Skemman contains 7 doctoral dissertations, 413 masters' theses and 1339 undergraduate theses. No member of the academic staff has submitted work so far, although there is a category set aside in the repository structure for them.

This autumn a new edition of the DSpace software will be implemented but it is obvious that a lot of development still remains to be done before Skemman can fulfill its purpose as planned.



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