

Liberal Arts Digital Archive Services: DASE
Joint Venture ITAC funding request for 2006-2007 funding cycle
College of Liberal Arts - UT Libraries

The College of Liberal Arts, and the University of Texas Libraries request a one-time ITAC grant of \$30,000 for extending Liberal Arts Digital Archive Services (DASE) to collections throughout campus and migrating the DASE software and data to Libraries' servers. Combining UT Libraries' infrastructure and Liberal Arts development tools, the project will provide teachers and students throughout campus with dependable, user-friendly access to the University's growing number of digital collections. (We encourage reviewers to visit DASE at <http://dase.laits.utexas.edu>.)

Overview: DASE

DASE (<http://dase.laits.utexas.edu>) is a joint effort of Liberal Arts and UT Libraries and consists of a set of applications for the collection, cataloging, and serving of digital media collections from all over the University. Current and planned collections include:

- Important museum collections such the Blanton Museum's collection of original art and the Texas Archeological Research Lab's extensive collection of Texas historical and pre-historical artifacts.
- College wide teaching collections such as the Visual Resource Collections in Fine Arts and Architecture.
- Departmental teaching collections such as those maintained by Classics, Middle Eastern Studies, Asian Studies, and others.
- Individual faculty teaching and research collections.
- Specialized collections such as:
 - the collections of images of costumes in the Department of Theater and Dance.
 - collections of QuickTimeVR and GIS data maintained by the Institute for Classical Archaeology and the Department of Anthropology.

The principle design objectives for DASE applications are to provide:

- custom functionality directly addressing the particular needs and uses of UT faculty and students,
- collection owners and managers wide, creative control over how digital assets are cataloged and published,
- carefully articulated interconnections with UT enterprise level technologies, applications, and projects such as Blackboard, XML Gateway, TED, the Classroom Technology Console project, and UTOPIA,
- tools that cut the cost of making digital assets available on line,
- interoperability and repurposing of data and metadata via OAI-PMH and RSS interfaces and commitment to open metadata.

In short, DASE is designed to fit the particular collections, needs, and conditions found at the University of Texas at Austin. This adherence to UT's special requirements is what sets DASE apart from other digital library projects and commercial applications. DASE applications are built from the ground up with UT in mind and are designed to grow and adapt to the changing environment on the Austin campus.

Initial versions of two DASE applications -- DASE Collection Builder and DASE Media Browser (<http://dase.laits.utexas.edu>) -- were released for use at the beginning of Fall 2005. Two more -- DASE Workflow and DASE Authenticator -- are under development.

DASE Media Browser gives faculty and students the ability to search diverse collections of hundreds of thousands of images, videos, audio files, and other media. Users can download files or organize them into online collections accessible from within Media Browser. Faculty can quickly create online slide shows and share them with students either online or by projecting them in class. A features currently under development will give users a two screen slideshow option allowing teachers in dual screen auditoriums to organize, format, and display dual screen slide shows. The best way to understand DASE Media Browser is by going to <http://dase.laits.utexas.edu> , logging in with your EID, and trying it out.

DASE Collection Builder places creation and management of departmental collections completely in the hands of departmental collection managers. Managers are free to design catalog metadata according to their users particular needs, predefine possible attribute values, customize metadata input forms, administer user permissions, and define search and display options for DASE Media Browser. Users can upload digital assets, define collection attributes and Dublin Core mappings, and create and edit metadata for individual items or groups of items.

DASE Workflow will provide scanning and other media digitization efforts with a set of easy to use tools for organizing files, creating catalog records, and capturing initial metadata. Workflow will transparently begin cataloging and metadata collection at a very early point in the digitization process, and provides digitization, post-production, and metadata specialists with a convenient method of tracking ongoing progress. A prototype of Workflow is currently in use in Liberal Arts Instructional Technology Services (LAITS).

DASE Authenticator will provide other DASE applications with a single source of directory information about users. The information will come from ITS's XML Gateway and TED directory service and other campus sources, as well as from data entered directly by users and catalog managers. By providing other DASE applications with real-time information on users UT status, course enrollment, department, and other information, Authenticator will permit sharing digital assets as widely as copyright laws allow. It will also allow DASE developers to adopt agile and modular development models.

Ongoing Development: Moving DASE to the Library

Development in 2006-7 will be directed toward establishing DASE as a University-wide resource. Liberal Arts' existing partnership with Fine Arts will provide the model for including collections from throughout the University. Discussions are underway with DIIA and the Colleges of Architecture and Geology. Several other colleges, museums, and departments have expressed serious interest. Liberal Arts proposes to work with any unit interested in adding a collection to DASE.

Liberal Arts and University Libraries will also work to migrate DASE to Libraries servers by the end of 2007. Housing digital collections is a core mission for University of Texas Libraries. Just as libraries have been the archival repositories for printed materials UT Libraries are committed to working with colleges and departments to manage and archiving new digital content. Libraries' infrastructure will provide a central, long-term home for DASE.

During 2006-2007 Liberal Arts will continue development of the DASE applications with College funds. Liberal Arts is committed to completing the workflow and authentication applications and adding extensive new functionality to both Media Browser and Collection Builder. Establishing DASE as an enterprise service, however, will require a significant additional investment of time and money. We requests a \$30,000 one-time ITAC allotment for Liberal Arts to fund one half of the salary for a Senior Systems Analyst. The Systems Analyst will manage addition of collections from around the University and coordinate migration of applications and data to Libraries' servers.

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