

Expanding the Electronic Reserve Services in Academic Libraries

Jong Ae Kim

*Department of Library and Information Science
Kyonggi University, Suwon, Republic of Korea*

Abstract- To expand the electronic reserve services in academic institutions, librarians can make efforts to connect the electronic reserves and institutional repositories (IR). To enrich electronic reserves, both librarians as well as instructors need to contribute toward the collection and development of educational resources. The electronic reserves developed and maintained by librarians can provide useful instructional and reference contents that can be commonly utilized in the various courses offered by institutions. Connecting the IR to electronic reserves can contribute toward the promotion of its benefits and facilitate the use of IR in institutions. By connecting electronic reserves with IR, the utilization of both electronic reserves and IR may increase.

Keywords – electronic reserve service, electronic reserve, e-reserve, academic library

I. ELECTRONIC RESERVE SERVICES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Electronic reserve services have been widely adopted by many academic libraries since the mid-1990s to improve their reserve services with the continuous technological advances. They started making their digital reserve materials available via network for the convenience of access. Electronic reserves (e-reserves) have improved the traditional reserve services, supporting the faculty and students in accessing reserve materials conveniently without any restrictions of time and space. Additionally, electronic reserves allow faster and more precise searching than traditional reserves. Due to the convenience and improved accessibility of electronic reserves, they have come to be preferred by users of reserve services in academic institutions.

However, the expanded use of course management systems (CMS) has brought new challenges to electronic reserve services. As the CMS have come to be widely utilized for teaching and learning in universities, especially in the distance learning environment, the need for connecting electronic reserves with the CMS has increased to improve the accessibility and usage rate of the reserve materials. In the distance learning environment, many courses are delivered via online classes by utilizing the CMS. The adoption of CMS enables instructors to upload course-related materials to it by themselves, without any help from the librarians who manage the reserve materials. However, instructors may have difficulties providing various materials carrying a wide scope and organizing all the useful educational resources that can be utilized by students in various ways. Moreover, students may not recognize the presence of information resources unless the resources are provided via CMS. Librarians can play a crucial role in filling this gap, and thus, make contributions to the educational process. Academic librarians are required to adopt more active roles and exert their professional competence in the provision of educational resources and supporting of knowledge sharing in the teaching and learning processes.

Goodson and Frederiksen (2011) presented three models of electronic reserve service programs, namely full-service, self-service, and hybrid-service models. In a full-service model, librarians take active roles in the entire e-reserve process, including posting materials, seeking copyright permissions, and archiving or eliminating reserve materials. In a self-service model, faculty members take the responsibility of placing reading materials in CMS to make the course content available to students. Hybrid-service models refer to a range of diverse e-reserve service models that combine CMS and library e-reserves. The hybrid models include those that carry both library as well as non-library focus.

To enrich electronic reserves, both librarians as well as instructors need to contribute toward the collection and development of educational resources. Librarians can contribute to the educational process by developing electronic reserves through collecting, organizing, and providing various resources including papers, audiovisual materials, institutional publications, institution-specific guidelines, and templates relevant to teaching and learning. The electronic reserves developed and maintained by librarians can provide useful instructional and reference contents that can be commonly utilized in the various courses offered by institutions. Instructors may provide links to the e-reserves that the librarians have developed on their course pages in CMS. This way, instructors would not be required to collect and organize all the resources on the CMS pages of the courses they teach by themselves. On the

course pages in the CMS, instructors may provide some instructional materials developed by themselves as well as the links to the e-reserves that the librarians have developed and maintained. The cooperation between the faculty and librarians enables students to access and utilize various useful resources for their learning activities.

II. EXPANDING THE ELECTRONIC RESERVE SERVICES

To expand the electronic reserve services in academic institutions, librarians can make efforts to connect the e-reserves and institutional repositories (IR). A growing number of academic institutions have come to build IR to collect and share valuable information resources and research data. Lynch (2003) defined IR as “a set of services that a university offers to the members of its community for the management and dissemination of digital materials created by the institution and its community members.” IR have provided effective venues for knowledge sharing and scholarly communication in academic institutions. In order for IR to serve as an effective tool for educational and research activities, it is important that academic librarians play an active role in their management. By playing an active role in the collection and dissemination of valuable resources via the development and management of IR, academic librarians can increase their visibility in their institutions.

By connecting the e-reserve services and IR, academic libraries can offer more extensive relevant resources to the students taking up courses in academic institutions. By pointing out that academic institutions can collect various types of contents in their IR, Nagra (2012) presented various types of IR contents which include creative works, curricular materials, learning objects, presentations, audio and video materials, institutional publications, and data sets. Academic librarians can select valuable resources from IR and connect the resources to e-reserve systems so that they may be commonly utilized across the various courses offered by institutions.

Pickton and Barwick (2006) suggested the need for reliable mediated deposit services considering that the users might have difficulties contributing content to the sites or might be reluctant in doing it themselves. Walters (2007) suggested the engagement of librarians in activities such as copyright checking, metadata creation, and authority control. As metadata specialists, librarians should play a part in assigning metadata to the resources that would be uploaded in the IR so that the IR resources are retrieved effectively. Academic librarians are also required to provide instructions and guidance to inform the faculty and students about copyright and creative common licenses. When the information resources are uploaded in the IR, the submission process in it may require a submitter to assign the Creative Commons License (CCL). The indication of the CCL can facilitate free and active usage of IR resources by its users.

It is important for academic librarians to inspire the members of institutions to upload their intellectual products in the IR and promote the value of its resources. Connecting the IR to e-reserves can contribute toward the promotion of its benefits for the faculty and students and facilitate the use of repositories in institutions. By connecting e-reserves with IR, the utilization of both e-reserves and IR may increase.

III. COPYRIGHT ISSUES CONCERNING ELECTRONIC RESERVES

One of the challenges pertaining to the implementation of electronic reserves has been the concern over copyright. The copyright policies on e-reserves are based on the fair use doctrine found in the Copyright Act. The Copyright Act was codified to protect the right of copyright holders to exclude others from “reproducing, distributing, creating derivative works, displaying the work publicly, performing the work publicly, or performing the work by digital audio transmission” without permission (17 U.S.C. §106). The law also codified the “fair use” doctrine to balance the copyright with the rights of the public by allowing the use of copyrighted works under certain conditions such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, and research. The fair use doctrine is “a means to balance the rights of the public to promote the dissemination of knowledge while ensuring copyright owner’s protection for their creative works and economic investments” (Driscoll, 2003). It contributes toward the fulfillment of the cultural needs of public and promotion of intellectual exchange. The fair use doctrine is comprised of four factors: the purpose and character of the use, the nature of the copyrighted work, the amount and substantiality of the portion used, and the effect of the use upon the potential market (17 U.S.C. §107). The implementation of electronic reserves relies on the fair use provisions. However, the interpretation of the fair use doctrine in the operations of reserve services is often confusing because of the vagueness inherent in it. With there being difficulties in applying the doctrine to reserve services, some efforts have been made to develop the guidelines on e-reserve copyright policy.

There are guidelines that may be considered by libraries to establish an institutional e-reserve copyright policy, namely the *Model Policy Concerning College and University Photocopying for Classroom, Research, and Library Reserve Use* (American Library Association, 1982) and the *Code of Best Practices in Fair Use for Academic and Research Libraries* (Association of Research Libraries, 2012). Recognizing the need to provide libraries a clearer explanation on the application of the fair use doctrine for the implementation of reserves, the American Library

Association (ALA) adopted the *Model Policy Concerning College and University Photocopying for Classroom, Research, and Library Reserve Use* in 1982. According to the Model Policy, libraries may place “an entire article, or an entire chapter from a book, or an entire poem” when placing only one copy on reserve (American Library Association, 1982). When placing multiple copies on reserve, the policy suggested that the following guidelines should be considered:

- (1) *The amount of material should be reasonable in relation to the total amount of material assigned for one term of a course, taking into account the nature of the course, its subject matter and level;*
- (2) *The number of copies should be reasonable in light of the number of students enrolled, the difficulty and timing of assignments, and the number of other courses which may assign the same material;*
- (3) *The material should contain a notice of copyright;*
- (4) *The effect of photocopying the material should not be detrimental to the market for the work. (American Library Association, 1982)*

The Model Policy enunciated that librarians might photocopy materials for reserve services to support the preparation of class assignments and pursuit of educational activities. It served as a basis on which libraries established their institutional reserve policies.

To identify the common practices of fair use in academic and research libraries, the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) prepared the Code of Best Practices in Fair Use for Academic and Research Libraries. It states the principles delineating each of the practices or situations to which fair use applies. It also states the limitations that confine the practices and enhancements that represent the practices to strengthen the case.

Some researchers have recommended that individual libraries should establish a copyright policy regarding e-reserves. Hudock and Abrahamson (2004) have recommended that each institution should create an e-reserve copyright policy that fits its demographics and unique situation. Melamut et al. (2000) suggested that each library should deliberate its own philosophy or approach toward fair use when it comes to the implementation of e-reserve services.

Currently there are no agreed-upon guidelines on the e-reserve copyright policy, thus, individual institutions are required to constitute their own e-reserve copyright policies to help their members use reserve materials legitimately and effectively in e-reserve implementations. The complexity and vagueness of the laws and guidelines concerning copyright have resulted in there being wide differences among individual institutions regarding e-reserve implementations. Some institutions have established copyright policies and procedures to govern their e-reserve services. However, these individual institutions’ policies and procedures show differences in terms of the scope of fair use exemption. These differences in the extent of restrictions may result in students and instructors having inconsistent experiences in terms of their activities associated with use of reserve services for teaching and learning.

Due to the vagueness inherent in the fair use doctrine and guidelines, many libraries have set highly restrictive policies with regard to the implementation of e-reserve services to avoid legal disputes. A number of studies have reported the uncertainty that the members of academic community have confronted. Gould et al. (2005) asserted that libraries should not limit their services too narrowly and deprive students and instructors of their rights falling within the scope of fair use exemption. Dalton (2007) pointed out that a narrow interpretation of what the fair use exemptions allow might bring potentially serious consequences as returning to fair use can be difficult once libraries limit their scope.

Although there is confusion because of the adoption of inconsistent approaches for the implementation of e-reserve services, the users’ rights should not be excessively restricted. Academic libraries should actively pursue fair use rights to enable the members of academic communities to use reserve materials without permission under certain conditions, which can contribute toward the educational process.

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