

## **The Collecting Missions of Law Repositories**

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Over the past 10-15 years, law schools have embraced online institutional repositories as a way to preserve scholarly works and publicize their schools' contribution to legal scholarship. Around 75% of U.S. law schools now manage or contribute to an online repository for their institution. Generally, these repositories house some combination of: institutional archives, faculty scholarship, law journals, collections of legal documents, and other materials relevant to the school's mission and operations.

Despite the rise of popularity in repositories among law schools, there is little agreement as to how these digital collections platforms should be positioned among law library collections, and even what purpose these platforms serve as part of the ecosystem of academic legal information. Are repositories best used as tools for preservation of institutional content? For marketing and discoverability of scholarly output? As bespoke websites to host materials that are not appropriate for other outlets? All of these purposes fill valid needs within law schools, but require different infrastructures to be carried out well.

This paper will present a summary of research into the current state of law repository collections, and extract some common paradigms and collection strategies. These paradigms will then serve as a foundation to analyze repositories and collections that show the most success when applied to these individual purposes.

This paper will then explore strategies to improve how repositories can conform to institutional purpose and how repository collections can be better integrated into library-wide collection development and technology. How do repository collections fit alongside traditional legal research and educational materials?

Finally, how can repository collections across U.S. law schools be coordinated, linked, and networked together to make research and discoverability of these materials more cohesive and straightforward for users, while reducing the burdens on repository administrators at each school? This paper will conclude by examining structures of institutional cooperation, open access, and shared resources that could create a more sustainable future for this information ecosystem.