Digital Honors: FAQ for Faculty Advisors:

Why Make Digital Honors Projects Accessible?

- To highlight the importance of student independent research at Bowdoin;
- To showcase Bowdoin faculty and student research collaboration;
- To welcome students into the wider scholarly community;
- To make student scholarship available to potential employers or graduate admissions programs; and,
- To potentially improve the quality of student honors work by increasing its future value to them.

What is a digital honors project and where is it kept?

- This is a digital version of the student’s honors project. It’s a part of the Bowdoin Digital Commons, a repository of digital collections created or curated by departments of Bowdoin College. See http://digitalcommons.bowdoin.edu/

Does this replace the print thesis?

- No, students still will be required to submit a print version of their thesis to the College Archives, but they’ll also create a PDF version of their thesis to upload to the Bowdoin Digital Commons.

What if a thesis contains non-textual materials?

- The student will be able to attach additional files to their Digital Commons upload with the non-textual material, e.g., sound or video files.

Does it take much time/how easy is it?

- The faculty participants have stated they felt the process was simple and didn’t take much additional time. One important step is for faculty and students to decide together about the Level of Access and possible Embargo period.

What do these terms mean?

- Level of Access determines who may access a document.
- Embargo determines when a document can be accessed.

How do we determine the appropriate level of access?

- If the final version of the thesis complies with fair use in accordance with U.S. copyright law, the student and advisor(s) should select Open Access. This allows unrestricted access via the Internet; content will be searchable via Google and other search engines.
- If the thesis includes copyrighted materials that fall outside fair use provisions of U.S. copyright law, the student and advisor(s) must select Restricted Access; this will limit access to users on the Bowdoin campus.
How do we determine if an embargo is necessary?

- An embargo prevents all online access to the thesis for a certain period of time; this might be chosen if, for example, the student and advisor are planning to publish the findings elsewhere. Periods of embargo may be 1, 3, or 5 years, after which the thesis will be available for viewing online.

*The faculty advisor(s) will have the final decision on access and embargo of digital honors projects.*

For additional information please contact Sue O’Dell, Science Librarian, 207-725-3265 or sodell@bowdoin.edu.