



## WVU Libraries program draws international visitors

West Virginia University Libraries' internationally respected system for posting graduate student research to the Web recently drew a visitor from thousands of miles away to campus.

Yaqub Ali, chief librarian of the International Islamic University Islamabad in Pakistan, visited staff at WVU Libraries to learn more about WVU's highly successful Electronic Thesis and Dissertations Program (ETD). He is the fourth international visitor to come to campus to study the program.

Ali is developing an ETD program in Pakistan and has selected WVU's system as a model to emulate.

"I wanted to get some guidance from those institutions that have done a good job," he said. "WVU is the most prestigious and most active institution in this field."

WVU was a pioneer when it established its ETD program in 1998. Since then, the University has required all master's theses and doctoral dissertations to be submitted electronically and then posted to the Web.

WVU is the second school in the world to require electronic submission of theses and dissertations. The University's ETD collection has almost 3,500 documents, including 2,145 theses and 1,340 dissertations.

"We are proud of our legacy, and we have taken on a leadership role in the ETD global movement," said John Hagen, manager of Institutional Repository Programs at WVU Libraries and ETD program coordinator. "Helping other schools, particularly those in developing nations, to achieve successful ETD program implementation has been an integral part of the University Libraries' international scholarly outreach program."

The Pakistani ETD program is currently in the pilot stage. Ali hopes to use the ideas and information that he gathered on the WVU campus to make necessary changes and enhancements to the program, so he can fully implement it in fall 2009.

During his visit, Ali met with members of WVU's ETD task force and library department heads for extensive discussions about procedures, policies and other issues concerning ETDs.

One of the challenges at the university in Pakistan has been conveying the benefits of digital publishing to students and faculty. Chief among those perks is increased access and visibility for each researcher's work.

Traditionally, printed documents go on the shelf in a university's library and are rarely read by anyone not on campus. However, a research document posted to the Web is open to the world. Increased access leads to advances in research and greater recognition for original researchers, Ali said.



INTERNATIONALLY RESPECTED PROGRAM — WVU Libraries' renowned system for posting research of graduate students to the World Wide Web continues to attract international visitors. Yaqub Ali, chief librarian of the International Islamic University Islamabad (from left), WVU Libraries dean Frances O'Brien and WVU ETD program coordinator John Hagen share the idea that research should be available electronically to scholars around the world for advancement of education and scholarship.

Others who have visited the WVU campus to learn about the University's ETD program include Susan Copeland of Robert Gordon University in Scotland (2006),

Sumant and Beena Goel of the Digital Dissertation Foundation of India (2005) and Simon Bevan of Cranfield University in England (2004).

Hagen credits much of the success of WVU's ETD program to Provost Gerald Lang, who played an integral role in the program's foundation and continues to provide leadership and encouragement.

"Provost Lang's foresight has been crucial to the important role WVU plays in the worldwide ETD movement," Hagen said. "He saw the value of a policy of mandatory electronic submission of theses and dissertations long before other universities, thus making WVU a pioneer in this field."

**mm/11/20/07**

**Contacts:**

**Monte Maxwell**  
**WVU Libraries**  
**Office: (304) 293-4040, ext. 4004**