

Courses & Reading Lists

Using APIs to Automate Cleaning Up Your Alma System

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Hello and thank you for being here for this session. My name is Jamen McGranahan from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. I am the Associate Director of Library Technology & Digital Services here at Vanderbilt – a lot of words just to say that I am one of the leads in server and systems management for the Library, including Alma, Primo VE, and Leganto. Today I just want to talk a little about what we do for cleaning up Courses that do not have Reading Lists.

History

- Migrated to Alma & Primo VE summer 2018
- Implemented Leganto at the same time

Just to give you a little background - Last year, we migrated to Alma & Primo VE from Sirsi's Symphony system. At the same time, we implemented Leganto as a Course Reading list tool. During implementation, we imported a lot of old course reserves that were in our previous system, so we had a lot of old data that needed to be removed.

Recognition

- Thanks goes to Eduardo N. Prieto from the University of Miami Libraries
 - Presented at ELUNA 2019 in Atlanta, GA
 - Leganto Maintenance: Deleting Courses using Alma API
 - Original code found on GitHub: <https://github.com/UMiamiLibraries/alma-delete-course-api>

Now this script would not have been possible without Eduardo Prieto's presentation at ELUNA 2019. He detailed basically everything I am showing you today, but it also gave me an opportunity to mess with and learn more Python, which was one of my goals for this year.

Why Is This Needed?

- If have an automatic course loader, could have hundreds of courses without reading lists that are sitting there doing nothing.
 - We automatically load courses from our Learning Management System, checking each day for courses to load
 - This has resulted in hundreds of courses since 2018 that are not used, no reading lists attached
- Helps to speed up performance (more courses, slower system gets over time)

Data clean up is an ever growing task and as we add more and more content to Alma, we learn that there is more and more data that needs to be updated or removed. The cleaner the system, the smoother it will run, so it is important to have some kind of task that assists in this process. For us, removing old course data that had no reading lists attached seem to be the hanging fruit. Since we do not roll over courses, it was not imperative to keep courses. But we are short on staff and not a lot of free time, so for us, using the method presented at ELUNA 2019 seemed to be the best option.

Prerequisites

- API keys – <https://developers.exlibrisgroup.com/>
 - Recommended: one key for Premium Sandbox; one key for Production
- Python 3
 - Can be either be installed locally on machine or on a server
 - If local, recommend using a Python Development Environment like Thonny (<https://thonny.org/>)
- Python Packages needed: requests, lxml, argparse, logging, datetime

Live Demo

Questions?

- Script can be found here on the Developer's Network:
<https://developers.exlibrisgroup.com/blog/alma-cleaning-up-courses-without-reading-lists/?preview=true>