

“It used to take days to respond to a transcript request that was on our microfilm. We were pleasantly surprised with Digital Reel’s search and retrieval speed. We now offer same-day turnaround for transcript requests that come into the office. Searches are now completed in minutes, not days.”

Chelsey Seely  
Assistant Registrar for Academic Records  
California State University, Los Angeles



## Case Study

### INDUSTRY

- Education – College & University Registrars

### LOCATION

- Los Angeles, California

### CHALLENGES

- Microfilm 30+ years old; degradation threatened viability of student transcript archive
- Inefficient for staff to access records, often taking days to respond to student transcript requests

### BMI SOLUTION

- 1,729 physical microfilm rolls converted at BMI’s document scanning facility in Sunnyvale, CA
- Student transcripts hosted at BMI’s secure data center for instant, online access

### BENEFITS

- No Registrar IT staff required
- 2,000+ records accessed per month from Digital Reel
- Secure, anytime and anywhere access to the student record archive (security parameters prevent off campus access)
- Full-text search and retrieval enables Registrar to offer same day turnaround on transcript requests



### Overview

The mission of the CSU LA Registrar's Office is to provide the most efficient academic services to students, faculty and alumni without compromising institutional or legal standards. Security and timeliness to accurate information guides the department's actions.

The Registrar's office consists of a staff of 35 people, 10 who focus on records management. Overall responsibilities include student transcript record production and handling changes such as grades and majors.

Chelsey Seely, Assistant Registrar for Academic Records, states “When I started here in August 2015, the microfilm was hitting the 30 year old mark and we knew that digitally converting the records would be important for not only convenience, but also long-term retention.”

Seely continues, “Our campus utilizes OnBase for regular scanning and indexing of day-to-day forms. We went to that team for a bid, but the price came back too high. We discovered Digital Reel at the PACCRAO Conference; it met our requirements and happened to be about one tenth of the price.”

## Hosted SaaS Solution Avoids IT Staff Involvement

CSU LA Registrar is utilizing the Digital Reel Cloud Option. BMI not only scanned the physical microfilm rolls but currently stores the digital images at its secure data center, which CSU LA staff accesses via Digital Reel's web browser.

BMI has a partnership with Raging Wire data centers, and CSU LA's digital information is hosted at Raging Wire's Sacramento SSAE 16 Type 2 compliant data center.

Seely states, "We have five Digital Reel user licenses. The Registrar maintains the license keys and we are sharing these log-ins with the Admissions and Alumni Department."

The Admissions Department, for example, will pull legacy transcripts from Digital Reel when attempting to re-admit students who studied at CSU LA in the past. The Alumni Department leverages the records as part of donation efforts and verification of degrees.

Security is a big concern to CSU LA. Although Digital Reel is web-based, BMI worked with the Registrar team to restrict the web access to systems on campus only.

## Same Day Student Transcript Service

Seely states that "Digital Reel requires almost no end-user training, enabling staff to instantly search and retrieve student transcripts that were very difficult to access on physical microfilm."

She continues, "In the past, it used to take days to respond to a transcript request that was on our microfilm. We were pleasantly surprised with Digital

Reel's search and retrieval speed. We now offer same-day turnaround for transcript requests that come into the office. Searches are now completed in minutes, not days."

BMI indexed the student transcripts using Date of Birth, Social Security number, and Permanent File Number (PFN). Last names are rarely searched for because common last names will display many hits, watering down the results.

## Student Record Image Enhancement

"Our microfilm was pretty old when it was imaged, resulting in hazy images and some with black areas surrounding the image," says Seely. "Digital Reel's editing features make it easy to crop and enhance sections of the transcript.

For example, grades and courses taken that were not legible on the physical microfilm are now improved with Digital Reel's enhancement features. We used to put copies on a copier and try to make them more legible. Now we do it within the Digital Reel application in a matter of seconds."

Digital Reel's adjustable grayscale enables users to optimize the image using contrast and brightness settings as necessary until a high quality document emerges. From there, users can save, print, or email the student record directly from the application.

## Conclusion

Seely closes, "Digital Reel met our exact requirements and did so at a price our department could afford. Our legacy student records are protected for the long-term and now easily searchable with modern technology. We're looking forward to scanning a set of legacy microfiche sheets into the system."