Extending an LIS Data Curation Curriculum to Include Humanities Data


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THE PROGRAM

This IMLS-funded project builds on the success of a program already in place at GSLIS, the Data Curation Education Program (DCEP), a concentration within the GSLIS ALA-accredited masters program.

DCEP-H extends the DCEP data curation curriculum to include humanities data, training a new generation of LIS professionals as humanities data curators and providing continuing education for practitioners currently in the field.

Principal Investigator: Allen Renear, Associate Professor, GSLIS. Coordinator: Kevin Trainor, Assistant Director, CIRSS/GSLIS.

CORE THEMES

- text and documents
- digital artifacts and media
- collections, metadata, and ontologies
- scholarly information use and behavior

DCEP-H draws directly on the ongoing research of GSLIS faculty members in metadata, information modeling, document processing, ontology development, archives, and information storage and retrieval, as well as traditional LIS areas such as indexing and abstracting, classification, collections development, user studies, and service design and management.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- Best practice development for curation of cultural data has a reciprocal relationship with the curation of scientific data, each informing the other and together advancing data curation as a discipline.
- Library and information science can help provide an overarching curricular framework for data curation (Cragin et al., 2007; Palmer et al., 2008).
- Humanities disciplines have already evolved sophisticated curation practices and theories, and in the last 50 years refined and extended these to support computation and digital storage. This rich tradition must inform the development of a humanities data curation curriculum.

Humanities disciplines such as history, literature, art, music, and philosophy are profoundly important to our society. These disciplines simultaneously create and mobilize the documentary record of the human condition, helping us remember and understand who we are and what we may become.

“Research in the humanities is becoming data-centric, with a large amount of data available in digital formats. These developments quickly change the landscape of humanities research.” (Blanke, Dunn & Dunning, 2006).

The need for improved understanding of curatorial practices, and education of a humanities data curation workforce, is therefore urgent.

OUTCOMES

- Documentation of best practices for humanities data curation.
- New courses and educational materials.
- A network of cooperating institutions for internships, practicum, and job placement for enrolled students.
- A common framework for data curation concepts and practices that applies both to scientific and cultural data.
- All materials freely available via UIUC’s institutional repository.

COOPERATING INSTITUTIONS & ADVISORY BOARD

Advisory board members help identify information problems, best practices, and case study topics, and review the completed curriculum. Cooperating institutions provided field placements for internships.

- Lorcan Dempsey, Vice President and Chief Strategist, OCLC Online Computer Library Center.
- Gregory Crane, Editor-in-Chief, The Perseus Digital Library, Tufts University.
- Julia Flanders, Director, The Brown University Women Writers Project.
- Harold Short, Director Centre for Computing in the Humanities, King’s College London.
- Daniel Pitti, Associate Director, The Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities, University of Virginia.
- Christian-Emil Ore, Director of Research Unit for Digital Documentation, University of Oslo.

FUTURE EVENTS

- Institute for Humanities Data Curation, May 18-22, 2009: a weeklong workshop for academic and research librarians hosted by GSLIS DCEP.
- iSchools Conference, Feb. 3-6, 2010: hosted by GSLIS.
- International Digital Curation Conference, 2010: hosted by GSLIS and the Digital Curation Centre, UK.

REFERENCES

