Building a Bridge to Next Generation DH Services in Libraries with a Campus Needs Assessment

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Methods

- 15 Interviews with faculty, administrators, academic professionals, and graduate students from units with interest or involvement in DH.
- Scan of recent dissertations to identify DH work.
- Follow-up survey to random sample of faculty (23%), researchers and academic staff (16%), graduate students (62%) in relevant units in the arts, humanities and social sciences (55 responses).

Team Members: English & DH Librarian, HathiTrust Research Center DH Specialist, Information Sciences Librarian, Visual Resources and Outreach Specialist, Head of Architecture & Art Library, and Associate University Librarian for User Services.

Findings

- Graduate students expressed stronger urgency and need for library support for tools and software.
- Faculty and staff expressed greater urgency across all areas including access to library expertise, assistance with access to digital content, and data storage.
- Access to digital collections as data was as a key barrier to researchers pursuing projects.

Areas of Need

- Access to Collections and Data
- Funding
- Networks of Research and Community
- Education
- Infrastructure and Research Support

Recommendations

(1) provide opportunities for in-depth training;
(2) connect the library’s role in research data curation to digital scholarship creation;
(3) expand the library’s strengths in discovery and access to digital collections;
(4) build space and opportunities for people to form communities of practice;
(5) act as a key node in the network of digital scholarship research initiatives;
(6) build library personnel capacity for digital scholarship services

Selected Actions

Redesigned introductory text mining workshop, offered advanced text mining workshop on topic modeling. (1)
Redesigned and expanded library guides on acquiring text data sets. (2,3)
New bi-weekly student and faculty reading and working group on digital scholarship. (4)
Revamped website and marketing for DH services to reach broader audience. (4,5)
Planning underway for digital scholarship space to update the existing Scholarly Commons (4,5)
New library-driven digital publishing initiative. (2,5)
Shifting staff roles including the addition of Data Visualization resident librarian, and 2 graduate student interns in digital scholarship. (6)
Supported four librarians to attend the Association of Research Libraries Digital Scholarship Institute to increase DH/DS capacity. (6)

The full needs assessment can be found at: https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/handle/2142/100081