

# Barriers in Digital Scholarship Engagement

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## Question | What barriers prevent researchers from engaging with digital scholarship methods, tools, and training opportunities?

### Prior Research | Digital Scholarship/Humanities Needs Assessments

To examine the question, I sought similar research that focused on two areas:

Barriers that cause researchers to **avoid** digital scholarship (DS) or digital humanities (DH)

**Outcomes** of DS/DH learning

My review indicates a **gap**.

#### Timeline of Digital Scholarship Engagement



Research on **pedagogical techniques and assessment** in DS/DH remains scarce. Most research found in this review comes from adjacent fields like librarianship. University libraries' needs assessments, that focus on identifying needs, are unable to assess **outcomes of DS/DH learning** itself.

More work has been done on:

The **research potential** of DS/DH

DS outside the USA (broader definition?)

Examining **outcomes** of specific DS/DH courses (case studies)

### Current Research | Training in Digital Methods for Humanists

My own research involves examining the Training in Digital Methods for Humanists (TDMH) Fellowship at the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities (IPRH). The program allows space and resources for advanced faculty in the humanities to learn digital methods.

Through interviews with fellows, and examination of application materials, I will determine:

**Motivations** for learning digital methods

**Barriers or challenges** faced: technological, social, or otherwise

#### Concerns Mentioned in Interviews

? Connecting technology with the "why"

Feeling a burden on instructors 😞

👥 Community of practice

💻 Physical space/resources

🕒 Demands on time

♻️ Sustainability/responsibility for projects

"I've felt like since I'm kind of unofficially taking the courses [in digital methods]...I **don't want to take up a lot of instructional space**...There are a lot of other people taking it for a grade, [or] their career depends on it. That is also one of the challenges, [making sure] that what I'm doing is **not unduly exploiting other people**."

"It has helped me to understand how [digital methods are] done, so I can be a better **collaborator**. I know what I'm asking a student or a colleague to do. I can collaborate better, but I don't think I can be the person who is in charge of [the digital portion of a project]."

"I definitely don't experience this campus as technologically up to code. [There should be a place with software that is] **accessible**...that does not exist here. I feel we do have state of the art equipment, [but] it's **very disciplinary-bound**."

## Solutions | Acknowledging and Addressing Concerns

Knowledge of **motivations** will help us understand why researchers may not take advantage of DS/DH learning opportunities.

Knowledge of **social, technological, or learning barriers** will help those advocating for use of DS/DH methods develop ways to address common concerns.