Supporting Humanities and Social Science Digital Research

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CNI | Digital Scholarship Planning | 2020 September 24
context

digital research needs in the humanities & social sciences

support + adaptations
Context

What are the factors influencing digital research support at your institution?
About me + DSPS

Digital Scholarship & Publishing Services (head)
1 full-time staff
1-3+ graduate students

ScholarWorks: A Center for Scholarly Publishing at Duke University Libraries (co-direct)
4 full-time staff

Project Vox (co-direct)
6+ member team (faculty, staff, students, volunteers)

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About DSPS

- Project-based / DH emphasis
- Small scale (high touch, low funding)
- 3 Areas of work:
  - Projects (partner to plan & implement)
  - Consultations (instruct, advise, & mentor)
  - Programs (workshops, events, prof dev)

DSPS Consultation Totals, 2016-2020

DSPS Events (2018-2020)
Total number of events per FY, distributed by type of event

2020-09-24
About DSPS + Duke Libraries

One of many units that support digital research within Duke Libraries
Digital Research Support at Duke

Many units provide “mesh” support:

- high-touch consultation and partnerships
- computing infrastructure and software services
- programs and incentives

Office of Information Technology (OIT)
- TTS (Arts & Sciences)
- Research Computing
- Innovation Co-Lab

Franklin Humanities Institute
- PhD Lab in Digital Knowledge
- Humanities Labs
About Duke

Data: [https://facts.duke.edu/](https://facts.duke.edu/)

*Largely interdisciplinary in nature*
Digital Research Needs

What are the digital scholarship needs of researchers in the humanities and social sciences at your institution?
Funding & Growth of Digital Scholarship

University initiatives provide incentives, programmatic support, and funding for digital projects.

2011
Humanities Writ Large begins, first Humanities Labs launch (Mellon)

2013
DSPS department forms; Bass Connections initiative launches

2015
Launch of The Edge (Ruppert Commons for Research + Technology + Collaboration)

2018
Humanities Unbounded initiative begins (Mellon)

2019-2020
Launch of ScholarWorks; global pandemic

2020
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Trends in Digital Research in the Humanities

- **Collaborative** (team-based)
- **Experimental** (new approaches to research, teaching, publishing, often intermingled)
- **Grant-funded** (time-limited projects and fellowships)
Project Teams

Programmatic support for cross-disciplinary, vertically integrated project teams

Broad need for space, team resources, and on-demand instruction and consultations

Access to specialized technology outside programs
Project Teams: EXAMPLE

A science professor working with documentary film footage from a non-profit environmental organization forms a team of graduate and undergraduate students to catalog the footage and create educational videos.

Digital Research Needs

- Digitization
- Server space
- Workflows (description)
- Video editing software
- Copyright / Permission guidance
Humanities Labs + DH Pedagogy

Experiments in collaborative research and publishing in the undergraduate classroom

Rapid development of research projects and courses, often with expectation of continuing in future classes

Use of non-standard tools, unfamiliar methods

2010 2011 2012 2013 2014

Greater Than Games

BorderWork(s)

Audiovisualities

PhD Digital Knowledge

Haiti
Lab + DH Pedagogy: EXAMPLE

A humanities graduate student teaching an undergraduate course out of a humanities lab wants her students to collaboratively create an online dictionary of sound. She’d also like other / future classes to continue adding to the dictionary (and eventually wants the dictionary continue after she’s graduated).

**Digital Research Needs**

- Content management tool
- Web hosting environment
- Guidelines for description
- Guidelines for audio capture
- Planning for sustainability
Grant-Funded Projects & Fellows

- Humanities Labs, Visiting Fellows, teaching initiatives

*Humanities Unbounded* (Mellon, 2018-2023)
- Department-based Labs, Visiting Fellows
Grant-Funded Fellow: EXAMPLE

A visiting faculty fellow, as part of building digital humanities skills and understanding how to incorporate these into the classroom, wants to map the movements of characters over the course of an historical novel then plot these on a map.

The resulting work will be published on a website, to share knowledge and demonstrate accomplishments during the fellowship year.

Digital Research Needs

- Web publishing platform + Web hosting
- Mapping tool + training
- Workflows (how to track and represent character movements)
- Digitization (historical maps)
Digital Research Needs

- Maps
- Images
- Texts
- Audio
- Datasets, etc...

- Digitization
- Copyright / Permissions
- Organization (e.g., data manipulation)
- Collaborative workflows
- Project planning, etc...

- Close analysis (e.g., coding, annotation)
- Distant analysis (e.g., text mining, classification), etc...

Supporting processes

METHOD

CONTENT
Digital Research Needs

RESEARCH PROJECT

 Supporting processes

METHOD

CONTENT

CONTEXT-DRIVEN NEEDS

Team Needs
Grant Demands
Future Plans

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Forms of support + Adaptations

How do we support digital research in the humanities and social sciences?

How do we adapt this for different communities & needs, with campus partners, over time?
Forms of support

Advise  
Equip  
Train  
Partner

Consultations  
Specialized software & equipment

Hands-on workshops

Working on / Leading projects

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Pandemic
Forms of support

Advise over Zoom & email, in discussion forums

Equip with VMs, sandbox environments, 3rd party hosting services

Train over Zoom (synchronously) & tutorials & guides (asynchronously, through video tutorials, web-based content, guides shared through Google Docs, Box, Sakai, etc)

Partner over Zoom & email, with much more time & resources devoted to communication & coordination
Balancing & scaling support

Changes in personnel affect nature and amount of support available

Cooperation across units helps build broader base of support and advocacy for digital research needs
Scaling support

Does small scale work for your institution?

Who are your stakeholders among academic community?

Who else on campus can help support this work? And how could you work with them?
Thank you!

Questions?

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