The Praxis Program
at the Scholars' Lab

2011-12 Praxis Program Charter

General Principles

Open and Frequent Communication

When in Doubt, Ask (both inter-personal & training/help)

Stay Conscious of Interdisciplinarity

Collaboratively Review All Claims for Credit

Goals

Enjoy and learn from the process

Learning, play, and creativity are intimately bound together. In the best spirit of the digital humanities at the University of Virginia, a healthy dose of play should guide our problem-solving strategies. Although this is a tool-building project, we expect that process of building the tool will also serve as a fun, educational opportunity for all members of the team.

Build programming & specific technical skills

By the end of the academic year or the end of the program's duration, all team members should have a basic command of humanities programming and current design techniques.

Improve and increase collaborative work

The Praxis Program should strive to experiment with different forms of collaboration. An important part of the program is to devise new forms of academic collaboration and improve existing ones. This means collaboration not only amongst ourselves, but also with the larger scholarly community as well as the general public. We aim to recognize, respect, celebrate, and leverage the differences in our intellectual convictions, our academic backgrounds and experiences, and our talents and skills.

Prism as a tangible project

Our learning and collaboration will center around the creation of a digital humanities project called Prism. The specific design and functionality of Prism will be determined by the members of the 2011-2012 Praxis Program team. It is our goal to produce and share a publicly-accessible version of this tool by the end of the 2011-12 program.

Preparations for future cohorts

In order to allow the next Praxis Program team to start work right away on a project, we will make suggestions for that project before our tenure is over.

Presentations & Publications

One specific outcome we would like to see involves the entry of our shared work into the scholarly record. Among other possibilities, we hope to write and submit a joint article to an appropriate formal publication venue, such as Digital Humanities Quarterly. The paper will be clearly marked as a collaborative effort, much in the same way that publications in the sciences are often co-signed by a team of researchers.

Charter Areas

Equal Credit

All members of the Praxis Program team deserve equal credit for Prism. We understand that we all have a vested interested in the success of the program, and each according to his or her skills will be an active participant, contributing time and creative direction. Therefore, we should all receive credit as equal partners in the program. That said, we posit two types of credit: credit attached to the project as a whole and credit claimed for individual contributions. Our shared web site should always list general credit in alphabetical order to emphasize the non-hierarchical ethos of the program. Whenever a member of the Praxis Program references the work to the outside community, the project as a whole should be credited to all members. Individual contributions may also be claimed wherever appropriate.

Conflict Management

If intractable conflicts arise, they should be resolved with the help of a neutral third party. The mediator can come from within the Praxis Program as long as he or she is not directly involved in the dispute at hand.

Maintenance

Until further agreements are made, the long-term steward for the project is the University of Virginia Library's Scholars' Lab. In order to lengthen the life-cycle of the project, Prism should be designed using sustainable standards whenever possible.

Outcomes

As stated above in "Prism as a tangible product," the 2011-12 Praxis team aims to offer a set of project deliverables by the end of the school year. Group members will discuss and agree upon deadlines for progress throughout the year, recognizing that there is a learning curve and that steady progress is our main goal. Project phases will be organized so as not to require the completion of one phase before work on another can begin.

Licensing

Prism will be produced in the spirit of open source, and the particular open source software and Creative Commons licenses involved in Prism and related products of the Praxis Program will be selected in accordance with that spirit.

Member Responsibilities

Transparency

We will attempt to keep communications transparent, for example, by copying everyone involved in any given discussion, and by directly addressing with each other any questions or concerns that may arise.

Meetings

In the true spirit of collaboration, Praxis participants recognize the value of meeting regularly in person and working together in the same space, where other team members are available for consultation. The group will agree on regularly scheduled blocks of time in which at least two members can work in the Scholars' Lab grad lounge to foster collaboration with the maximum number of Praxis team members.

Expectations

All Praxis team members will maintain and update a Google doc (or other collaboratively editable working document) that lists agreed-upon weekly responsibilities and goals.

Outreach

Praxis Program participants should seek opportunities to publicize work, including both formal and informal conference presentations and scholarly publications (see Equal Credit section for information on credit claims for project derivatives).

In order to promote the spirit of collaboration between Praxis participants and the geographically distributed, though interested, community, participants should be open to suggestions for changes and new directions. Unless the team decides otherwise, participants have permission to publicize the Praxis Program at any step of the process through their professional and social networks.

Ratified

This charter was ratified by all the members of the Prism team, October 12, 2011.

SCHOLARS' LAB (http://scholarslab.org)
UNIVERSITY of VIRGINIA LIBRARY (http://library.virginia.edu)

Scholars' Lab (http://scholarslab.org) University of Virginia Library (http://www.library.virginia.edu) P.O. Box 400129 Charlottesville, VA (Virginia) 22904-4129 434.243.8800 (T) (work) 434.924.1431 (F) (fax)
✉ scholarslab@virginia.edu (mailto:scholarslab@virginia.edu)
🐦 Twitter (https://twitter.com/scholarslab)
f Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/scholarslab)
git Github (https://github.com/scholarslab/)
8 Google (https://plus.google.com/114472010795641313811)