**Shrout — Starting**

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**Starting from Scratch? Strategies for Building Undergraduate-Centered #DH Programs**

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**Workshop Description**

Despite widespread interest in digital humanities and growing interest in undergraduate-centered digital curricula, most DH discussions and DH programs still focus on graduate education. However, some institutions are beginning to offer DH training for undergraduate students, with predictably diverse results. Many in the United States have developed in the context of small liberal arts colleges (for example, Bard College and Davidson College), while other programs have emerged as offshoots of large graduate programs (for example, the Australian National University’s Center for Digital Humanities Research or the digital humanities program at University College Cork) or dedicated digital humanities centers (for example, discussions of undergraduate digital pedagogy taking place at the University of Victoria’s Digital Humanities Summer Institute). These programs are geographically and pedagogically diverse, alternately incorporating classes on digital methods, digital culture, instructional technology, libraries and archives, and ‘traditional’ fields ranging from English to history, from computer science to anthropology.1

This workshop uses case studies of ‘startup’ undergraduate DH programs as a jumping-off point for a broader discussion about whether undergraduate digital programs must indeed start from scratch at each new institution, and whether it is possible to craft a transnational document for DH best practices. The central issues driving this workshop are

• The challenges of establishing DH programs at teaching and undergraduate-centered institutions.

• The ways in which the pedagogical needs of undergraduate institutions and undergraduate-centered DH programs differ from and dovetail with those of larger research universities.

• The role of and challenges to undergraduate-focused DH programs around the world.

• How the discussions about digital humanities taking place on liberal arts campuses relate to broader questions that animate the field of digital pedagogy.

The workshop itself will

• Invite participants to share different approaches to undergraduate-centered DH programs, incorporating global perspectives.

• Workshop some general solutions to common undergraduate DH problems, share local challenges, and collaborate to workshop particular problems.

• Define common principles and pedagogical reasoning, keeping in mind the variety and experimental nature of different initiatives.

• Explore the many different forms that undergraduate-focused digital programs take.

• Chart recent developments in digital liberal arts pedagogy.

In addition to sharing insights from different programs in an in-person session, this workshop also aims to codify some best practices for building and sustaining new digital humanities programs for undergraduates. Drawing on the success of crowdsourced best practices, we will compile what we’ve learned into a collaborative, public document that speaks to the needs of undergraduates, their teachers, and their institutions in the digital age.

**Workshop Background**

The digital humanities began in research projects and at research universities, and discussions of digital pedagogy have tended to coalesce around graduate education (see Kirschenbaum, 2010; Schreibman et al., 2004). These discussions focus on supporting digital theses, building PhD programs, or running training in methods designed to support faculty research (see, e.g., McCarthy, 2010). However, alongside the development of graduate and professional programs, institutions around the world are beginning to build digital curricula centered on undergraduate education.2 These programs are driven by student interest in digital humanities, emphasizing research collaboration between faculty and students and exploring students’ digital engagement both within the classroom and in the world beyond the academy (see Hirsch, 2010, Introduction). Despite similar concerns, these programs have also tended to be shaped to suit unique curricular needs of particular institutions. As a result, they have developed in many and varied ways, and in the midst of this exciting diversity there remains little consensus on how to systematically integrate critical pedagogy, new teaching methods, and new ways of having undergraduate students interact with the digital humanities.

**Workshop Structure**

Through short presentations from DH stakeholders, small group discussions between participants, and a broadly ranging question-and-discussion period, this workshop explores the creation of digital programs at a diverse group of institutions.

In advance of the workshop, participants will be invited to scaffold a best-practices whitepaper: identifying different pedagogies, challenges, and questions they want a best-practices document to address. A version of this document will be circulated in advance of the workshop. At the workshop, participants will present short introductions to their undergraduate DH programs and outline one main takeaway each. Organizers and participants will both work to draw attention to commonalities and differences among presentations, before opening up the floor to design thinking exercises and formal discussions designed to add material to the whiteboard scaffold. The half-day workshop will afford time to identify additional best practices and suggestions for the shared document. After the conference, presenters will work together to transition the document into a more formal whitepaper and to compile an accompanying bibliography, linking the issues raised to the existing literature.

This public document is an informative, rather than a prescriptive document, intended to highlight practitioners' points of view. It will share and solicit contributions from attendees as well as those not present. Overall, the goal of this workshop and whitepaper is to share undergraduate DH practitioners’ experiences, with an eye to how others around the world can learn from or build upon those experiences.

**Proposed Workshop Schedule**

(subject to change based on preconference schedule)

9:00–9:30 Participant introductions — name, institution, one or two key challenges to undergraduate digital humanities pedagogy that participants want the workshop to address

9:30–10:00 Working in small groups (breaking up people from the same institution), building on the initial concerns scaffolded in the whitepaper

10:00–10:15 Reconvene as a group to discuss challenges

10:15–10:30 Break

10:30–12:00 Design thinking session,3 with small groups tackling individual issues raised in earlier group activity and adding to the crowdsourced whitepaper

12:00–12:15 Break

12:15–12:45 Final wrapup and discussion

**Workshop Leaders**

*Anelise Hanson Shrout, Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow at Davidson College*

My interest in digital studies grows out of its ability to highlight hitherto unnoticed connections, to tell stories in new ways, and to make visible the histories of marginalized people. My training in American and Atlantic history led me to explore encounters between North America and the wider world. As a digital scholar, I am interested in the methods that help us to map and archive these encounters, as well as the tools we use to share our findings with the wider world. Recently, I have been teaching classes on digital history methods and digital mapping, as well as running workshops on undergraduate digital pedagogy and curricula. Contact info: Box 7192, Davidson College, Davidson, NC, 28035; anshrout@davidson.edu.

*Caitlin Christian-Lamb, Associate Archivist at Davidson College*

Since 2013, I’ve served as the associate archivist of Davidson College, where my duties include reference services, processing collections, planning outreach events and collaborations, serving as a core member of the institutional repository working group, teaching course modules, and acting as the library liaison to the digital studies concentration. Prior to joining Davidson’s staff, I served as a project producer for the Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University’s metaLAB (at) Harvard project, and as a research associate at the Massachusetts Historical Society’s Adams Papers Editorial Project. My interest in digital humanities grew out of my interest in new ways of connecting users with collections, and with digital curation and preservation. My research interests: collective memory, intersections between pop culture and history, creative outreach methods, undergraduate education, the role of information professionals in academic discourse, social justice, and archives. I earned a B.A. in history from SUNY Purchase College, and an M.A. in history and an M.S. in library and information science from Simmons College. Contact info: Box 7200, Davidson College, Davidson, NC, 28035 cachristianlamb@davidson.edu.

**Workshop Program Committee**

The program committee reviews submissions and creates a final participants list. The committee consists of the workshop leaders and

• James Baker, curator of digital research at the British Library.

• Mark Sample, associate professor of digital studies at Davidson College.

• Jentery Sayers, assistant professor of English and cultural, social, and political thought and director of the Maker Lab in the Humanities, University of Victoria.

• Sarah Sikes, associate editor of digital projects at the Massachusetts Historical Society.

**Workshop Participants**

We hope to have approximately 15 to 20 participants. We aim to include participants from as wide a geographical range and roles within digital humanities initiatives as possible. We will send out a call for participants in general DH forums (DH Now, DH lib) as well as those frequented by DH practitioners outside of the United States (such as GO::DH) in advance of the conference in order to internationalize and diversify our participants.

**Technical Support**

A projector and screen, if possible.

**Notes**

1. Davidson College, http://www.davidson.edu/academics/digitalstudies; Bard College, http://www.bard.edu/academics/programs/programs.php?id=2286088&pid=1110; University College Cork: http://www.ucc.ie/en/ck118/; DHSI, http://dhsi.org/courses.php; Australian National University’s Center for Digital Humanities Research, http://cdhr.anu.edu.au/.

2. Five of the papers presented at DH2014 explicitly engaged with undergraduate education (http://dharchive.org/paper/DH2014/Paper492.xml, http://dharchive.org/paper/DH2014/Paper798.xml, http://dharchive.org/paper/DH2014/Poster763.xml, http://dharchive.org/paper/DH2014/Paper309.xml, and http://dharchive.org/paper/DH2014/Paper520.xml), and programs like the recently inaugurated Institute for Liberal Arts Digital Scholarship (http://iliads.org/) are beginning to formalize best practices for digital liberal arts pedagogy.

3. For discussions of design thinking and examples of design thinking in practice, see http://dschool.stanford.edu/dgift/ and http://www.designthinkingforeducators.com/.

**References**

**Hirsch, B. D.** (ed.). (2010). *Digital Humanities Pedagogy: Practices, Principles and Politics*. Open Book Publishers.

**Kirschenbaum, M. G.** (2010). What Is Digital Humanities and What’s It Doing in English Departments? *ADE Bulletin,* no. 190.

**McCarthy, W. (2010).** The PhD in Digital Humanities. In Hirsch, B. D. (ed.). *Digital Humanities Pedagogy: Practices, Principles and Politics*. Open Book Publishers.

**Schreibman, S., Siemens, R. and Unsworth, J.** (eds). (2004). *A Companion to Digital* Humanities. Blackwell, Oxford.