

Digital Library Education: Some International Course Structure Comparisons

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ABSTRACT

Following our recent review of progress in Digital Library (DL) education [1], we present here a brief overview of current work to investigate the commonality/diversity of course structure between ten institutions outside North America which offer DL education in their library schools. The weighting of specifically DL module topic credits as a proportion of the overall course taught credits varies between 13% and 63%, and coverage of a proposed core topic set [2] is as high as 85%.

Categories and Subject Descriptors

H.3.7 [Information Storage and Retrieval]: Digital Libraries

General Terms

Management, Documentation, Design

Keywords

Institutions, Educational Issues

1. INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

Digital Library Education (DLE) is assuming increasing importance and it is clear there is a pressing need from social trends and technology for educational developments in this new and fast moving area. Our latest review of progress in DLE and other recent studies [1, 2] pointed out that the number of library schools offering DL education is still growing, promulgated from LIS based programmes [1, 2]. In a recent study [2], Pomerantz et al., suggested a set of 10 core DL topics (Overview; Collection Development; Digital Objects; Info/Knowledge Organization; Architecture (agents, mediators); Space; Services (searching, linking, browsing, annotating, etc.); Archiving, preservation, integrity; DLE & Research) and 33 related topics. Taking this set as a starting point, we have up-dated our collection of on-line data, chosen a sample set of universities outside North America offering DLE in their LIS programmes, normalised this data to the suggested standard set of categories, and analysed the results. We present here some initial findings.

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2. DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

Detailed information about data collection and definitions can be found in reference [1].

Table 1. DL -Related Modules in LIS Programmes

| No | University | Type ## | Taught Credits♦ | DL Credits |
|----|-------------------|---------|-----------------|------------|
| 1 | City (UK) | 2C | 120 | 30 (25%) |
| 2 | LeedsM # (UK)** | 2C | 120 | 40 (33%) |
| 3 | LondonM# (UK)* | 1C + 1E | 120 *** | 60 (50%) |
| 4 | Strathclyde (UK)* | 4 C | 120*** | 85 (63%) |
| 5 | UCL (UK) | 1E | 120 | 20 (17%) |
| 6 | Hong Kong (China) | 1E | 60 | 12 (20%) |
| 7 | NTU (Singapore) | 1E | 20*** | 4 (20%) |
| 8 | UM (Malaysia) | 1E | 24 | 3 (13%) |
| 9 | QUT (Australia)** | 2 E | 144*** | 24 (17%) |
| 10 | VUW (NZ) | 1C + 1E | 150*** | 30 (20%) |

* Independent programmes for students specialising in DL.

**Certificate courses for students specialising in DL.

***Detailed course syllabus is on line.

M# -- Metropolitan; ## Type of Module: C—Core; E—Elective;

♦ Taught Credits – Credits points (in total) required for the taught part of the studies (excludes project and dissertation);

3. RESULTS

This limited study indicates that the DL module-based credit weighting for the sample set of library schools considered here varies from 13% to 63% (excluding project or dissertation work). After analysis and comparison of on-line curricula, the coverage of a proposed standard set of DL topics and sub-topics, was found to be at 80% or above for three of the five schools studied (LM (LondonM), ST (Strathclyde), VUW, QUT, LB (Loughborough)) and no lower than 50% for a programme that does not have a specific focus on DL topics (LB).

4. REFERENCES

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- [2] Pomerantz, J. et al., Digital library education in library and information science programs. *D-Lib Magazine*. 12, 11 November 2006.