

White Paper Report

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Bringing Digital Humanities to Community Colleges and Vice Versa
White Paper to the NEH Office of Digital Humanities
Level 1 Digital Humanities Start-Up Grant
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Above: Project Director Anne McGrail's Literature Students' DH Projects 2012-13

Abstract: Lane Community College implemented a Level I project for the National Endowment for the Humanities Digital Humanities Start-Up grant program. The project, entitled “Bringing Digital Humanities to the Community College and Vice Versa” (DH@theCC), initiated a much needed national dialogue regarding the lag in community college participation in the emerging field of digital humanities (DH). The program’s short-term outcome was the engagement of national thinkers, experts and community college stakeholders in a survey, strategic conversation and workshop to prompt greater community college engagement with digital humanities. The long-term desired outcome of the project is improved access to digital humanities for the nation’s community college students.

Three major goals inspired the grant’s activities: to develop a picture of the DH landscape in community colleges; to cultivate an inclusive DH community of practice at community colleges in conversation with research-focused initiatives and institutions; and perhaps most importantly, to bring DH to lower-division humanities students and their communities and develop their 21st century literacies in an open-access context.

To achieve these aims, the grant supported several major activities:

1. Design and implementation of a National Survey of Digital Humanities at Community Colleges
2. A pre-conference strategic discussion led by DH experts at the 2013 Community College Humanities Association (CCHA) national meeting to discuss opportunities and obstacles to increased engagement
3. A follow-up workshop led by the project director during the CCHA regular session to expand the conversation to the CCHA membership
4. The development of a website and wiki where DH resources, including grant products, would be housed. This is intended as a hub for a developing community of practice of DH@theCC.

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Background

Digital humanities has reinvigorated humanities programs nationally. This grant was intended to include community colleges in this movement and in so doing strengthening the humanities while addressing equity. Community college humanists have been slow to enter conversations and communities of practice in digital humanities (DH), in part because serving students in an open-access context involves intensive teaching and service workloads and constraints on professional development. “Bringing Digital Humanities to the Community College and Vice Versa” (DH@theCC) began a critical conversation about what digital humanities can look like at the lower-division level and how to put digital humanities at the center of educational reform efforts.

While the DH community is known for its openness and generosity, the energy and engagement in DH has not extended equally to community college humanities programs, to the detriment of students who seek associates degrees or eventually bachelor degrees. Through the general education requirement, community colleges provide foundational humanities courses for transfer students and for associate degree students. Community colleges are often the gateway to degrees for low-income, first-generation students, returning adult students, students of color, and students with disabilities. Two-fifths of traditional-age students begin their post-secondary education in one of the 986 public community colleges in the U.S., and 3/5 of adult learners begin theirs at CCs.¹ These students are often from the lowest socioeconomic quintile.² These students and the humanities faculty and programs that work with them deserve a voice in digital humanities conversations. As Professor Matthew Gold notes in his essay, “[Whose Revolution? Towards a More Equitable Digital Humanities,](#)” the lag in full entry of community colleges into the digital humanities “revolution” is an inequity that needs to be addressed.³ Lane’s DH@theCC program began the process of addressing this inequity in a formal and systematic way.

Digital projects offer empowering tools for these students to represent their communities, to challenge inequalities they experience and observe, and to learn sophisticated ways of engaging with 21st century tools for creation and interpretation in the humanities. Digital humanities projects geared to community college students can offer a new avenue for engagement with academic work for lower-division students who may not otherwise be drawn to the humanities.

Scope of the project activities

Several connected activities supported the goal of increasing community college engagement in DH. The first activity began in Spring and Summer 2013, during which time the project director developed a DH@theCC project website and wiki and invited community college humanities faculty to use its resources and contribute to it. This site is intended to become a hub for developing an online community of practice among community college digital humanists. The website currently hosts much of the grant’s products: a collection of DH@theCC assignments developed by the project director, links to videos of the conference sessions supported by the start-up grant, slides from these sessions, and other resources related to the project. (See below for more details of grant products).

¹ American Association of Community Colleges. “Fact Sheet.” <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/AboutCC/Pages/default.aspx>

² Adelman, Clifford. “Executive Summary: Moving into Town--and Moving On: The Community College in the Lives of Traditional-Age Students.” US Dept. of Educ. Office of Vocational and Adult Education. Feb. 2005. 19 Oct. 2006 <<http://www.ed.gov/print/rschstat/research/pubs/comcollege/index.html>>.

³ *The Lapland Chronicles*. January 10, 2012. Web. March 19, 2014.

The second activity, also begun in Spring 2013 and continuing through Fall 2013, was the development and administering of a National Community College Digital Humanities Survey.⁴ The survey included questions about participants' levels of interest and participation on the digital humanities spectrum. Options ranged from developing courses using Web 2.0 technologies, teaching online courses or components and developing digital exhibits and capstones, to partnering with local and regional collections and museums and historical societies and critical engagement with interpretive methods of inquiry, et al. The survey also queried receptivity and resources among community college humanists and their institutions to faculty development with the intent to identify potential paths to future DH engagement at community colleges. A detailed analysis of survey responses follows below.

The website and survey results then informed the conversations at the program's third and major activity—a day-long pre-conference session at the Fall 2013 Community College Humanities Association (CCHA) conference October 24, 2013.⁵ This activity convened leading digital humanities experts with thought leaders in the humanities, in technology in education and in the community college humanities for a strategic conversation.⁶ These invited experts discussed opportunities and obstacles to deeper engagement with digital humanities nationally and brainstormed paths to broader community college participation in the DH movement. The group of experts also heard from the nine CCHA members who joined the conversation. Together they began a conversation that will likely continue into the future. Participants agreed that community colleges can make unique contributions to DH, and that inclusion of community colleges is important for the health and vitality of DH and of humanities generally. Detailed notes on session topics, goals and discussions follow below.

Following the pre-conference session, the fourth activity was a 90-minute workshop during the regular CCHA conference intended to engage more members of the CCHA membership in exploring the value of digital humanities principles and methodologies. The project director framed DH@theCC within David Perkin's pedagogical model and shared assignments with attendees to adapt and infuse into their current courses. For several community college faculty attendees this workshop provided an introduction to DH and helped them to clarify how DH could be practiced at their institutions.

This White Paper is the fifth activity of the DH@theCC project. What follows is a discussion of the survey results, a summary of the pre-conference session, and an overview of the regular-session workshop. Then the grant products and impacts will be discussed, followed by a discussion of outcomes, lessons learned and next steps.

⁴ See Appendix I for a list of survey questions.

⁵ For a detailed agenda of the workshop, see Appendix III.

⁶ For a list of participants, see below.

National Survey of Digital Humanities in Community Colleges: a Preliminary Discussion of the Results

Overview

Part of the NEH ODH Start-Up project, the National Survey of Digital Humanities in Community Colleges provides a window into how digital humanities are perceived at community colleges now and what might be done to aid the field's expansion.⁷ In many ways some of the survey results reflect a community out of touch with how much digital methods have changed the questions we can ask of cultural artifacts. Arguably, this uneven development of DH is an consequence of the institutional hierarchy and perceived separation of spheres that organizes the division of intellectual labor in higher education nationally. The perception is that community colleges teach "basic skills" and four-year colleges and universities "develop minds." Such a perception has lasting effects on access to professional development as well as institutionally recognized incentives for innovation.

Still, community college faculty surveyed were generally comfortable with technology. While the term "digital humanities" was somewhat unfamiliar among some survey respondents, 69% of these faculty valued highly or very highly the use of technology in the classroom. When asked how well their institution meets their expectations for faculty and staff development, however, only 19% reported that their institution met or exceeded their expectations for reliable, equitable funds and opportunities to develop professionally. "We are given funds to present traditional literary papers at conferences without question," wrote one respondent, "but we would have to argue to get funds to attend a conference in which we would not present but learn from others who are DECADES ahead of our department in Digital Humanities" [*sic*]. Such institutional barriers are in addition to the intensive faculty workloads: "I also have to prep, teach and grade materials for 5 classes per semester which leaves little time for training and learning new technology."

The survey methodology was as follows: in June 2013, the project director drafted a set of survey questions based on her understanding of the field and gaps that she had observed in her engagement with the field. She posted it to a Google doc and solicited feedback directly from experts in the field of DH as well as colleagues she knew in the DH community.⁸ She also put a cold call for feedback out on Twitter with hashtags for digital pedagogy, digital humanities, community colleges and other key words and phrases. The program coordinator for the NEH Office of Digital Humanities, Jennifer Serventi, also consulted on the survey and offered suggestions. Finally, the project director discussed a revised draft with her home institution's research director, Craig Taylor, who offered advice on finding a balance between complete data and useable data and functionality. Twenty-six multiple choice questions with spaces for commentary comprised the final survey.

To distribute the survey as widely as possible, the project director posted onto sites such as HASTAC (See Figure 1), emails, professional association listservs in history, philosophy, composition/rhetoric, the League for Innovation in the Community College, and used social media such as Facebook pages for the Community College Humanities Association and the Two Year College Association (See Figure 2). She also sent direct appeals to officers of these groups, and sent an email to faculty at her home institution, Lane Community College.

⁷ Complete survey questions and results are available online here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-CL2CVR/>. A PDF of the results is also available on the project website <https://blogs.lanecc.edu/dhattthecc/2014/02/03/survey-data-available-from-national-survey-of-digital-humanities-in-community-colleges/>

⁸ The draft and comments are available on Google Docs here: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/15-z5iRNR3XQ85zWP890aajH3zADwrsXwlekJN0ajd0c/edit>

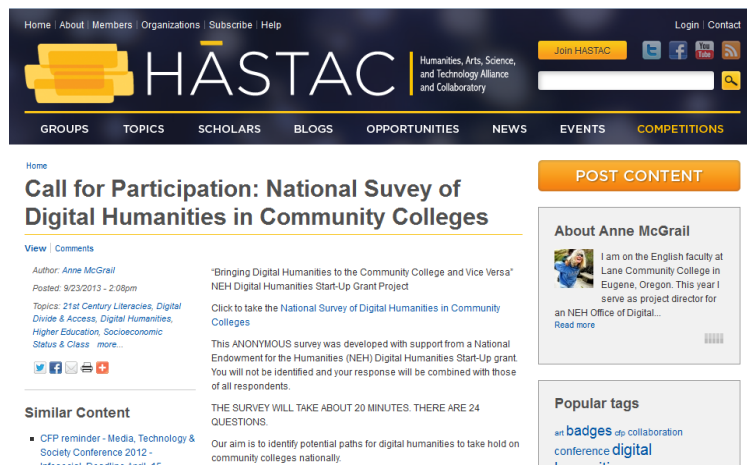


Figure 1: Screenshot of CFP for National Survey on the Humanities, Arts, Science and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory (HASTAC) website.

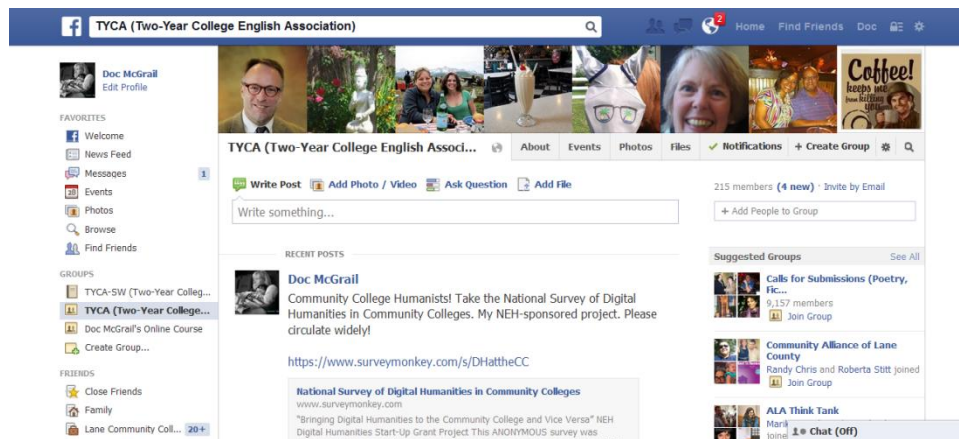


Figure 2: Call for participation on the Two Year College English Association Facebook page.

To date the survey has received 189 responses. What follows is a discussion and commentary on survey questions and response data.⁹

Q1: FAMILIARITY

One thing I was curious about was what was already being done at CCs among faculty: How much were faculty using technology in their classrooms; did they consider this work “DH” or not, etc. Results showed that the most common use of technology was student-production of multimedia artifacts: 67% of respondents reported familiarity with student productions of this sort. More than 50% were familiar with the use of technology to study human objects and culture (a key feature of humanities disciplinary inquiry) OR the use of humanities methods to study technology.

⁹ The full text of the questions and PDF with the data collected are available on the DH@theCC website here: <https://blogs.lanec.edu/dhatthecc/>

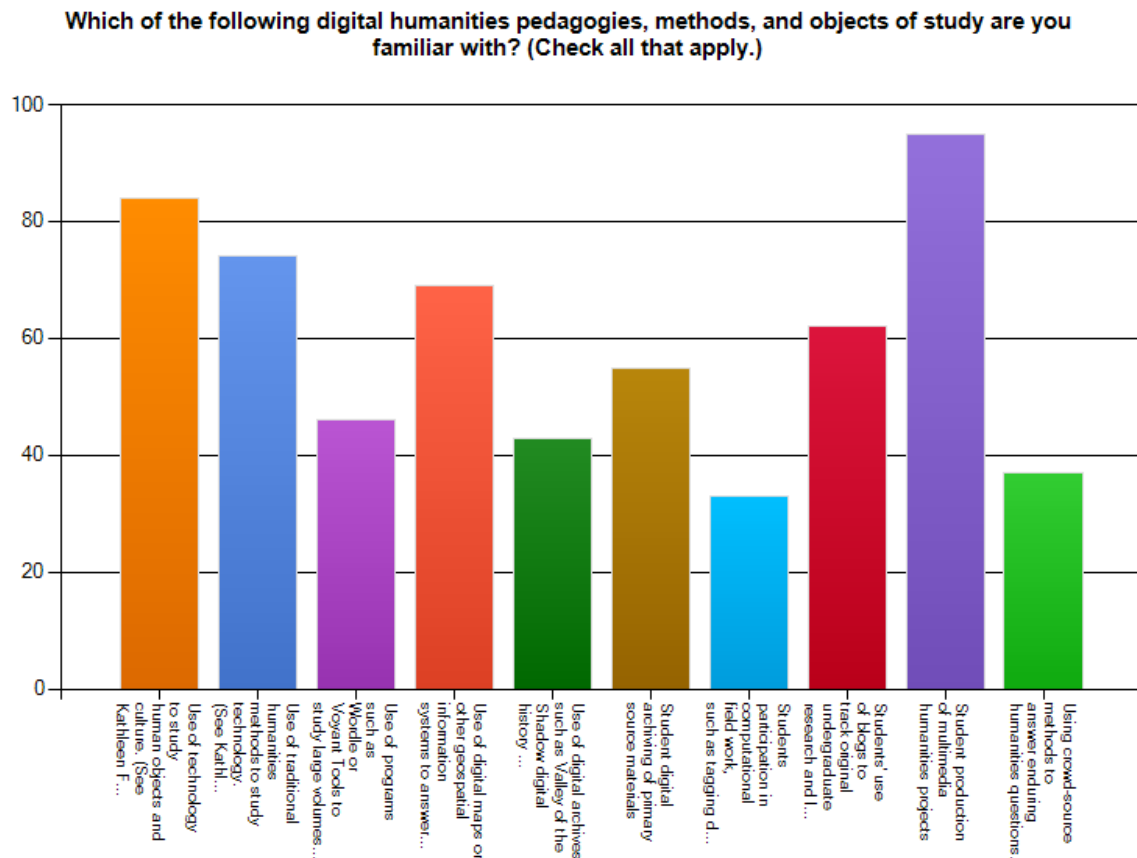


Figure 3: Respondent familiarity with digital humanities technologies, etc. From the National Survey of Digital Humanities in Community Colleges.

Q2: EMPLOYEE ROLE

Of the 166 who answered the question, 159 or almost 96% of respondents identified as faculty. Others were program directors and management.

Q3 TEACHING DISCIPLINE:

By far the largest number of faculty respondents taught courses in writing and rhetoric—with more than 43% or 72 respondents; 28% taught in humanities, 27% in literature, and 8% or 13 respondents in media studies/media arts. A few respondents were not on the list and so wrote in their disciplines: biology, GIS, and education disciplines responded.

Q4 COURSES REGULARLY TAUGHT

Since much professional development in digital humanities is at the graduate and primary-research levels, it was important to get a picture of our respondents' work life in the classroom. Respondents regularly taught first-year courses, either required (116 respondents or 74%) or elective (86 respondents/ 55%). This was the largest contingent of faculty. Sixty seven faculty or 46% did teach "special topics" classes or second-year courses; 20 respondents recorded that they taught professional development courses. My conclusion at this point is that faculty development must be designed with first-year required courses in mind if DH is to become prevalent at community colleges. While professional development opportunities such as THAT (The Humanities and Technology) Camps have

become widespread, only one serves community college faculty specifically (planned for 21 October 2014).

Q5: EMPLOYMENT STATUS:

Approximately 51% or 85 faculty were full-time at the same institution for more than 5 years; about 19% or 31 of those responding were full-time at the same institution for fewer than 5 years. Another 37 faculty or about 22% were part-time—about 14% from between 3 and 5 years and another 7% fewer than 5 years at the same institution. These results demonstrate a key flaw in much communication with part-time faculty: while part-time/adjunct faculty represent nearly 70% of the instructional workforce of community colleges¹⁰, only 22% of our respondents were part-time. So we are not hearing from enough part-time faculty. This is a structural limitation of the reliance on part-time faculty.

Q6 AUTONOMY

With the question on course design autonomy, I wanted to get at the possibility for individual faculty developing their own infusions of DH, as I had done in the past 18 months. I know that many required courses at CCs use common textbooks and even common course calendars, and so I thought this might be a problem. About 62% reported complete or significant course design autonomy, with another 46% reporting some design autonomy. Only 16% reported little or no course design autonomy. This is encouraging for developing a DH community among these faculty, since DH methods require course redesign at some level.

Q7 TECHNICAL PROFICIENCY

Of the 161 who responded to this question, sixty-five faculty or 40% rated themselves “proficient and comfortable” with digital tools. Another 19%, or 30 respondents, rated themselves “highly proficient and very comfortable.” Thirty-three per cent were somewhat proficient and only 7% rated themselves not very proficient or comfortable. Again keeping in mind the self-selection of the sample through digital means (including email), these results show that more than 90% of this survey cohort enjoys some degree of proficiency with digital tools.

Q8 VALUE TECHNOLOGY

When asked how highly they valued the use of technology in teaching, 109 or nearly 69% reported that they valued it highly or very highly. Another 29% valued it moderately, and 4 people valued it not at all. Since the survey itself is digital, those who don’t value digital tools may have skipped the survey entirely. Sixteen skipped the question altogether.

Q9 DIGITAL DIVIDE STUDENTS

I was interested in the so-called “digital divide” among students because I wondered how typical my own experience was. For this survey, I defined “digital divide” as the difference between those students who have access to technology through computers and other devices and data plans and those whose access is limited to classroom and lab access.

When attending the Digital Media and Learning conference in San Francisco in 2012, presenters regularly commented how computers, data plans, devices, software and skills all represented economic obstacles to students. And in fact, just over 50% of respondents to this survey reported either a “pervasive” or “widespread” digital divide on their campus among students. Another 29% or 62 respondents found an “occasional” instance of it, and only 14 respondents or about 9% found a “rare” instance. This may change every year as computers become more prevalent and data plans become cheaper, but it’s an ongoing consideration for any course redesign in community colleges.

Q10 DIGITAL DIVIDE FACULTY

When I put the survey questions up on the Google Doc last June, I was really struck by the frustration

¹⁰ “A National Survey of Part-Time/Adjunct Faculty.” *American Academic* Vol. 2 March 2010. p. 3. Web. March 18, 2014.

expressed by part-time faculty about professional development opportunities at their institutions. So I worked to really integrate issues of part-time faculty equity for professional development into the survey. For the purposes of this question, I defined the digital divide as follows: By "digital divide" we refer to a working environment that lends itself to developing and using digital competencies: access to hardware, software, tech support, adequately equipped office and classroom space, money and time for faculty development opportunities.

The question about the digital divide among faculty prompted the most pointed individual answers:

Part-time have access to shared computers, and digital classrooms, but that is all. There is no support for continuing education, and in fact, ANY support that was once offered, has recently been revoked due to keeping the hours paid, in any capacity, under 11, due to "Obamacare", per administration.

Oddly, it's mainly the full-time tenured instructors who are disconnected from technology use in the classroom.

Sixty-seven per cent of respondents did observe a digital divide among faculty: 29% saw it as a part-time/full time faculty divide; 37% found that this divide was not due to part-time/full-time status. Given that a large majority (70%) of our respondents are full-time, this may not represent the part-time experience of the digital divide.

Q11 ONLINE COMPONENTS?

Seventy-one respondents or 45 % reported that they regularly teach online courses and have an online companion site for their face-to-face courses; 34 respondents or 22% reported that they don't teach online courses but have an online companion site for their face-to-face courses. Another 13% occasionally taught hybrid or online courses, and almost 21% said that they did not teach either online or hybrid courses. Again, we may have a skewed sample here, as the survey is online.

Q12 WHAT DO YOU REGULARLY USE IN YOUR HUMANITIES COURSES?

In the Digital Pedagogy section of our survey, we asked whether respondents regularly use a learning management system for their courses; 125 respondents said that they do; 109 or 70% reported using web components of some sort in the classroom; 33% used digital archives, and 28% reported producing their own audio or videos for the classroom. Sixteen per cent said that they only occasionally rather than regularly used any of the list, and only 3% reported never using any of these technologies in the classroom.

Q13 HIRING COMMITTEE EMPHASIS

Arguably, new faculty represent the embodied vision of a discipline's future. Intentional recruitment of faculty with interest and expertise in a subfield such as DH has the potential to change curricula and even program organization and funding over time. When asked if they were willing to advocate for or consent to considering skill in "digital technologies and pedagogies" as preferred qualifications in evaluating candidates for hire, 126 respondents or 79% were willing to either actively advocate or consent to such qualifications being considered.

Q14 SUPPORT AMONG YOUR COLLEAGUES?

While the overwhelming majority of respondents would consider DH qualifications for hiring in their

disciplines, respondents were slightly less confident when considering their colleagues' likelihood to consider such qualifications. About 18% thought that there would be high support among colleagues to put emphasis on digital technologies in hiring, and just under 37% thought there would be moderate support among colleagues. Just over 10% thought that there would be little support, and 34% felt there would be some support.

Q15 MEET EXPECTATIONS FOR FACULTY STAFF DEVT?

About 70 respondents or 47% felt that their institutions were approaching their expectations for faculty and staff development through curriculum development grants, reassigned time, professional leave time, travel funds, sabbatical funds, relevant on-campus resources, etc. However, 34% felt their institutions fell below or far below their expectations for faculty and staff development. Only 19% said that their expectations were met. 37 respondents took the time to write individual responses/explanations. Here are some excerpts verbatim:

- *No funds or opportunities for adjuncts, but plenty of funds and opportunities for full-time faculty.*
- *No funds for the part-time faculty who carry the bulk of our teaching load*
- *Very unfocused allocation. We tend to fund a number of little projects that inevitably stall. It looks like we fund hobbies, not sustained infrastructure supported research. No time release. Little travel funding. No IT support for anything outside the classroom, and even then. IT support and currency is major impediment to doing DH-oriented anything.*
- *Workshops are offered but sometimes only once and at inconvenient times. Basic skill classes are mixed with advanced courses. It's hard for part time instructors to participate because workshops are often announced only a few days in advance, assuming a daily on campus presence.*
- *We are given funds to present traditional literary papers at conferences w/o question, but we would have to argue to get funds to attend a conference in which we would not present but learn from others who are DECADES ahead of our department in Digital Humanities.*
- *They will fund FULL TIME TENURE TRACK. That is all. They are less than 30% of the faculty.*
- *There are excellent opportunities, but we do not have any time built into our paid work to take advantage of them. I do not need to pay for them, but I lose time at another job when I spend time doing workshops.*
- *little to no opportunities for part time faculty who often have to teach elsewhere or have other commitments*
- *Gah. Deep despair.*
- *There is little or no travel funding.*
- *Staff and adjunct faculty have unreliable access to professional development opportunities.*

Q16 METHODS USED TO KEEP CURRENT IN THE FIELD

While faculty's response to their institutions' efforts to support professional development was mixed or troubling, respondents' answers to this question suggests that faculty are engaging in many kinds of professional activities to keep current in their fields. With multiple answers allowed, and 160 respondents answering this question, 122 respondents or 77% said they learned from their colleagues—an important consideration for DH projects which often involve collaboration over time. Seventy-seven

per cent of respondents also said they read journals and books in their fields regularly; 68% attended and presented at regional and national conferences. On-campus teaching workshops were also significant sources of professional development: 65% or 102 respondents attended them. Importantly, 66% or 105 respondents used what they learned in workshops in their curriculum development. Almost 50% read journals and books on pedagogy, and 40% read about teaching and research on blogs. Nearly 36% use social media to keep current in their fields and in educational trends (e.g., Twitter).

Q17 CONDITIONS TO ATTEND A CAMPUS DH WORKSHOP

Since the goal of my grant was to build a community of practice in DH at community colleges, I was curious to know what it might take to gather a group of community college educators together for a workshop. The definitional question about what exactly digital humanities is remains.¹¹

Overwhelmingly, respondents felt that a strong understanding of the value and usefulness of digital humanities to their teaching was a critical condition for considering attendance at an on-campus workshop: Of the 153 who responded, 76.4% or 113 chose this condition. Released time for the event was important for 44.6% or 67 of the respondents, and money for attending the event (a stipend) was critical to 42% or 64 respondents.

Q18 NECESSARY CONDITIONS TO ATTEND A REGIONAL OR NATIONAL INSTITUTE

Money became more important for considering a regional or national institute such as those the NEH offers: 68 respondents or 46% said that money was critical, and 13% mentioned tenure/promotion credit as being a necessary condition. This question did not allow more than one response, so this was an interesting response. Several added “money and time are both necessary” in the “other/explain” column.

Q19 WOULD YOU ATTEND A SUMMER INSTITUTE?

The NEH has offered summer institutes on special topics for years, and recently has begun to support work in community colleges. The *Bridging Cultures* institutes, for example, are highly regarded and well attended, and represent a concerted effort on the part of the NEH to increase diversity and equity and cross-cultural understanding through pedagogy. When asked about respondents’ interest in a similar week-long institute for digital humanities work, 65% were highly interested or interested in attending, and 22% were “mildly” interested. Only 11% were uninterested. Reasons were highly varied, and 28 respondents shared their opinions. A selection verbatim follows:

Because I am part-time faculty, the time that I am most likely to have more than two classes is during the summer term. It would be wonderful to attend a week long period with like minded peers, learning almost anything that would help students learn more effectively by encouraging digital literacy in the classroom.

Normally my summer fellowships are for improving content. It would be interesting to have a week-long seminar/workshop to improve delivery.

I can't say how valuable it would be to attend a summer institute to expand use of digital humanities methodologies in the classroom. I think digital tools will be essential for keeping classical humanities topics of enduring interest to 21st century students.

¹¹ See, for example, Carl Straumshein, “Digital Humanities in Demand.” *Inside Higher Education*, January 10, 2014, Web, especially the comments section <http://bit.ly/1d33mox>.

I'm interested and I'm 50 w/ 25 years in the field. We need young faculty who already do and know this to help show us how. We've been hiring too many people in our own image of our selves (a 1970s "comp. & lit" model) to perpetuate the illusion that we're doing well. We've been living w/ our heads in the sand here at xxxx ENG/COM

Several other respondents offered reasons for not attending: from not wanting to travel during summers to needing to work summers for money and being too close to retirement.

Q20 INSTITUTIONAL OBSTACLES AT YOUR COLLEGE TO INCREASING DH PRESENCE ON CAMPUS

Among the institutional obstacles to increasing DH presence on their campuses was a lack of clarity about learning goals of "digital humanities"—a clarity that I contend will best emerge when community college faculty enter the conversation rather than letting the critical paths develop without their knowledge or input. Sixty-five per cent or 94 respondents wanted to know what DH is and why it's important. Sixty-eight per cent or 102 respondents felt that there was a lack of clarity about the difference between "digital humanities" and other kinds of technology on campus (e.g., the sentiment that "we already have computer labs and technicians..."). Some (46%) felt that there was a lack of interest in what seemed to be trendy. A lack of commitment to supporting part-time faculty development was felt to be an obstacle to 35% of respondents. Lack of commitment on the part of administration to support new courses that are not directly related to job training was chosen by 23% of respondents.

Q21 RATE ADEQUACY OF FACILITIES FOR DML

The majority of respondents—114—found that the facilities for technology were adequate or highly adequate. However, there were some pointed critiques in the comments section:

We have plenty of computer labs for math/science courses, but humanities courses do not have a designated computer lab or have minimal access to lab time.

We have the technology. But not the expertise -- least of all at the Administrative levels. Administrators seem to want to quantify everything (LOA) w/ a business model of efficiency of course delivery in mind, rather than genuine trust in faculty to use digital media to meet their learning objectives in ways that might be highly creative and rewarding for and motivating to students (and therefore leading to higher rates of student retention and success) -- though perhaps not "quantifiable" in the current Admin. matrix. Admin lacks a variety of "narratives" for imagining pedagogical uses of digital media -- as do our older and young-but-old-school faculty.

No Smart Board in my classroom, I teach Art History and still have to use an old Kodak projector for comparison images.

Q22 RATE FAMILIARITY WITH NEH PROF DEVT

When asked about their familiarity with the NEH's professional development opportunities, 116 respondents were very familiar, quite familiar or familiar; however, nearly 25% were not familiar with them at all. Given how many respondents are full-time faculty teaching in humanities disciplines, this suggests that the NEH itself might expand its outreach to community colleges.

Q23 WHICH PROGRAM OF NEH FAMILIAR WITH?

Of the 118 who answered this question, 84 had never attended an NEH professional development event. But a total of 40 respondents, or 32%, had attended either the “Bridging Cultures,” “Landmarks of American History” or other Summer Seminars/Institutes.

Q24 FAMILIARITY WITH CCHA

While many were familiar with the Community College Humanities Association, 43% of respondents knew nothing at all about this national professional association. Given that so many respondents were full-time community college humanities faculty, this tells us that CCHA could expand its base. About 30% of respondents are regular attendees at events, which suggests that the CCHA is just one way to get the word out about digital humanities at community colleges.

Q25 FAMILIARITY WITH LEAGUE FOR INNOVATION IN CC

While about 44% of those who responded had heard of the League for Innovation in the Community College or came from a League college, 39% were unfamiliar with the organization. The League has a lot of influence among administrators and can help set broad agendas for support of innovations such as DH.

Q26 MECHANISMS FOR DEVELOPMENT: AN OPEN-ENDED QUESTION (85 respondents).

Below is a selection of verbatim comments from respondents when asked what would be the most useful mechanism by which the NEH, the CCHA, the League for Innovation in the Community College or other humanities organizations might support their development in the area of digital humanities pedagogy or research:

Facilitate workshops that put me and my colleagues in touch with digital humanities experts and involve us in the ongoing conversation. Such facilitation would need to be supported by time off and/or monetary support (the latter depending on where such workshops were held).

HAVE CHAPTERS IN EACH AREA AND EMAIL LISTS OR A PUBLICATION.

If the league for Innovation is really of any value beyond a bragging right for college Administrators, it needs to be presented to humanities depts. and faculty as a serious means of prof. development for classroom teaching pedagogy in ENG/COM. NEH has established such a reputation.

Either stipends for attendance, or webinars. Travel funds and travel time are the big obstacles.

Offer 2-3 day conferences within driving distance and specific workshops/lessons easily transferable to my courses. Costs covered by my institution or free to veteran faculty.

A CCHA National Conference seminar/presentation on the subject

Short Webinars accessible from anywhere that give institutionally-recognized credit for faculty development. They should assume we know nothing, have knowledge of their target audience so its applicable to curriculum and be no more than 50 minutes in length.

at research institutions, museums, libraries and archives, a national community of practice could emerge and influence the future of digital humanities.

Participants

Pre-Conference Session Leaders¹²

Rebecca Frost Davis, Ph.D., Director of Instructional and Emerging Technologies, St. Edward's University.

Matthew K. Gold, Ph.D., Associate Professor of English and Digital Humanities at CUNY Graduate Center.

Anne McGrail, Ph.D., Project Director, English faculty, Lane Community College, Eugene, Oregon.

Dean Rehberger, Ph.D., Director of MATRIX: the Center for Humane Art, Letters, and Social Science Online and Associate Professor of Writing, Rhetoric and American Cultures.

Jesse Stommel, Ph.D., Assistant Professor in the College of Liberal Studies at University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Terri Whitney, Ph.D., English Faculty at North Shore Community College in Salem, Massachusetts.

Jake Agatucci, Assistant Professor of Writing and Literature at Central Oregon Community College.

Russell H. Shitabata, Ph.D. (videographer), English faculty at Lane Community College, Eugene, Oregon.

Pre-Conference Session Attendees

Monica Fleming, Program Coordinator, Historic Preservation Trades, Edgecombe Community College, Tarboro, North Carolina.

Professor Rayka Rush, Philosophy Department, Metropolitan Community College Omaha, Nebraska.

Andrew Barnett, Dean, Public Service, Humanities, Social Sciences Westmoreland County Community College Youngwood, Pennsylvania.

Paul Nagy, English Department Clovis Community College Clovis, New Mexico.

Melissa Hebert Johnson, Associate Professor of Art History Black Hawk College Moline, Illinois.

Maya Sharma, Assistant Professor of English Hostos Community College Bronx, New York.

Laura Bergstrom, School of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Ivy Tech Southern Indiana, Sellersberg, Indiana.

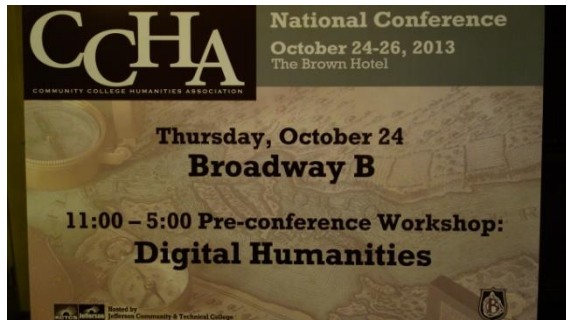
Paul Vanheuklom, Professor Arts and Humanities, Lincoln Land Community College, Springfield, Illinois.

Carol Hahn, Chair, Humanities and Fine Arts, Heartland Community College Normal, Illinois.

¹² For complete expert bios, see Appendix II

Meeting Summary:

Preconference Session at Community College Humanities Association



Session I: “Digital Humanities at Community Colleges Now”

Topics Introduced: Presentation of survey data from Spring/Summer 2013 National Community College Digital Humanities Survey. Problems of defining the digital humanities and possible effects on the community college embrace of DH. Understanding the reception of digital humanities at community college campuses. Effects of a fluid and evolving DH definition on community college engagement with and understanding of digital humanities. Community colleges taking the lead in digital humanities.

Goals for this session: Share the data that we have collected so far on perceptions about digital humanities at community colleges. Make visible how widespread is understanding of digital humanities –what it is and how much it is being practiced on community college campuses. Understand institutional obstacles to offering new elective courses given part-time faculty ratios, teaching loads, enrollment pressure etc. Understand where community colleges are on the DH spectrum of participation to determine the long-term needs for a mainstream embrace of DH at community colleges nationally.

Discussion: Project director Anne McGrail introduced the day by talking about how she wanted to jump-start development of a community of practice for DH at the CC. For DH to gain a foothold in CC curricula, she argued, a professional and social infrastructure is necessary. One question that framed the day was how to build that infrastructure. A second strategic goal was to foster the conditions for mid-career community college faculty such as herself to learn DH. Anyone browsing for information can observe a rising sea of work coming from scholarly practitioners of DH who share their work in a constant feedback loop of inspiration. But stretched as community college faculty are in teaching workloads, she asked, is this possible for ccs? How will digital humanities be mainstreamed at the CC?

She suggested that DH at the CC will add another layer to the “eternal September” of DH, and welcomed the experts gathered for the day.¹³

Terri Whitney, Hawthorne in Salem

Terri Whitney discussed how at her home institution, North Shore Community College (NSCC) in Danvers, Massachusetts, the term “digital humanities” hadn’t really caught on yet, even though she and colleagues had been doing DH for a long time. Whitney began her journey in DH by attending some conferences at MIT and creating a CD ROM in 1992. In 1998, when the World Wide Web was just starting, she found herself asking what the Web could actually do. She thought that it allowed one to

¹³ Video of McGrail’s introduction is available here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WEaTU9SYQc&feature=youtu.be> . Slides available on the DH@theCC website here <https://blogs.lanecce.edu/dhatthecc/2013/11/20/slides-from-ccha-dh-at-the-cc-workshop/>

use local resources and make them available globally. This led her to develop www.HawthorneinSalem.org. She explained why NSCC put Hawthorne in cyberspace and how they are trying to help their audience use the site.

Whitney emphasized how important it was to collaborate with local resources. For *Hawthorne in Salem*, collaborators included the Peabody Essex Museum, the House of Seven Gables, and Salem Maritime National Historic Site, sponsored by the National Parks Department. She also collaborated with faculty from several institutions—community colleges, four-year institutions and even high schools. For content expertise, she also engaged seven Hawthorne scholars, two historians, two evaluators to evaluate the content, and someone to evaluate the technical aspects and offer computer expertise. In this way, Whitney’s experience of putting together a team is highly characteristic of many DH projects, and demonstrates both the opportunities and challenges of DH at the CC.

One problem that Whitney ran into immediately was copyright, and so her team worked with The Riverside Edition of Hawthorne, whose copyright was open. Another issue was developing the database, and local resources proved to be the answer: a community college programmer from Norway came up with this database in two weeks. Whitney recounted the need for institutional support for project release-time. She emphasized the need for collaboration and developing a clear plan that you stay with. Technical support, she suggested, can come from the college and from students. She also said that having some mechanism for tracking traffic to the website or project is essential, as it gives you data for administrators looking at effectiveness and the bottom line.

Summarizing her experience on the project, Whitney said there is no end of work to do, but given the limits of time, she is pleased to maintain the project.¹⁴



Figure 5: L-R: Anne McGrail, Matthew K. Gold, Julia Huston Nguyen (Senior Program Coordinator for NEH Educational Programs) and Terri Whitney at the Pre-Conference Session at the Community College Humanities Association.

Jake Agatucci, *Digital Games Culture*

Jake Agatucci has developed a Digital Games Culture course at his home institution, Central Oregon Community College in Bend, Oregon. He recounted that one of the difficulties he has found in teaching this class has been getting support for access to the digital games products that students were supposed

¹⁴ Professor Whitney’s comments begin at 25:00 in Part I of the video available here: <https://blogs.lanecc.edu/dhatthecc/2014/03/18/video-of-pre-conference-session-at-the-community-college-humanities-assn/>

to be studying. But the lesson he learned from this problem was that resistance from the institution helped him to develop the class in a way that eventually satisfied him. Like Whitney and her colleagues at NSCC, he “never really identified as a digital humanist.” He said that he leveraged the collaboration affordances of Prezi to create presentations that his own students then edit. “There are some things about digital games that students know better than I do,” he said, and the “collaborative nature of constructing knowledge” was a hallmark of this class. He advised those interested in developing new classes such as Digital Games Culture to be prepared to be creative in responding to institutional matters beyond faculty control.¹⁵



Figure 6: Terri Whitney (l), Jake Agatucci (c) and Jesse Stommel (r) discuss DH in community colleges at the Pre-Conference Session at the Community College Humanities Association

Session II: “In the Open Access, Lower-Division Classroom: Pedagogy and Faculty Development”

Session Leaders: Jesse Stommel and Rebecca Frost Davis

Topics Introduced:

Designing introductory undergraduate digital humanities projects. Infusions and embedded pedagogies as a path to mainstreaming digital humanities at the community college level. Learning communities, service learning, mini-capstones and other ways to introduce digital humanities to community college students. Adapting upper-division projects, capstones, initiatives for lower-division students. Skill building for faculty and staff. Developing communities of practice locally and nationally for community college DH faculty. Designing open-access assignments and activities that extend DH across the digital divide.

Goals for this Session:

Understand how current faculty at early- or mid-career or later can adapt digital humanities methods in their classrooms. Learn how DH can be practiced in the 100- and 200-level humanities classroom, whether as embedded pedagogy and/or as new courses. Understand minimum requisite skills for students to practice DH and brainstorm ways to expand and build on these skills. Address the impact of the digital divide in classrooms where some students may not have computers at home.

¹⁵ Agatucci’s comments can be found beginning at 53:00 in Part I of the video of the session here:

<https://blogs.lanec.edu/dhatthecc/2014/03/18/video-of-pre-conference-session-at-the-community-college-humanities-assn/>

Discussion:

Jesse Stommel began the session, “In the Open Access, Lower-Division Classroom: Pedagogy and Faculty Development” by recognizing the importance of this conversation and the usefulness of having both faculty and administrators in the room (there were two division deans in attendance).¹⁶

Rebecca Frost Davis commented that community colleges have a lot in common with teaching-intensive four-year colleges. She said that in 2009, when she was first researching digital humanities, she was told that “there was no place for undergraduates in DH.” But that has changed, and her previous employer, the National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education (NITLE) is one of the leaders in that development. Stommel recounted how he had practiced DH in many levels of higher education, and continues today working with non-traditional learners at University of Wisconsin. Bringing students into the faculty conversations is new to academic culture, he suggested, but it needs to happen if we want to create a welcoming environment for all students to practice DH. Both Stommel and Davis agreed that in working with all students—from those who “don’t know how to click a mouse” to those who can code—it’s important to create assignments and environments that meet students where they are. Peer-driven learning, in which students can help each other across the digital divides they may inhabit, is critical.

Davis was interested in thinking about the desired learning outcomes for DH in community colleges. Discussion moved to the floor, where McGrail offered that her reasons for developing DH in community colleges is that “this is where humanities are going—this is where human beings are going.” This resonated with Davis’s experience.

Matthew K. Gold took up a perennial DH question and asked it in a community college context. “There’s something I worry about,” he remarked. “What is the difference between DH and digital literacy, information literacy?” Gold was concerned that the innovations in DH—thinking about new methods for research and teaching—could get blunted by a focus on digital literacy. But Stommel suggested that a Venn diagram is the best way to think about DH and digital literacies. “I am interested in how we approach tools critically—critically interrogating and analyzing our methods,” Stommel remarked. Davis agreed that it’s important to avoid an “ossification” of digital literacy skills, to avoid turning programs into “computer competency exams.”

This conversation, which in some ways continues the longstanding definitional debates, continued. “My fear about DH at the CC level,” remarked Gold, is “that it will become almost a digital remedial effort to raise the skills of CC students. Whereas the best way DH has been used is to build new paradigms. We need to say to community college students: you need to innovate, to create new tools, new methods, that speak to you as students, and to us as audience.”

This thread of the discussion was a natural one for talking about community college teaching, as often CCs are considered places where “job skills” or “basic skills” are taught. Stommel argued that critical thinking is the best job skill you can teach and DH can support that.

Davis argued that humanities could take a lesson from the sciences, where students have collaborated with students as part of the disciplinary culture. She suggested that developing projects in which students could perform microtasks would involve students in building something. Dean Rehberger suggested that the true value of DH is to transform the humanities. He remarked that teaching courses where we can teach critical thinking to 20-40 students sitting in front of us is a model that is not going to work anymore. Creativity and critical thinking is our call to what we do well.

¹⁶ A video of Jesse Stommel and Rebecca Frost Davis’s session is available here: <https://blogs.lanec.edu/dhatthecc/2014/03/18/video-of-pre-conference-session-at-the-community-college-humanities-assn/>

Following this conversation, Stommel then demonstrated several examples of where “the digital” and “the humanities” work together. His recent article in *Hybrid Pedagogy* provides an overview of DH work that Stommel has undertaken that would be appropriate for community college students.¹⁷

Following the demonstration, Davis asked, “should we be changing our learning outcomes or are they the same learning outcomes in a different context?” A discussion ensued about whether the student projects Stommel demonstrated illustrated that the object of inquiry—and therefore the outcomes—had changed or not. But Stommel suggested that understanding the poem (in this case one by Emily Dickinson) is important for production of digital projects about her poetry. And Davis agreed: “It’s important to have a reflection piece built into the project, so that you can understand the thought process behind it. For students to learn about risk-taking, failure, etc.” One participant, Carol Hahn, who is an artist, suggested that in her discipline they’d been doing this for centuries: “If we flip the studio classroom, we have the lecture classroom.”

The conversation turned to assessment: “We need to have a rubric for everything,” said Davis. Stommel uses a lot of self-assessment and self-grading. In one assessment technique, students write a “writer’s letter” in which students enter into dialogue with Stommel about their work. Davis described the kinds of assessments that she thinks are the most useful for DH: “Implicitly you are looking for self-awareness, agency on the part of the writer.”



Figure 7: Jesse Stommel and Rebecca Frost Davis co-led the session, “In the Open Access, Lower-Division Classroom: Pedagogy and Faculty Development” at the Pre-Conference Workshop.

Session III: “Equity and Institutional Policy: Opportunities and Obstacles for DH Development on Community College Campuses”

Session Leaders: Matthew K. Gold and Dean Rehberger

Topics Introduced:

The importance of introducing DH methods, practice, theoretical principles to CC students. Digital humanities, digital fluencies and degree qualifications for the associate’s degree. Defining digital humanities for community colleges. What community colleges can offer the evolving field of DH. Imagining community college counterparts to the digital humanities centers; possibilities for internal

¹⁷ Jesse Stommel, “The Digital Humanities is About Breaking Stuff.” *Hybrid Pedagogy*, September 2, 2013. Web. March 19, 2014.

partnerships (with Media Studies and Instructional Technology departments at community colleges) and external partnerships (with two-year and four-year colleges and universities, libraries, digital initiatives, etc.) Understanding faculty and staff profiles and expertise for hiring and institutionalizing DH at community colleges.

Goals for this Session:

Develop a definition of “digital humanities” that would resonate with and be understood by the broad audiences of community college faculty, staff, instructional technology specialists, administrators and communities. Map out the unique contribution to an associate’s or transfer degree that DH can offer 21st century students. Articulate the unique contributions that community college students, faculty and projects could offer DH in terms of visibility and expansion of its evolving values and function in society at large. Articulate how DH could draw more community college students to the humanities in general. Articulate where DH projects and personnel can “live” in the CC institutional structure (operationally, physically, politically). Brainstorm ways to effectively recruit DH faculty, given the more generalist emphasis of community college faculty and the few digital humanists currently practicing at CCs.

Discussion:

Matthew K. Gold began this session on improving equity and institutional policy in DH at community colleges.¹⁸ “DH need community colleges more than community colleges need DH,” he remarked. “DH scholars need to speak to the wider public, and community college students are an audience that we can speak to.” Gold’s journey in DH began when he got a faculty development grant from NEH to work on the history of downtown Brooklyn and Walt Whitman. Much of Whitman’s work happened across the street from City Tech, where he works. This project led him to ask, “Why, in the digital age, are our classrooms still these spaces within these walls?” The web-based digital pedagogical project, [*Looking for Whitman*](#), emerged from this work. Because the project connected students from different kinds of institutions, Gold felt that it was a model project for possible community college engagements of similar kinds. *Looking for Whitman* engaged different students at different stages in their scholarly inquiry—undergraduate liberal arts students as well as General Education students and Master’s and Ph.D. candidates. Because this project connected students across multiple institutions located variously in places where Whitman had worked, it led to a natural study of place. “Place-based study provides a level engagement for students to do original work and connect with others. What do our students have that others don’t? The places where they are.”

Gold suggested that the model of place-based learning in *Looking for Whitman* could help community college faculty conceive of projects in their own locations. At the heart of the work is an invitation to students to do the archival, historical work—“Primary digging in their own locations and then sharing it out,” as Gold put it. The multiple levels of engagement allows for students with different skill levels to still engage: “I could bridge the gaps in skills: students could annotate a Whitman poem and create an annotated text.”

Gold invited participants to think about DH projects of their own using the places where they and their students live and work. He also encouraged faculty to aim high and be ambitious in developing a community and infrastructure. “You’d be surprised,” he remarked. Early in his career, he was able to work with Library of Congress manuscripts division. “Rope in high profile institutions in your project,” he offered to the community college faculty gathered. Such high-profile collaborations will help convince home institutions that a project is worthwhile. The connections that Gold made with *Looking for*

¹⁸ A video of Matthew K. Gold and Dean Rehberger’s session is available here: <https://blogs.lanecce.edu/dhatthecc/2014/03/18/video-of-pre-conference-session-at-the-community-college-humanities-assn/>

Whitman led to further work and great opportunities for his students. He offered as an example a project that the Brooklyn Historical Society did through a Fund for Improvement of Post Secondary Education (FIPSE) grant, “Students and Faculty in the Archives.” This is especially relevant, since first-year students in that project do archival work in their first moments in college. “Start from your place, and be willing to go outside,” he suggested. As with Whitney’s *Hawthorne in Salem*, Gold emphasized the importance of interinstitutional collaborations, and he recommended Davis’s article, co-authored with Brian Alexander, “Should Liberal Arts Campuses Do Digital Humanities? Process and Products in the Small College World” as a resource.¹⁹ “If your institution is like mine, you can’t trust that there are enough seats, WIFI, etc., but partnerships can help ease various strains.” Gold then demonstrated a project he directed, the CUNY Academic Commons, which uses WordPress and Buddy Press. It was built through a University-wide committee and enables various campuses to connect with each other. Many in attendance were very interested in the “Commons in a Box” concept, which won the 2013 Digital Humanities Award for best DH suite of tools.²⁰

The “digital commons” idea sparked quite a bit of interest among faculty in the room, perhaps because many are looking for ways to connect with like-minded faculty in their regions. Gold interjected that it was important to be strategic when thinking about funding for DH projects such as the Open Lab. Embedding DH projects into institutional projects that are a priority can help gain leverage for projects. Gold summarized his advice as “start where you are, build partnerships with high-profile institutions, and, to the extent you can, be ambitious in the people and institutions you ask to join you. You’d be surprised at the institutions that would be willing to partner with you and your institutions.” He also reminded participants of the importance of project- and self-promotion: “Let your administrators know what you’re doing. Spread the word on your own campus, through Twitter, blogs, etc. Demonstrate to your administration how your project is aligned with the goals of your institution. Digital humanities projects build the kinds of skills administrators like to see.”



Figure 8: Dean Rehberger (l) and Matthew K. Gold (r) at the Pre-Conference Session at the Community College Humanities Association

Dean Rehberger joined Matthew K. Gold in his remarks, adding that community colleges have been doing digital humanities in ways that universities didn’t even think about in the 1990s; it was just under a different guise. Rehberger explained that he has done digital humanities himself since 1995, when he worked on a project with women from West Africa running NGOs. He demonstrated his latest project,

¹⁹ “Should Liberal Arts Campuses Do Digital Humanities? Process and Products in the Small College World.” In *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, ed. Matthew K. Gold. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012. <http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/>

²⁰ <http://dhawards.org/dhawards2013/results/>

the [Public Philosophy Journal](#).²¹ “Philosophers are the most insular, anti-digital of all,” he joked, and so this project is an achievement.

Another significant project he has worked on that community colleges could learn from is [Oral History in the Digital Age](#). The project involves 58 institutions and is a model for interinstitutional collaboration. What oral history teaches us all, Rehberger commented, is that “if we are to do oral history in such a way that it can be preserved and is valuable, then we have to think about the oral history process right from the moment we collect data. All the way down to archives.” This means that oral history projects can provide a pedagogy and practice that are innovative, create new knowledge and also provide training in critical thinking and planning skills. In other words—amenable to a community college context.

Rehberger suggested that oral history makes humanists rethink how they do humanities research. For generations, humanists kept their research hidden until they wrote a book. But the digital era fosters an atmosphere of sharing along the way—and a culture of openness that old-school humanists need to get used to. Echoing Davis’s comments earlier, Rehberger says that digital humanists have to be more like scientists in this way.

Oral history projects build skills in planning, project management and collaboration as well as the critical thinking skills that all humanists recognize and value. Rehberger explained the importance of protocols when collecting oral histories which will translate into good metadata and create accessible projects that are useable.

Because Rehberger and his colleagues have worked on international projects with low resources and overburdened people, they have had to learn how to plan well enough to make the best of difficult situations. This kind of work is applicable to community college students who may be working in low-resource environments. “We’ll go into labs where power is on two hours a day with no air conditioning. We’ll go into Mali, how do we get the digitization done when we only have one scanner?” Rehberger advocated a can-do, DIY attitude that leverages what is available and makes the best of it. Participants were very receptive to this idea.

The emphasis at MATRIX is on strict protocols and students whose work style is collaborative and interoperable. Working together as a “digital commons” means that if something takes a student away, another can step in. Rehberger suggested that such awareness of other students and the project-centeredness of the work is applicable to community colleges, since collaboration is a critical skill for all students.

Rehberger’s work on the *Explore Pennsylvania History* (<http://explorepahistory.com/>) project also is applicable to a community college context: “Teachers don’t have time. . . . What we found is that we have to put lesson plans for them. We tie this to teaching themes: people love oral history, but they can’t use the whole thing in their classroom. . . . When you create resources, it’s important to create them in a way that’s useful from the beginning.” To engage more faculty in digital humanities in community colleges, the more that assignments and projects have been thought through and tested, the more likely that time-stretched faculty can adopt these projects.

Rehberger summarized his advice: “Two things that are critical: You need to work together. It requires a whole new thinking about humanities. You don’t just go off into the archive, do your research, and create your monograph. Whether you’re in an R1 or a CC: We are in a resource-strapped place in humanities. People are doing more work than they used to do. How can we leverage technology in those situations for us to ease our way, make things better for us, for our students?”

²¹ For a list of all websites referred to by session experts, see Appendix IV.



Figure 9: Participants Paul Vanheuklom and Carol Hahn discuss their work at the Pre-conference Session at CCHA



Figure 10: Project Director Anne McGrail introduces expert panelists at the beginning of the Pre-conference session at the CCHA

Meeting Summary:

Follow-Up Workshop Session at CCHA 2013: “Helping Students Navigate the ‘Digital Turn’ in the Humanities”

Project director Anne McGrail led the Saturday session at the Community College Humanities Association, “Helping Students Navigate the ‘Digital Turn’ in Humanities.” She adapted David Perkins’ Seven Principles for *Making Learning Whole*²² to provide a framework for talking about the value and usefulness of digital humanities at community colleges.²³

David Perkins uses a terrific baseball metaphor for explaining the importance of holistic learning in successful pedagogies. McGrail adapted this metaphor to demonstrate the way that digital humanities projects provide a perfect platform for “making learning whole.” She shared some of the digital humanities projects that she has used in her community college classes and talked about how digital humanities projects increase engagement.



Figure 11: Slide from Project Director Anne McGrail’s presentation, “Helping Students Navigate the ‘Digital Turn’ in the Humanities”

A key feature of Perkins’ model is that it’s important for students—even novices—to “play the whole game.” Just as kids play a “junior version” of baseball when they are as young as three years old, so, Perkins says, we should lead our own students into whole digital humanities projects that are scaled for their skills and goals. Such a model avoids what Perkins calls “elementitis”—a focus on rote skills that are suspended from any relevance for the student. Likewise, “everybody plays” in baseball, and so should all students participate in digital projects. McGrail described her requirement that all students create some kind of digital project by the end of the term, learning how to manage their project and deal with failures and unmet expectations as well as the satisfaction of creating new knowledge. A combination of high expectations and high support characterizes McGrail’s DH classes, and students meet in a lab for an hour each week so that they can work with each other and the instructor as they

²² *Making Learning Whole: How Seven Principles for Teaching Can Transform Education*. David N. Perkins. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008.

²³ Slides from this session are available on the project website here: <https://blogs.lanecc.edu/dhatthecc/2013/11/20/slides-from-ccha-dh-at-the-cc-workshop/>

develop their skills. She establishes an atmosphere of “unconditional positive regard” where there are “no stupid mistakes”; such an atmosphere is critical to successfully embedding digital projects into community college classrooms, as many students come to open-access institutions with fear of failure.

Another feature of Perkin’s model is that it’s important to “make the game worth playing.” McGrail demonstrated how teaching students about Ngrams and text mining builds skills in inference and deduction and helps students begin developing generative topics and conceptual knowledge that they can learn for their lives.

Perkins call to “work on the hard parts” is another feature that can be adapted for digital humanities pedagogies in a community college context, demonstrated McGrail. Providing deliberate practice in the context of the whole game and integrating writing, critical reflection and self-evaluation into projects helps students develop a tolerance for working through the difficult stages of a project, when they may be in the doldrums just before a moment of insight. McGrail’s student projects on Uncle Tom’s Cabin and Material Culture and *The Gospel of Slavery* illustrated how this pedagogical concept works.



Figure 12: Slide from Anne McGrail’s presentation at the CCHA, “Helping Students Navigate the ‘Digital Turn’ in the Humanities”

McGrail also demonstrated how several projects such as “Live Tweeting *Last of the Mohicans*” and “Using Storify to Archive Class Discussions” helps students to take important steps in “near” and “far” knowledge transfer. She discussed the ways in which DH projects offer opportunities for layered aspects of learning to emerge, and how such projects draw learners into the game of inquiry. She shared how she has introduced students to new kinds of interpretive analysis such as basic text mining, first showing students Wordles and then even summarizing Professor Ted Underwood’s work. For some students this way of reading has opened up a whole new world of thinking about texts. Even basic online work with primary source documents and crowdsourcing annotations with Google Docs has created a sense of collaboration not previously possible in even the liveliest humanities class discussions.

Those in attendance at the workshop shared their enthusiasm for the goals of “Bringing Digital Humanities to the Community College and Vice Versa.” Many were interested in learning more and were referred to the website for assignment ideas and to the National Survey for their opinions and experiences.

Products

A White Paper was submitted on March 19, 2014.

The National Survey of Digital Humanities in Community Colleges questions and data are available on the DH@theCC website here: <https://blogs.lanecc.edu/dhatthecc/2014/02/03/survey-data-available-from-national-survey-of-digital-humanities-in-community-colleges/>

These data and the discussion of results by project director Anne McGrail will appear in print in the Spring 2014 issue of *The Community College Moment*. The website for the magazine is <http://www.lanecc.edu/ccmoment>

The project director wrote an article covering the CCHA pre-conference session and workshop for the *The Humanist*, the association newsletter for the Community College Humanities Association which goes to all membership.

The project director will present findings of her project at the CCHA PacNW in Seattle in October 2014.

Lessons Learned and Next Steps

“Bringing Digital Humanities to the Community College and Vice Versa” emerged from the project director’s own desire to engage with a community of practice in digital humanities. And the time is right for that community to develop: perhaps from the moment that the Start-Up grant was in September 2012, an emerging community began to spring up. At the October 2012 Pacific Northwest chapter of the Community College Humanities Association, for example, the project director presented to a room full of faculty interested in digital humanities and wanting to hear more. The 189 respondents to the online survey also suggest that there is a group of faculty who are interested, engaged, and want to learn more. A clear outcome of this project has been a fuller picture of the state of professional development among community college humanists and a raised awareness on the part of the major professional association of community college humanists.

Lessons Learned:

Wiki: While the project director enthusiastically shared her own work on the DH@theCC website, the Wiki has been slow to engage interest. This perhaps because the nature of a Wiki assumes a crowd to source from as well as be a resource for. That crowd has yet to emerge. However, the National Survey of Digital Humanities at the Community College has brought enough email queries to the project director’s inbox that its role as a mechanism for outreach as well as inquiry is clear. Sharing your work in all its imperfection is an innovation that DH has brought to humanities teaching, but it may be slow to catch on with mid-career humanists used to keeping their work in their own classrooms.

Participation: While the 2012 regional CCHA conference session on DH at the CC was well attended, the number of participants at the pre-conference session in the 2013 national meeting was somewhat disappointing: nine signed up and another four attended without registering officially. This small turnout could be explained by one comment made in the National Survey: that the CCHA meetings are already expensive and that Louisville was too far out of the way for most faculty to attend.

What is the Pipeline for New DH Faculty at the CC? This grant and its activities demonstrated how much work there is still to be done to raise the salience and relevance of digital humanities for community college faculty, students, and their communities. Bringing DH to the CC brings another wrinkle to the definitional questions surrounding DH. Can community college students and their teachers contribute to digital humanities, to the new knowledge and new paradigms that DH has been about since its inception? Or are they to be stuck creating derivative products that mimic what is being done in research institutions? What does a “junior version of the whole game” look like at community colleges and how? What is the pipeline for community college humanist faculty looking like now? Will it eventually lead to DH at the CC?

Next Steps:

Community college faculty need a digital humanities (DH) institute of their own. Results of the survey and conversations at conferences demonstrate that community college (CC) faculty are immersed in the daily intensive work of teaching and are unable to devote time and resources needed to learn DH theory, methods and practice. For this reason the project director has requested funds to support an NEH Office of Digital Humanities Advanced Topics Summer Institute specifically for community college faculty to engage with new digital methods, tools and practices for humanities teaching and scholarship.

Participants will work with experts to translate current theory and practice in DH for the unique learning needs of community college students in open-access institutional contexts. Ultimately, the institute will increase the profile and relevance of humanities in the 21st century by extending engagement with

digital humanities to a higher education community that has been largely overlooked in the developing field.

In the course of the conversations that emerged at the CCHA conference in 2012 and 2013 and in analyzing the responses from the National Survey, several research topics and questions significant to community college digital humanists materialized. An institute for community college humanists would allow deep engagement with these questions:

- **DH as Content:** What kinds of DH content are best suited to the open-access and lifelong learning contexts in community college humanities classes? **Outcome:** Participants explore, use and/or create digital exhibits scaffolded for community college students.
- **DH as Method:** How can faculty expand and deepen traditional humanities and close reading methods by adapting and adopting tools for text mining, distant reading, and other DH methods? **Outcome:** Participants infuse instructional designs with digital textual analysis.
- **DH as Pedagogy:** How can the use of “living laboratories” and creation of born-digital projects enhance humanities’ relevance to higher education and support students’ developing intellectual identities as producers and not just consumers of knowledge? **Outcome:** Participants design a place-based research project that invites students to use digital methods in humanities courses.
- **DH as Rhetoric:** What kinds of DH projects can help students see the (often hidden) rhetorical power of digital tools and methods and learn about the constraints and arguments embedded within them? **Outcome:** Participants create a scaffolded design for tool use and analysis of the rhetorical functions and interactions of digital assets, architecture and user displays.
- **DH as Community Builder:** How can DH projects cultivate connections among students and their communities? **Outcome:** Participants create prototypes for community-based projects in, for example, crowdsourcing data, oral history projects, maps and georeferencing.
- **DH as Tool for Public Humanities and Equity:** What projects illuminate systemic biases and exclusions embedded in DH tools, methods and culture and how might we leverage the affordances of DH to address these problems? **Outcome:** Participants prototype a project for identifying and responding to a demonstrably exclusionary digital tool or practice.

If the institute is funded, the participants would emerge from the institute with a portfolio of project prototypes in, for example, data visualization, multimedia production, geospatial mapping, crowdsourced research, and digital storytelling, among others, each designed for an open-access community college context. As with the Start-Up grant, participants’ work will be shared on an online commons that will serve as a hub for developing a national community of inquiry and practice in DH at the CC.

This NEH ODH Summer institute will not replace the myriad professional training opportunities that exist in DH nationally and internationally; it will also not merely be a workshop in teaching with technology. Rather, this institute will guide participants in understanding and scaffolding DH curriculum tailored to the learning needs of open-access institutional settings. It will provide opportunities for participants to see their work within the larger picture of the digital humanities field while developing DH projects suitable for community college students. Along the way, participants will develop a professional learning community that could lead to diffusion of DH into humanities programs at community colleges nationally in coming years.

One thing became clear through the start-up project: for community college faculty to engage with DH work, digital humanities must be very tightly aligned with clear pedagogical goals and readily adaptable to lower-division transfer (i.e., “freshman and sophomore”) courses. Teaching loads are higher (4-5 courses per semester) in community colleges than universities and most four-year colleges and,

according to one study, community college faculty spend more than 2 times the number of hours in the classroom teaching than do public doctoral faculty, and more than one and a half times the number of contact hours with students.²⁴

Moving from Pockets of Innovation to a Community of Practice Model

Our expert community college digital humanists illustrate how important an active national community of practice is. Terri Whitney's *Hawthorne in Salem* digital archive and Jake Agatucci's work with Digital Games Culture—as well as the project director Anne McGrail's ongoing curricular infusions and website—demonstrate that pockets of innovation in digital humanities are springing up nationally. But they remain isolated. In future, reliable and coordinated activities are needed to build a critical mass of community college faculty. These faculty can then become a resource for one another and for the field's development. An NEH institute is one kind of activity. The Humanities and Technology (THAT) Camps are another. Constrained by it is by a shoestring budget, the Community College Humanities Association itself can still offer a place for sharing new work in community college digital humanities.

²⁴ 2004 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty, cited in MLA Committee on Community Colleges, "A Community College Teaching Career." Modern Language Association, 2006. Web 10 Feb 2014.

APPENDIX I

Survey Questions

National Survey of Digital Humanities in Community Colleges

1. Which of the following digital humanities pedagogies, methods, and objects of study are you familiar with? (Check all that apply.)
2. What is your employee role?
3. What is/are your teaching discipline(s)?
4. If you teach, what level courses do you teach regularly?
5. What is your employment status?
6. What level of autonomy do you have in designing your courses?
7. Please rate your own technical proficiency and comfort with digital tools.
8. How highly do you value the use of technology in your teaching, curriculum development, assessment and research?
9. Mark the extent to which you witness the so-called "digital divide" in your daily teaching on your campus. (By "digital divide" we mean the difference between those students who have access to technology through computers and other devices and data plans and those whose access is limited to classroom and lab access).
10. In your opinion, does a "digital divide" exist between PART-TIME faculty on your campus and FULL-TIME faculty? (By "digital divide" we refer to a working environment that lends itself to digital competencies: to hardware, software, tech support, adequately equipped office and classroom space, money and time for faculty development opportunities.)
11. Do you teach your course(s) with some online components and/or entirely online?
12. Which of the following do you use regularly in your humanities courses? ("Regularly"= at least once a week in all your classes.)
13. **HIRING:** Digital humanities is a new umbrella term for expertise across a broad spectrum of special skills and disciplines, and hiring this expertise is new to community colleges. If you were to serve on a hiring committee in your discipline or a neighbor humanities discipline, how much emphasis would you place on a candidate's facility with digital technologies and pedagogies in the classroom?
14. How much support do you think there would be among your colleagues for adding emphasis in the hiring process for faculty with digital technologies/technologies in the classroom?
15. How well does your institution meet your expectations for faculty and staff development through curriculum development grants, reassigned time, professional leave time, travel funds, sabbatical funds, relevant on-campus resources, etc.?
16. What methods do you use to keep current in your discipline and teaching practice? Please check all that apply.
17. In your opinion, which of the following conditions would be **NECESSARY** for you or your colleagues to attend a workshop **ON YOUR CAMPUS** to learn more about digital humanities? (Check all that apply.)
18. Which of the following conditions would be **NECESSARY** for you or your colleagues to attend a **REGIONAL** or **NATIONAL INSTITUTE** about digital humanities for community college faculty?

19. If given the opportunity, how interested would you be in attending a week-long summer institute to learn how to use digital humanities methodologies in your classroom?
20. What do you see as institutional obstacles at your college to increasing the presence of digital humanities courses, curricula and programs of study at your institution?
21. Rate the adequacy of your institution's FACILITIES for supporting using digital media in the learning environment (e.g., computer labs, smart classrooms, WiFi access for students, etc.)
22. Rate your familiarity with the National Endowment for the Humanities professional development opportunities:
23. For Question 22, if you answered that you have attended an NEH-funded professional development opportunity, please indicate which particular program. Check all that apply:
24. Rate your familiarity with the Community College Humanities Association (CCHA).
25. Rate your familiarity with the League for Innovation in the Community College:
26. What would be the most useful mechanism by which the NEH, the CCHA, the League for Innovation in the Community College or other humanities organizations might support your development in the area of digital humanities pedagogy or research?

Appendix II: Participant Bios

Rebecca Frost Davis, Ph.D. is Director of Instructional and Emerging Technologies, St. Edward's University. Previously, she was Program Officer for the Humanities at the National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education ([NITLE](#)). Dr. Davis served as assistant director for instructional technology at the Associated Colleges of the South Technology Center and as assistant professor of classical studies at Rhodes College, Denison University and Sewanee: The University of the South. Dr. Davis has taught numerous workshops on teaching with technology for faculty, technologists, and librarians at liberal arts colleges. She has also planned conferences and consulted on digital teaching, the teaching of writing with technology, classical studies, intercampus teaching, and virtual collaboration.

Matthew K. Gold, Ph.D., is Associate Professor of English and Digital Humanities at CUNY Graduate Center. He is Director of CUNY Academic Commons, [New York City College of Technology](#) and teaches in [Interactive Technology and Pedagogy](#). He is editor of [Debates in the Digital Humanities](#) (Minnesota UPress: 2012). He is advisor to the Provost for Master's Programs and Digital Initiatives at [CUNY Graduate Center](#).

Anne B. McGrail, Ph.D., Project Director, joined the English faculty at Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon in 1998; she has taught online writing and literature courses since 2007. She maintains the website, DH@theCC and was Activity Director for Faculty Development for Lane's Title III Dept. of Education grant, Learning Communities Coordinator for the college, and a participant in the AAC&U's [Roadmaps](#) project. She was founding co-editor of [The Community College Moment](#).

Dean Rehberger, Ph.D., is the Director of MATRIX: the Center for Humane Art, Letters, and Social Science Online and also Associate Professor of Writing, Rhetoric and American Cultures. His primary areas of research include: High Performance Computing and the Humanities; Oral History Online; information design and architecture; digital libraries, museums and archives; and online learning environments. He oversees the development of a number of open access projects in the humanities including the Oral History in the Digital Age (<http://ohda.matrix.msu.edu>), Quilt Index (<http://www.quiltindex.org>), Overcoming Apartheid (<http://overcomingapartheid.msu.edu/>), Studs Terkel: Conversations with America (<http://www.studsterkel.org/>) and many other projects found at (<http://matrix.msu.edu>).

Jesse Stommel, Ph.D., is Assistant Professor in the college of Liberal Studies at University of Wisconsin, Madison. Previously he was Asst. Prof. of English and Digital Humanities at Marylhurst University. He is co-founding editor of *Hybrid Pedagogy*.

Terri Whitney, Ph.D., is Project Director for [Hawthorne in Salem](#), an NEH-sponsored digital archive. She is on the English Faculty at North Shore Community College in Salem, Massachusetts.

Jake Agatucci is Asst. Professor of Writing and Literature at Central Oregon Community College. He is instructional designer for "Digital Games Culture" at COCC and also editor of the Community College Humanities Association Newsletter.

Russell H. Shitabata, Ph.D. (videographer) is on the English faculty at Lane Community College. He has produced two documentaries, one on sugar plantation workers on the Big Island of Hawaii and the second on First Year Experience programs at Lane Community College. He teaches Asian American Literature and Folklore and Mythology as well as writing courses. He is co-chair of Lane's College Council and Faculty Council, and currently co-edits the *Community College Moment*.

Appendix III: Workshop Agendas

Bringing Digital Humanities to the Community College and Vice Versa
An NEH Office of Digital Humanities Start-Up Grant-Funded Project
Community College Humanities Association National Meeting
Pre-Conference Workshop
Thursday, October 24, 2013
11 am-5 pm
The Brown Hotel, Louisville, Kentucky

Agenda

11a.m.-11:20

Welcome, Introductions, Plan for the Day

Anne McGrail, Project Director

11:30-12:30

Digital Humanities at Community Colleges Now

Terri Whitney, *Hawthorne in Salem* NEH-sponsored website

Jake Agatucci, Digital Games Culture at the CC

Anne McGrail, DH at CCs Now: Data from the National Survey of Digital Humanities in Community Colleges

12:30-1:00 Boxed Lunch

1:00-2:20

In the Open Access, Lower-Division Classroom: Pedagogy and Faculty Development

Discussion Leader: Rebecca Frost Davis and Jesse Stommel

2:30-3:50

Equity and Institutional Policy: Opportunities and Obstacles for DH Development on Community College Campuses

Discussion Leaders: Matthew Gold and Dean Rehberger

4:00-end

Next Steps:

Plans for White Paper draft and dissemination, Level II grant proposal.

Discussion Leaders: All

5 pm

Close

Helping Students Navigate the “Digital Turn” in Humanities

Anne B. McGrail, Ph.D., Lane Community College

Project Director, “Bringing Digital Humanities to the Community College—and Vice Versa”

an NEH Office of Digital Humanities Digital Start-Up Project

@annemcgrail on Twitter

National Survey of Digital Humanities in Community Colleges: **Please circulate widely and take it if you haven’t!**

www.surveymonkey.com/s/DHAttheCC

David Perkins’ Seven Principles for *Making Learning Whole*ⁱ Provide a Framework for DH at the CC

Making Learning Whole: How Seven Principles for Teaching Can Transform Education. David N. Perkins. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008.

1. Play the Whole Game

- a. Avoid “elementitis”
- b. Everybody plays
- c. High support
- d. “Unconditional Positive Regard”—no stupid mistakes
 - i. Primary Source Document Assignment

2. Make the Game Worth Playing

- a. Learning for life
- b. Generative topics that teach for understanding
- c. Conceptual knowledge
 - i. Ngrams—word clusters that build skills of inference and deduction

3. Work on the Hard Parts

- a. Deliberate practice in the context of the whole game
- b. DH always integrates writing, analysis, self-reflection
 - i. *Gospel of Slavery*
 - ii. *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and Material Culture

4. Play Out of Town

- a. Knowledge transfer is difficult to learn
- b. “Near” and “Far” transfer intrinsic to DH work
 - i. “Live Tweeting *Last of the Mohicans*”
 - ii. Storify for the class archive of work

5. Play the Hidden Game

- a. Opportunities for layered aspects of learning to emerge
- b. Drawing learners into the game of inquiry
- c. Interpretive analysis extended to the screen and methodologies of DH
 - i. *Incidents in the Life of Harriet Jacobs*—Wordles: what kinds of words should we count? How do we decide? (Ted Underwood for those really interested)
 - ii. What difference does publication location make? Mary Rowlandson’s *History of the Captivity and Restoration...* London and Cambridge, Ma.

6. Learn from the Team

- a. DH leverages the social, collaborative aspects of learning
 - i. “Crowdsourcing” an annotated “edition” of “The Great Lawsuit”
 - ii. Collaborative Annotation of a Primary Source Text (Google docs—students show up “live on the page” even when home sick.

7. Learn the Game of Learning

- a. Let learners take control of their learning
- b. They will surprise you and each other

Appendix IV

List of Website Resources Referred to in the Pre-Conference DH at the CC Session

[Home | HASTAC](#)

<http://nycdh.org/>

<http://thatcamp.org/>

<http://mla2013.thatcamp.org/about-thatcamp/>

<http://explorepahistory.com/>

<http://msu.seum.matrix.msu.edu/>

<http://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/>

<http://commonsinabox.org/>

<http://commons.gc.cuny.edu/>

<http://lookingforwhitman.org/courses/>

<http://waterandwork.wordpress.com/>

<http://ohda.matrix.msu.edu/>

<http://www2.matrix.msu.edu/>

<http://publicphilosophyjournal.org/>

<http://historyhacks.org/>

<http://www.jessestommel.com/hypertext/wordle.html>

<http://www.jessestommel.com/hypertext/>

<http://www.jessestommel.com/>

<http://rachelblumblog.wordpress.com/2013/06/09/viscera/>

<http://lanssolo.wordpress.com/2013/04/06/a-certain-slant-of-light-typographically-speaking/>

<http://timmydigiwriting.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/photo.png>

<http://www.jessestommel.com/digitalhumanities/>

<http://rachelblumblog.files.wordpress.com/2013/06/20130602-211240.jpg>

<http://rachelblumblog.wordpress.com/2013/06/02/final-project/>

<http://rachelblumblog.wordpress.com/2013/05/03/what-the-helvetica/>

<http://rachelblumblog.wordpress.com/>

<http://rachelblumblog.wordpress.com/page/2/>

<http://www.jessestommel.com/digitalhumanities/syllabus.html>

<http://www.jessestommel.com/digitalhumanities/syllabus.html>

<http://www.jessestommel.com/digitalhumanities/blog/index.html>

<http://www.racheldoesstuff.com/>

http://www.hybridpedagogy.com/Journal/files/Digital_Humanities_is_About_Breaking_Stuff.html

<http://www.hawthorneinsalem.org/Architecture/CustomHouse/Introduction.html>

<http://www.hawthorneinsalem.org/Architecture/Introduction.html>

<http://www.hawthorneinsalem.org/Introduction.html>

<http://hawthorneinsalem.org/>

<http://hawthorneinsalem.org/mmd/search.php?view=0&search=witches&topic=0&mediasel=1&submit=submit>