The OU Libraries and Digital Humanities

Rick Luce
Dean of University Libraries
and Associate VP for Research
September 15, 2015
Roadmap

- DH observations from a Library perspective

- Resourcing: developing capabilities and building infrastructure
  - collections; expertise; facilities; enabling technologies

- Seeing possibilities: progress to date

15 minute rule
A Simple Management Principle

if you want unusual results, you can’t expect that they will come from playing by the usual rules
1. **Center focused**: organized around a physical location
   many diverse projects, programs, and activities, offering different resources to diverse audiences
   (e.g., *UVA Scholars’ Lab*)

2. **Resource focused**: organized around a primary resource, located in a virtual space, serving a specific group
   All programs and products flow from the resource, individuals and institutions help sustain the resource by providing content, labor, or support services
   (e.g., Emory’s *Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*)
Common Library Roles Supporting DH

1. **Develop digital collections**: via digitization and curation, and supporting data management infrastructure

2. **Discovery and dissemination** - aggregation of research outputs, OA publishing, and tracking impact (altmetrics)

3. **Managing Data** – *work collaboratively* to enable aggregating collections, re-purposing and organizing data for further analysis

4. **Digital preservation** - preservation of complex objects is complex and not straightforward
Digital Humanities “Infrastructure”

Technical and technology assistance and expertise:

- Metadata encoding, statistical analysis and/or geo-coding
- Digital resource design; digitization of images, text, audio, or video files
- Hardware/software infrastructure(s) for online communities
- Technology prototyping
- Internet services -- Web hosting, storage space, site mirroring, servers for scholars and organizations, archiving inactive projects,
Next Gen Library Roles in DH

1. **Tools** for publishing research and organizing and analyzing data across disciplines (e.g., Zotero, Omeka)

2. Incorporating DH **computational techniques** into library systems and services (e.g., provide concordance services against all of the full text items in our collections)

3. **Creation of small corpuses** of library content:
   - provide n-gram services
   - entity-recognition services
   - parts-of-speech extraction service against results
Lessons from the Past Decade

- The ‘structure’ of digital humanities means that projects do not necessarily terminate in the ‘fixed products of humanities’

- *DH in libraries is more than a service* -- by nature it is eccentric, unpredictable, highly customized, and prone to failure

- Need for DH training ground

- Successful ‘library DH centers’
  1. In it for the long term
  2. Permanent staffing
  3. Physical space(s) to work, create identity
  4. Serving as a sandbox / idea incubator
     - some projects will succeed and some will fail
OU Libraries: Digital Scholarship Lab

1. **Dedicated space** for faculty/post-grad/grad collaboration, cooperation & consultation

2. **Consultation** and assistance in the use of GIS, scholarly asset management, informatics, information handling, software, web sites, etc.

3. Record lectures, pod-casts, presentations

4. Connect with peers via video-conferencing
OU Libraries Supporting Campus Research/Creativity

RESEARCHER TOOLS

Edition Open Sources

SHAREOK.ORG
A central, open-access repository of research by members of Oklahoma Higher Education

OUatio: a celebration for a victory
A repository of open access, quality research and creativity by University of Oklahoma undergraduate students

(OJS) - Open Journal System

OPEN ACCESS

OER COMMONS
OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
New DH-related Capabilities (past 3 years)

- **Research & data initiatives:** Digital Scholarship Specialist; GIS Librarian; Research Data Specialist; Informatics Specialist
- **Special collections:** Digi-lab coordinator; Registrar
- **Faculty teaching support:** OER coordinator
- **CLC:** 2 emerging tech librarians
- **Digital infrastructure team:** SHAREOK digital repository; Discover! search application; new web site
- **Joined HathiTrust:** 12M+ digitized titles
Facilities: Investment & Transformation

- DigiLab (high resolution digitization): Aug. 2013
- Collaborative Learning Center: Sept. 2014
- Bizzell Master Plan: Regents approval June 2015
- Special Collections 5th floor renovation: Aug. 2015
- Innovation Edge – Bizzell Main floor – Nov. 2015
- Innovation Hub (Research Park) – Spring 2016
OU Libraries Supporting Campus Research/Creativity

New Discovery / New Webpage

Digital Scholarship Lab & Conference Room

Special Collections

Digitization Laboratory
New ways of exploring knowledge: Exaptive, MooMat, NavApp …
Key Challenges

- **Variability** (one size/solution won’t fit all)
- **Resourcing and Scaling**
- **Sustainability** over the long term
- **Preservation** of complex objects
Key Opportunity

Digital scholarship promises to transform the university organizational structure itself, *particularly the university library*.

1. Developing the ecosystem enabling interdisciplinary digital scholarship

2. Evolving a laboratory integrating digital scholarship research and production

3. Enabling a transition from Humanities $\rightarrow$ to Digital Humanities $\rightarrow$ to the Humanities
Thank you!

Rick Luce
rluce@ou.edu

The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA LIBRARIES
libraries.ou.edu