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PANELISTS

June Abbas, University of Oklahoma. Dr. Abbas teaches Digital Libraries and has led her students in building digital collections for community partners.

George Coulbourne, Executive Program Officer, Office of Strategic Initiatives (OSI), Library of Congress. Mr. Coulbourne is involved in developing the national *Residency in Digital Curation.*

Anatoliy Gruzd, Dalhousie University. Dr. Gruzd teaches Digital Libraries and guides students in building digital collections using Greenstone.

Samantha Hastings, University of South Carolina. Dr. Hasting has rich experience in developing digital library curricula.

Iris Xie, University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee. Dr. Xie has taught courses on Digital Libraries in an online format for many years, and has been incorporating experiential learning into the courses using CONTENTdm.

Xiao Hu and **Krystyna K. Matusiak**, University of Denver. Dr. Hu and Dr. Matusiak teach a sequence of courses on digitization, indexing of visual resources, and digital objects and collections using CONTENTdm, Greenstone, and Omeka.

ABSTRACT

Integration of experiential learning into the library and information science (LIS) courses has been a theme in LIS education, but the topic deserves renewed attention with an increasing demand for professionals in the digital library field and in light of the new initiative announced by the Library of Congress (LC) and the Institution of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) for national residency program in digital curation. The balance between theory and practice in digital library curricula, the challenges of incorporating practical projects into LIS coursework, and the current practice of teaching with hands on activities represent the primary areas of this panel discussion.

The panel brings together a representative from the Library of Congress Office of Strategic Initiative to talk about the *Residency in Digital Curation* program and LIS educators who are actively involved in developing and teaching DL courses with experiential components in face-to-face, hybrid, and online environments.

Keywords
LIS education, digital library curriculum, experiential learning

INTRODUCTION
I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.
Confucius, Chinese philosopher & reformer

Digital library (DL) education in library and information science (LIS) programs has been an area of extensive research and curriculum development in recent years (Chen et al, 2011; Dahlstrom & Doracic, 2009; Mostafa et al., 2009; Yang et al., 2009; Wildemuth at al., 2008). The efforts concentrate on identifying core concepts in DL education and on curriculum design to prepare students for working in the rapidly changing fields of digitization, digital collections, and digital curation. The topic of experiential learning in DL education, however, has not been explored fully with the exception of a few publications that discuss the use of DL applications in teaching digital library concepts (e.g., Pomerantz et al., 2009). The purpose of this panel is to discuss the integration of experiential learning into the LIS courses in the area of digital libraries, digitization, digital objects and collections, and digital curation.

This topic is particularly relevant to LIS educators in light of the January 2012 announcement of the Library of Congress (LC) and Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), in which they proposed a new program for national *Residency in Digital Curation*. The announcement is available at: http://www.loc.gov/today/pr/2012/12-016.html .The goals for the program are to "foster the creation of a cadre of experts in the field and encourage LIS schools to include more experiential learning as part of their standard curricula." The initiative indicates an increasing demand for professionals specializing in digitization, digital collections, and digital curation, and reinforces the efforts of LIS programs in expanding the curriculum in those areas. The

program places an emphasis on experiential learning.

Adult education theories emphasize that effective learning takes place in authentic, hands-on situations where students' knowledge is transformed through direct experience and reflection upon it (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989; Kolb, 1984). Students involved in direct experiences gain a better understanding of the new knowledge and retain the information for a longer time. Experiential learning is particularly crucial in DL curriculum as extensive practical skills and technical competencies are required from the "new cadre of experts" in the field. The need for experiential learning in the LIS education has been traditionally addressed through fieldwork, internships, and service learning (Most, 2011). The practice of integrating theoretical concepts with relevant practical projects and hands-on activities in the classroom, however, varies from program to program. The survey studies that examined DL curricula, pointed out the insufficient amount of hands-on instructional or project components in individual DL classes (Choi & Rasmussen, 2006; Perry, 2005). Perry (2005) noted that it was easier to implement classes focusing on theoretical and research aspects of DLs than those with substantial practical exercises.

DL education, however, has been changing with the introduction of new courses and several recent initiatives focusing specifically on developing curricula in digital collections, digital preservation, and data curation (Mostafa et al., 2009). The curriculum framework developed as part of a collaborative project between the School of Information and Library Science (SILS) at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) and Department of Computer Science at Virginia Tech provides a foundation for the consistent education of DL professionals (Wildemuth at al., 2008; Yang et al., 2009). The framework proposes a number of educational modules with examples of practical projects and hands-on activities, thus addressing the need for experiential learning in DL education to a certain extent. However, there has yet to be a formal discussion among DL educators regarding experiential learning.

With the renewed attention to experiential learning in DL education, especially in light of the new initiative announced by LC and IMLS aimed at establishing the *Residency in Digital Curation*, the panel plans to discuss the balance between theory and practice in DL curricula and the current practice of incorporating practical projects and hands on activities into the classroom. The panel brings together a representative from the LC Office of Strategic Initiative to talk about the Residency program and LIS educators who are actively involved in developing and teaching DL courses with experiential components in face-to-face, hybrid, and online environments.

PANEL STRUCTURE
In the first part of the session, an overview of the *Residency in Digital Curation* program will be provided and the faculty panelists will introduce their experiences in integrating experiential learning into DL curricula in brief 5 to 6 minute informal presentations. The focus of the panel will be on the coursework that incorporates hands-on activities rather than on internships, fieldwork, or service learning. The panelists will be asked to address the following issues:

1. The titles of the DL-related courses they teach in their programs;
2. Brief introduction of the courses;
3. The formats of the courses: online, face to face, hybrid
4. The assignments in the courses
5. The experiential learning components in the courses
6. The tools or platforms used in the courses
7. Major benefits of experiential learning components in DL coursework
8. Major challenges to incorporating experiential learning components
9. Students' feedback on experiential learning in DL coursework.
10. University policies on making students' collections publicly accessible.

Next, the moderators will lead a discussion guided by the following questions:

- What core topics in DL curriculum are best taught with practical projects? What is the balance between theory and practice in the courses that incorporate hands-on exercises and projects? What are the examples of hands-on assignments and assignments in DL curriculum?
- What are the best strategies for mapping learning outcomes with experiential learning and tools used in the projects?
- What are the challenges of integrating experiential learning in different types of instructional environments (face-to-face, hybrid, and online)? How to create virtual labs to facilitate experiential learning in online environments?
- What are the implicit benefits of experiential learning in addition to students acquiring practical skills and competencies with DL applications? What are the disadvantages of this instructional approach?
- What types of software applications (open source and commercial) are used in DL classes? What are the pros and cons in selecting these applications in DL education?
- What are the best approaches to incorporating real community-based projects versus artificial projects for course assignments?
- What are the feedback/requests from existing and potential employers?

Audience members will be invited to engage in dialog with the panelists by asking questions and reflecting on their experiences in participating and/or teaching classes with practical projects and hands-on activities. Such participation should contribute to better understanding of the current state

of experiential learning in DL education and sharing best classroom and teaching practices.

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