I-Schools as a Natural Home for Digital Libraries Education

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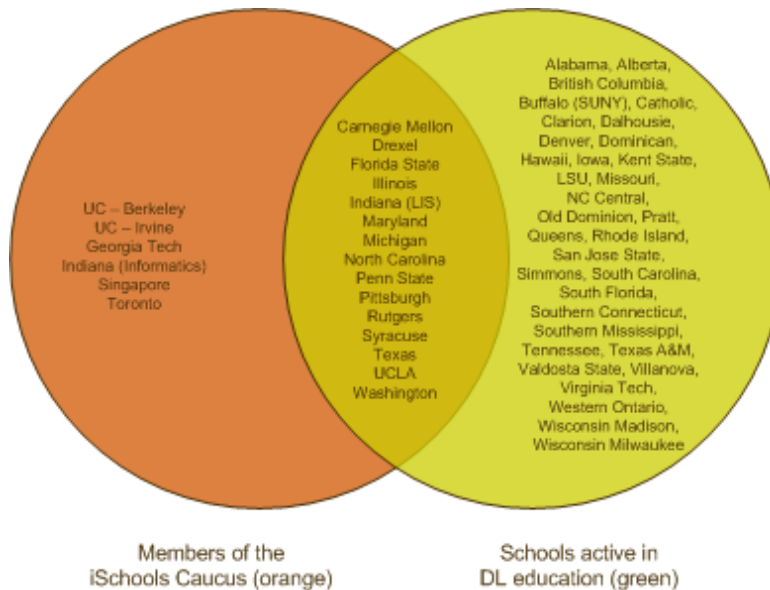[2] Department of Computer Science, Virginia Tech

Overview

Given that digital libraries (DLs) bring together technology, information, and the people using the information, it can easily be argued that i-schools should play a central role in educating DL professionals. This study examines the existing roles that i-schools play in DL education from two different vantage points:
(1) their offering of DL courses; and
(2) their participation in a DL curriculum development project.

In addition, we explore the potential to expand the iSchools Caucus by recruiting those schools that are active in DL education efforts (i.e., those that offer courses or participate in curriculum development) but are not yet members of the Caucus.

Based on the seven course syllabi available on the open Web, DL courses in the i-schools are further analyzed, in terms of the topics covered, the textbooks used, and the types of assignments used. From this analysis, we conclude that there is not yet a consensus on the topics covered or the assignments made in DL courses.

Members of the iSchools Caucus (orange): UC – Berkeley, UC – Irvine, Georgia Tech, Indiana (Informatics), Singapore, Toronto

Overlap: Carnegie Mellon, Drexel, Florida State, Illinois, Indiana (LIS), Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina, Penn State, Pittsburgh, Rutgers, Syracuse, Texas, UCLA, Washington

Schools active in DL education (green): Alabama, Alberta, British Columbia, Buffalo (SUNY), Catholic, Clarion, Dalhousie, Denver, Dominican, Hawaii, Iowa, Kent State, LSU, Missouri, NC Central, Old Dominion, Pratt, Queens, Rhode Island, San Jose State, Simmons, South Carolina, South Florida, Southern Connecticut, Southern Mississippi, Tennessee, Texas A&M, Valdosta State, Villanova, Virginia Tech, Western Ontario, Wisconsin Madison, Wisconsin Milwaukee

Topics covered:

- No topics were covered by *all* courses
- The most frequently-covered topics were:
  - Introduction to DLs
  - DL history
  - Metadata
  - DL architecture
  - Interaction design and usability
  - Preservation
  - Intellectual property
  - Economics of DLs
  - The future of DLs

Textbooks used in 3+ courses:

- Witten, I.H., & Bainbridge, D. (2003). *How to Build a Digital Library.* Amsterdam: Morgan Kaufmann.
- Arms, W.Y. (2000). *Digital Libraries.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Borgman, C.L. (2000). *From Gutenberg to the Global Information Infrastructure: Access to Information in the Networked World.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Lesk, M. (2005). *Understanding Digital Libraries.* 2nd ed. San Francisco, CA: Morgan Kaufmann.

Assignments used in 5+ courses:

- Review/evaluation of a DL
- Development of a DL