The Variety of Ways in Which Instructors Implement a Modular Digital Library Curriculum

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Introduction

- Purpose of the study:
  Understand the variety of ways in which instructors of DL courses adapt educational modules for their use
  - The assignments
  - The body of knowledge covered
  - The readings assigned

- Curriculum framework & modules
  - Interdisciplinary: computer science + information and library science
  - 10 broad areas
  - 47 individual modules; 15 currently available
  - http://curric.dlib.vt.edu/

- Methods
  - 18 field tests of 10 different modules
  - Conducted by 11 instructors at 10 institutions, summer and fall 2008
  - Individual instructor interviews covering their use/adaptation of the modules

Field tests conducted in 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of tests</th>
<th>Module</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1b, History of DLs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3b, Digitization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4b, Metadata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5b, Application software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6a, Information needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6b, Online information seeking behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6d, Interaction design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8a, Preservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9c, DL evaluation &amp; user studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9e, Intellectual property</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coverage of body of knowledge

- Topics in module outline
  - Metadata (Instructor 3)
  - Dublin Core (Instructor 3)
  - Namespace & repositories
  - Administrative metadata (Instructor 3)
  - Harvesting (Instructor 2)
  - Educational metadata
  - Semantic Web

- Topics added by instructors
  - Encoding, e.g., XML (Instructor 2)
  - Metadata standards (Instructor 2)
  - Where to put metadata (Instructor 3)

Coverage of readings

- Little consensus on assigned readings, particularly for 5b, 6a, 6b, 8a, and 9e
- Some agreement on assigned readings for 3b:
  - Chowdhury & Chowdhury, 2003
  - Cornell University Library, 2000
  - Smith, 1999

Coverage of assignments

- Most of the available activities and assignments were not used by these instructors
- Most courses focus on a term project involving designing/implementing a DL

Conclusions

- Customization has many dimensions: assignments, body of knowledge, readings
- Modular structure supports diverse implementations: different contexts, different instructors
- Instructors can make changes within the body of knowledge without disturbing the rest of the module
- High priority for future development: sample/sandbox DLs and case studies

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Instructor comments

- Metadata and Dublin Core already covered in required course (Instructor 2)
- Additional topics needed to support student projects (Instructor 11)
- Most topics covered in too much detail (Instructor 11)
- Fair use should be covered in more detail; it spawned much class discussion (Instructor 11)
- DRM covered in separate class session (Instructor 11)
- DRM not relevant to class project (Instructor 2)