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

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DIGITAL LIBRARIES Curriculum Development

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
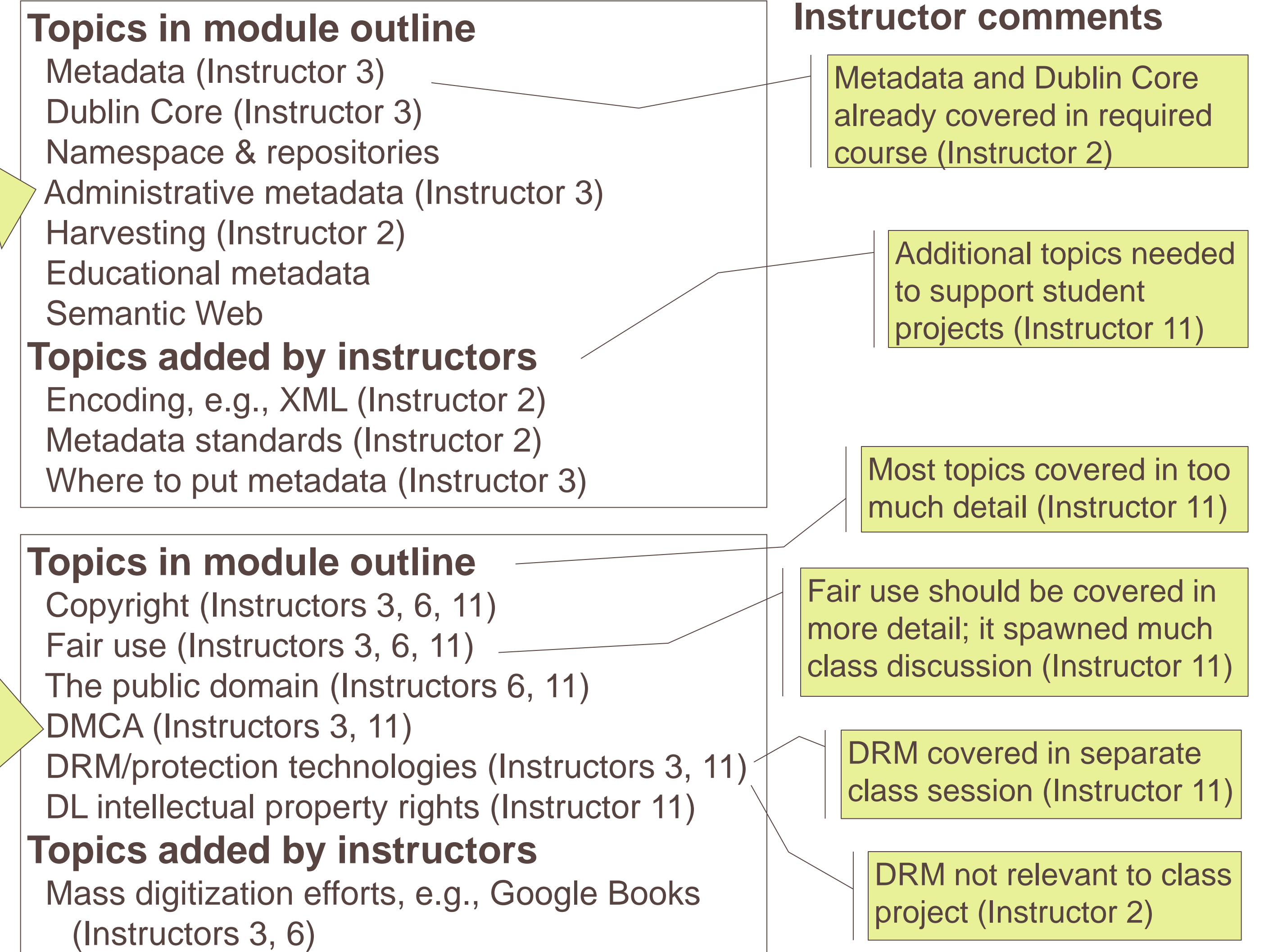 - Individual instructor interviews covering their use/adaptation of the modules

Field tests conducted in 2008

# of tests	Module
1	1b, History of DLs
2	3b, Digitization
3	4b, Metadata
2	5b, Application software
1	6a, Information needs
1	6b, Online information seeking behavior
2	6d, Interaction design
1	8a, Preservation
2	9c, DL evaluation & user studies
3	9e, Intellectual property

Example 1 →

Example 2 →

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

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)

Topics in module outline
- Copyright (Instructors 3, 6, 11)
- Fair use (Instructors 3, 6, 11)
- The public domain (Instructors 6, 11)
- DMCA (Instructors 3, 11)
- DRM/protection technologies (Instructors 3, 11)
- DL intellectual property rights (Instructor 11)

Topics added by instructors
- Mass digitization efforts, e.g., Google Books (Instructors 3, 6)

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)

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