The willingness of student respondents to pursue faculty or private sector positions suggests possibilities for private and non-profit partnerships. Respondents showed great diversity in their educational backgrounds and career goals.

There is apparently no set educational or career trajectory for digital curation professionals. Digital curation education efforts may profitably be extended to senior-level personnel and faculty members who should encourage teaching and research in the field.

The predominant venues of digital curation research were websites, blogs, and informal publications. There is no formal journal or conference that serves as the main outlet for digital curation research.

Method

DigCCurr II goals: understand and cultivate doctoral-level education in digital curation.

Research Question: in what contexts are digital curation research networks being addressed?

What disciplinary and institutional contexts?

How do researchers characterize their field and their work?

How do researchers describe their current and projected research environments?

The predominant venues (conferences, journals, and associations) were conferences, perhaps as a result of our sampling technique.

Study reports on: education; disciplinary background; research focus; connections among research networks and curricula

Venues examined: 1) The International Journal of Digital Curation (IJDC); 2) International Digital Curation Conference; 3) DigCCurr Conferences; 4) International Conference on the Preservation of Digital Objects (iPres)

Survey: April 2011 to May 2011, online solicitation to 607 authors and presenters of 686 contributions

At close of survey: 209 started; 180 completed; overall response rate of 29.65%

Career trajectories:

• Respondents also indicated their intended post-degree positions (each respondent chose up to three desired positions)

• The majority of the current students (eight of fourteen) intended to seek faculty positions, but three of the fourteen respondents (21%) would consider employment at a private corporation

• Senior positions (such as Executive Director or Head of Research) and academic faculty positions were the most frequently reported

Job titles:

• Senior roles (such as Executive Director or Head of Research) and academic faculty positions were the most frequently reported

• The term “digital curatorial” appeared frequently in respondents’ job titles, but three of the fourteen respondents (21%) would consider employment at a private corporation

Job titles:

Director, Executive Director, President, Head (24.7%, 44)
Research (23.6%, 42)
Professor (20.4%, 36)
Academic Librarian (15.4%, 27)
Assistant Professor (13.2%, 23)
Lecturer (10.1%, 18)
Data (8.4%, 15)
Curator (7.3%, 13)
Lecturer (6.2%, 11)
Other (5.6%, 10)

Results

Introduction and Context

• Digital curation “involves the management of digital objects over their entire lifecycle, ranging from pre-creation activities wherein systems are designed, and file formats and other data creation standards are established, through ongoing capture of evolving contextual information for digital assets housed in archival repositories” (Lee and Tibbo 2007)

• Digital curation goals: secure content; ensure continuing access; 2) add value

• Interdisciplinary and international

• Heterogeneous stakeholders

• Flexibility in designing educational and research frameworks

Describing the discipline:

• Respondents described (in free text) up to three disciplines in which they classified their research

• Many of the 119 respondents included “digital” in their descriptions

• The term “digital curation” appeared infrequently—only fourteen times in 364 total responses

• Respondents used terms and concepts drawn from information, archives or archiving, librarianship, or preservation.

• Presentation, article, and workshop titles were classified by their predominant themes:

• The most common terms used in presentation or article titles included “digital,” “preservation,” “data,” “curations,” and “information”

• The terms “research” and “science” appeared less frequently. The phrase “digital curation” was used quite infrequently, appearing in only five of 670 titles

Current research and mentoring:

73% of respondents are currently engaged in research

53% of respondents reported that they currently had students working with them

Selected references


