

Overview

- **Project Name:** History of the Indiana University Libraries
- **Timeline:** 12-18 months; ongoing, as-needed
- **Project Leads:** Michelle Dalmau, Angela Courtney and Lou Malcomb
- **Project Contributors:** Staff from Reference, Digital Collections Services, and select subject librarians
- **Project Partners:** Library Technologies, Libraries Human Resources, IU Archives, Center for the Study of History and Memory (and others to be defined)
- **Brief Description:** Create a comprehensive digital archive encapsulating the history of the Indiana University Libraries
- **Related Initiatives:** As part of engaged learning for the Scholars' Commons cross-training; Ongoing Scholars' Commons training; *War of 1812* project

Project Summary

The *History of the Indiana University Libraries* project is conceived as a comprehensive, multimedia, and perpetual digital archive documenting the earliest days of the Indiana University libraries through present times. The archive will serve as an engaged learning opportunity for Reference Services, Digital Collections Services, and Subject and Area Librarians as we retool our skills and knowledge in preparation for the Scholars' Commons. It will also provide a framework for ongoing, engaged learning opportunities for staff across the libraries as well as faculty and graduate students who participate in more general digital projects training that will be offered by the Scholars' Commons.

The project is conceived to:

- a) consolidate two parallel web sites¹ that cover the history of the IU Libraries by migrating the existing content into services such as Archives Online, Image Collections Online, and others for long-term digital preservation and access;
- b) digitize and describe existing content (35 mm slides, photographs, manuscripts, video recordings, newspaper clippings and other ephemeral materials) held by Lou Malcomb;
- c) cross-reference existing digital content about the libraries' history from related resources and repositories
- d) identify, digitize, and describe additional materials in existing repositories across campus;
- e) and create and compile *original* primary and secondary source contextual information by way of oral histories, essays, timelines and chronologies, biographical sketches, bibliographies, and other related information.

The learning goals are two-fold: to understand the multi-faceted dimensions, iterations and phases involved in designing and developing a *curated* digital archive, and for library staff contribute to the project as researchers.

Areas of Focus for Hands-On Training

A project of this scope will ensure exposure and experience-building across all service areas offered by the Scholars' Commons:

- Research Practices/Traditional Research
- Scholarly Communication & Publishing Services

¹ <http://bl-libg-doghill.ads.iu.edu/gpd-web/iulibraryhistorysite/index.php> and <http://www.libraries.iub.edu/index.php?pageId=5434>

- Copyright & Intellectual Property
- Data Analysis & Visualization
- Metadata
- Data Management
- Digitization Services
- Geospatial Services

Resources & Services

As the project is currently conceived, it would utilize the following existing services:

- IU Archives Online
- Image Collections Online
- Page-turning services for manuscripts, pamphlets, books, serials, etc.
- Avalon (possibly) for creating and managing oral histories and other audio/video recordings

Like the *War of 1812*, we imagine using Omeka as exhibit environment that collects and presents the various digital artifacts in one comprehensive, curated interface. The project will require some baseline support from Library Technologies (server administration and possibly minor programming support) and Digital Collections Services for use of the existing services outlined above.

Benefits

As stated above, this project provides a robust, engaged learning opportunity modeled much like the University of Virginia's Praxis Program² and the University of Maryland College Park's Digital Humanities Incubator program³ for meaningful cross training for Reference Services staff, Subject and Area Librarians, and Digital Collections Services staff in preparation for the opening of the Scholars' Commons. The pioneering model for this type of hands-on learning experience is coming out of Columbia University as part of two-year training program known as the Developing Librarian Project, which is preparing approximately 12 subject librarians for the opening of their new digital humanities center.⁴ We are following their progress⁵ and communicating with the lead designers of that learning program as we plan for training modules tailored to the *History of the Libraries* project, resource allocation, and assessment rubrics to ensure we are all indeed learning as we go.

By working collaboratively on a uniform project, we will maximize opportunities for knowledge transfer across our various domains from research methods to reference techniques, from digitization best practices to metadata standards. We will also collectively gain the much-needed insight to the ins and outs of managing a project of this scale and with such diversity of materials that are not subject to special handling or restrictive access.

Finally and no less important, with Lou Malcomb's imminent retirement, and as the main person who has taken up this noble cause to trace and tell the stories of the IU Libraries, we, staff of the IU Libraries, feel compelled to preserve, manage, grow and provide unfettered access to this treasure trove of information.

² <http://praxis.scholarslab.org/about.html>

³ <http://mith.umd.edu/community/dh-events/event/digital-humanities-incubator/>

⁴ <http://acrl.ala.org/dh/2013/07/01/the-developing-librarian-project/>

⁵ <http://www.developinglibrarian.org>