Data Information Literacy

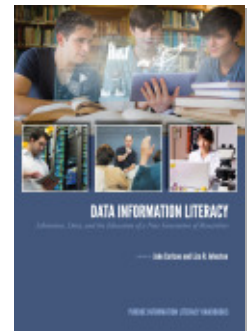Carlson, Jake , Johnston, Lisa

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PREFACE

We did not set out to write a book on the subject of data information literacy. Our initial intent was to explore the educational needs of graduate students in working with data and to report our findings to the research library community. When we started our investigations in 2010, there was a dawning recognition among academic librarians that the rising expectations for researchers to manage, document, organize, disseminate, and preserve their data in ways that would contribute to the advancement of their fields would require novel educational initiatives and programs. More importantly, we recognized that this was an area where librarians could potentially make important contributions. At the time, there were only a few examples of educational programs that addressed issues relating to data management and curation and very little practical guidance on what content should be taught.

Our early investigation into articulating "data information literacy," or DIL as we came to call it, was tremendously helpful for us in better understanding the needs of faculty and students in this space. However, as the needs surrounding educational programming on data issues became more apparent, the more questions we had. Based on prior research by a Purdue University team the 12 DIL competencies helped us to see possibilities for developing educational programming, but what would our programming actually include, what pedagogies could be applied, and what would we as librarians be qualified to teach to researchers? In short, how could we apply the theoretical competencies for DIL in ways that would have a real-world impact on students? Thanks to the generous support of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, we had the opportunity to seek answers to these questions through developing the Data Information Literacy project.

This book contains descriptions of our work in carrying out the DIL project, but our goal in sharing our findings in this way goes far beyond simply reporting our experiences. We believe that DIL represents an opportunity to leverage the expertise, knowledge, and skill sets of librarians and apply them to an area of

growing need. Fulfilling this need represents a potentially significant advancement for librarians in engaging in both the teaching and research missions of the academy. To further this goal, we share our findings and our experiences from a practical approach, in ways that will enable librarians and other information professionals to build on our work and to incorporate what we have learned into their own DIL programs as appropriate. It is our sincere hope that this book will serve not only as a resource to those who seek to develop DIL initiatives and programs at their institutions, but as a means to further a discussion on the direction of DIL and how it could take shape as a component of services offered by the library.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The editors of this volume would like to recognize the commitment, hard work, and dedication of every DIL team member who participated on this project. Without the creativity and passion of these individuals in shaping and implementing the DIL project, as well as in writing up their experiences with their respective programs, this book would not be at all possible. Thank you Camille Andrews, Marianne Bracke, Michael Fosmire, Jon Jeffryes, Christopher C. Miller, Megan Sapp Nelson, Dean Walton, Brian Westra, and Sarah Wright for making this book and the DIL project a success. We also wish to thank the Institute of Museum and Library Services for their generous support in funding this project, Dr. Sharon Weiner for her thorough review and helpful suggestions, and the staff at the Purdue University Press, who have been a joy to work with in putting this book together. Finally, a special thank you to our trusted graduate assistant, Mason Nichols, who diligently tweeted our praises, caught and corrected our mistakes, and kept us on track through documenting our progress.

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