

Digital Humanities Initiative

Survey of interest in DH at CEU¹

I. Overview

At the beginning of the Fall 2016 semester, the DHI circulated a short survey to determine the level of familiarity and experience with the digital humanities at CEU. We wanted to identify existing strengths, possible avenues for growth, and needs for further resources to enhance DH practices. Above all, our goal was to identify areas of DH interest among students, staff, and faculty, and to begin to build a real DH community around these shared interests.

Out of the 134 respondents, we found that there is a much wider interest than practical experience with DH. Only 8.2% described themselves as “very familiar” with the term, another 29% as “somewhat familiar,” while the majority of those surveyed answered either “a little” or “not at all.” At the same time, even with little exposure, most people expressed some interest in learning more about a particular DH methodology, as tabulated below:

Would you be interested in learning more about any of these DH practices?	Little or Not at all familiar (N of yes answers) N = 219	
Text analysis (quantitative analysis of large collections of text)	47	21%
Mapping-GIS	29	13%
Network analysis	39	18%
Data curation, digital collections and exhibits	32	15%
Digital storytelling	28	13%
Video production	24	11%
Immersive digital technologies	20	9%

Those least familiar with DH seem the most interested in text analysis, while those with just a little exposure seem to be equally drawn towards network analysis and text analysis:

Would you be interested in learning more about any of these digital humanities practices?	Familiarity with digital humanities practices	
	Little familiar (N of yes answers) N=36	Not at all familiar (N of yes answers) N=38
Text analysis	21	26
Mapping-GIS	13	16
Network analysis	22	17
Data curation, digital collections and exhibit	17	15
Digital storytelling	17	11
Video production	14	10
Immersive digital technologies	11	9

¹ Many of the tables in this summary were produced by Anna Galácz of the Institutional Research Office, who kindly helped us with the survey design, dissemination, and analysis.

Among those more familiar with DH, their experiences seem concentrated in text analysis, mapping, network analysis, and digital storytelling.

Which of the various Digital Humanities methodologies have you used, at least on a basic level?	Familiarity with digital humanities practices	
	Somewhat familiar (N of yes answers) N=34	Very much familiar (N of yes answers) N=9
Text analysis	15	6
Mapping-GIS	9	5
Network analysis	9	1
Topic modelling	3	3
Digital storytelling	10	3
Video production	5	2

II. Some definitions

The very first reaction that most people have to the term “digital humanities” is “what exactly is it?” Although there are hundreds of readily-available definitions out there, we believe that the meaning of DH differs from one setting to the next, depending on the academic and social context of a given university. With this in mind, we were curious to know how people at CEU define DH as it relates to their respective fields. Here are some of their responses:

Color-codes

	Not at all familiar		Somewhat familiar
	Little familiar		Very much familiar

How would you define Digital Humanities in the context of your own research and teaching activities? Is there a specific branch of the Digital Humanities that you think might be relevant to your work?
Digital Humanities: for organizing, analyzing and displaying both quantitative and qualitative research data from the humanities and social sciences
Citation management, research data management
digital archives, collaborative teaching, digital story telling, digital mapping
The engagement of liberal arts studies (literature, history, sociology, anthropology, arts, etc.) with some of the concepts, tools and frameworks provided by the digital age (computing, information technology. Text parsing/ mining; network analysis; manuscript digitization.
In my case DH would/is significantly contributing through digitizing archival material and setting up of thematic/field-oriented libraries and clusters of information.
Digital cartography and Historical GIS is the most relevant for my project
1., the transformation of philological research into internet research is an important change that I have experienced during my career - I am often thinking about this as a philosophical problem
2., social network analysis - I have supervised 3 theses on this topic, worked with the students and with colleagues from the Network Analysis Department
3., digital data banks (prosopography, epigraphy, iconography)
I work with digitized manuscripts. I am interested in digital paleography.

*DHI Interim Report
Appendix B: Survey Summary*

video and photo recordings and infographics
the practice of digitizing historical texts. philosophical research
DH: digital transformation of humanities, the influence of ITC on humanities, using ITC in studying and teaching humanities, IC's influence on society and individuals
Digital humanities make primary sources available and easily searchable, especially as I am interested in the use of certain concepts, it helps a lot to find those in a text quickly.
Digital Humanities is the solid method of accumulating knowledge through the usage of digital technology that enables researchers find/storage/organize materials in the way which they direct. In my research area, contemporary history, digital humanities is one of the most recent focuses that contributes to new archival practice.
Wide use of big data processed via specialized software to enhance the understanding of serial processes and discover unexpected connections. In my field it is mostly connected with lexicometry and qualitative data mining on large sets.
online platforms for sharing, accessing, and processing research material in the Humanities
1. Handling (collecting, sorting, saving) research materials in electronic form. 2. Using technology in the teaching process.
Since I'm essentially reading History, I think of DH primarily in terms of archive/info management and analysis. Also, because it's important to me that my research speaks to a broader public beyond the classroom, broadcasting over social media (and the various, more interactive forms that this can take) is also particularly relevant.
It means another approach to texts and data basically. Our traditional tools in sociology (quantitative and qualitative) have been dramatically transformed by DH. It is true in the way I approach texts of course but also in the way I gather and analyse data
(Crowdsourc) Mapping (such as geographic mapping of destroyed areas), surveying, blogging
Through my earlier work with IISD since the early nineties and continuing to some extent at CEU since 2010 we have been experimenting with the use of a very wide range of digital technologies to create engagement platforms, acquire, organize and present data, facilitate learning etc.
Digital Humanities backup the methodological elaboration of my research and teaching practices.
I'm interested in some of the philosophical issues surrounding the use of digital technologies. I am particularly interested in the question of how the use of data storage transforms our conception of knowledge
ELearning is strongly connected to digital humanities being the tool for knowledge dissemination within universities and other knowledge generating entities. It also relates to the notion of the third generation univeristy utilizing the knowledge triangle.
Not relevant to my research, but helps to make math students or me all-round scholars
Digital mapping has been used for the history of telegraph communication due to the database from the ITU beginning in 1865. Also, I have used data analysis techniques, realized in tabular form, to quantify samples and time lines of film co-productions.
In the context of my own research Digital Humanities can be defined as the most innovative, but still an alternative approach towards the preservation and presentation of the Human Heritage. In my area of research visualizing tools might prove useful.
Practical approach that helps to build conceptual background for research
I am teaching geospatial technologies.
GIS mapping is a strong component in my new research project - I will be collective data on refugee women and mapping on the basis of communities of religious influence online and how these come to bear on the spatial mapping of refugees and their communities. I hope to create a book with an online supplementary component using this form of digital mapping.
Online text corpora; digital support for critical editing; prosopographical databases; OCR and automatical translation; GIS
In my own field, there is much talk about digital text editions. I have been working on databases containing information on manuscripts, and the integration of different databases is now an important issue. In terms of teaching, much remains to be done.
I consider at least a part of every research project in quantitative terms, and try to find an angle which could generate interesting DH results
Digital Philology

DH is applying computer-based methods and tools to humanities.
I work with geospatial technologies, including but not limited to - geospatial data visualization, - crowdsourcing, - remote sensing, - satellite technologies, - data analysis, - mapping (as digital storytelling),
Definition: any project that uses digital technologies in the analysis or presentation of data. For my work, tools allowing the study of word usage throughout a corpus and changes in the transmission of texts are particularly useful. I also use a lot of the digital classics resources (e.g. online texts, digital editions of manuscripts, interactive maps of the ancient world etc.)
historical (searchable) text databases
image repositories
editing tools

III. Current Projects and Resources

The last important finding from this preliminary survey is an overview of people’s current projects that they consider relevant to DH, and the identification of key resources that are either present or needed to carry out DH projects. Again, we left this as an open-ended question in order to capture the widest range of responses. A follow-up survey at the end of the Winter 2017 term will explore the CEU community’s use of specific DH-relevant resources on campus.

Apart from the Syslab, mentioned several times as a key resource for help in mapping-GIS, most respondents reported that they carried out their DH projects outside of CEU due to lack of resources.

What CEU resources (e.g., digital content, personnel, funding, tools, knowledge) have you used to carry out this work? Have you had any problem finding resources or relevant personnel at CEU?
e-journals, internet access, project funding from CEU to create and change platforms on MAD database
smart classrooms, IT support, course support
I have been away from CEU since June 2015, and I was hardly able to get acquainted with the various resources and opportunities at our disposal. But yes, I've had very little help in handling digital manuscripts and in coming up with theory-driven research questions that would take into account the specific materiality of the digitized manuscript.
The project is currently housed at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, but at a previous phase Victor Lagutov was helpful with discussing possible digital alternatives. Now a CEU alumna, Katalin Tolnai works as cartographer for the project.
None, I did my work elsewhere. I would appreciate possibilities - software and workshops how to use it.
Personnel, tools are needed
None. I had no idea that CEU was doing anything at all in this area (I assumed Open Archives was but hadn't checked in with them). My own department seems quite behind the curve here.
CEU and SPP communication offices help with media. Viktor and Rob helped a lot with mapping. Outsourced website creation. Online polling through activist networks.
Most of my work used outside resources, though through the work of some of my students I make use of network science, some GIS and integrated modeling
I used SPSS in the past but have not used new techniques.

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None; realized in Austria
yes. CEU support is needed in providing digital technologies to humanities
Hardly any until now; I once had contacts to GIS experts in Environmental Studies but did not pursue
Funding for DH projects
Syslab, which I lead, provides technical and consultative support to other CEU units in terms of mapping and otehrs relevant use geospatial technologies.
I have difficulties finding funding to provide mapping/GIS services to CEU community and support CEU research projects by my branch of DH. There is high and constantly growing demand in both teaching and practicing geospatial technologies at CEU.
I have only done this outside of CEU. We don't have access to digital editions of classical texts through the university library.

Please list DH projects in which you are involved or will be involved, and what resources (hardware, software, IT staff) you would need to carry out these project(s).
Medieval Animal Data-network (MAD) with the Institute for Daily Life at University of Salzburg and Hypothese blogging group (France)
Collaborative research seminar, IT digital mapping
Network of New Materialism (COST Project)
ArcGIS would be very useful, also in order to use the project results and interim results in teaching.
Teaching entrepreneurship. Permanently updated video library of cases, interviews etc. would help a lot.
I have finished the project and later I will most probably leave CEU. However, a software lab with available workshops how to use would be an advantage. During my entire CEU period I have not approached any info/offer concerning computer aided text data mining.
I'm working on a virtual women's history museum and right now everything is done using basic tools (text editor, a Wordpress site, Zotero, tools readily available on my Mac like Automator for scripting). I know that there are much better tools that could be particularly useful, but they are expensive (even where educational licences are discounted). If CEU has a library of software, I'd love to know about it. More importantly, if anyone is doing stuff around digital archives, I would love to meet and work with them!
The Aleppo Project: data scraping, from social media. Digital databases in social, urban, and conflict studies.
Currently I'm involved in a data analysis project with Szent Istvan University and National University of Public Service scrutinizing data derived from the eLearning system of NUPS defining those factors whic enhance knowledge takeup during the learning process.
Research and teaching assistants in Syslab to attract external funding and to teach geospatial technologies to CEU community
I am currently applying for funding for my new project. The software I have considered using is ArcGIS, and can use the currently licensed software through CEU. In terms of funds going forward, I would need some support for data management and a few trained graduate students to help with data collection and analysis.
Various OCR projects, have used OCR for nineteenth-century Gothic script; with a colleague I am now working on using OCR for early modern manuscripts
1- Phylogenetic analysis of Qur'anic manuscripts (in progress) 2- Documentary Digital Editions (e.g. https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/minganaLewis), reconstruction of underwriting of palimpsest Resources:IT professional with experience in using electronic tools to analyze texts, and in writing software applicable to text analysis
I offer regular support of CEU units (History, Medieval , Political sciences, School of Public Policy, International relations, etc) with maps development for research and publications. I need research assistants for that since there are many requests for technical qualified assistance. I could provide it through having trained assistants whom I could supervise.
At some point in the future, I would like to provide a digital edition of Cicero's translation of Plato's Timeaus providing a hyperlinked text showing the Latin, Greek, and English. I would need somewhere to host this, and some help with data entry and IT support.

IV. Conclusions

This is the only first of three surveys that we plan to distribute over the grant term, as we will try to measure the impact of our activities on the university community. From this first snapshot, we are able to conclude that:

- 1) Two-thirds of those surveyed had little or no idea what DH is in an increasingly digital era, at a university based in the humanities and social sciences;
- 2) However, there is a strong curiosity among humanists at CEU about digital tools;
- 3) Those who have had more experience with digital tools are based in the social sciences, and are quite open to collaboration with humanists;
- 4) There are existing resources on campus (such as the Center for Network Sciences) which could be very useful for humanists and are not yet being fully tapped;
- 5) The Syslab is already engaged in training humanists, but needs much more support to meet the demands of possible DH practitioners;
- 6) There is a clear need for new expertise, digital tools, and training in computational text analysis (text mining).