SI 699: Digital Curation Mastery
Winter 2018

Meets: Thursday 1-4 PM, 2185 North Quad
Instructor: Margaret Hedstrom
Office: 4443 North Quad
Office hours: Thursday 9-11 AM or by appointment (4443 NQ)
Email: hedstrom@umich.edu

Syllabus subject to change. Most current version always available on Canvas.

COURSE OVERVIEW

Mastery Courses:
Mastery courses are advanced one-semester courses that require students to demonstrate command of the key theories, methods, approaches, and capabilities required for entry into a specific class of information professions. Unlike other courses with significant faculty-led structure and scaffolding, mastery courses require you to demonstrate initiative and show that you can independently design, implement, evaluate, and complete a sizable project, with faculty primarily in the role of advisor and mentor. Successful completion of a mastery course implies a level of proficiency comparable to or exceeding a well-launched employee in a field.

This mastery course prepares students for careers in data management, access, and preservation in many different venues: research libraries as data services librarians and digital collections managers, digital archives and domain repositories (e.g. ICPSR, NOAA and NASA data centers, NCAR), the publishing and entertainment industry as digital product managers, corporations and not-for-profits as internal data management specialists, and as consultants.

This mastery course is designed for students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in digital curation through completion of a client-based project with a specific outcome. Each student will work with one client on a specific digital curation problem, such as:

- developing and implementing a data management plan
- designing methods and tools to curate and transfer data to a repository
- analyzing and improving an existing collection
- developing tools that help users discovery and use a digital collection, etc.

The quality of the work will be evaluated on user acceptance of the solution, effectiveness and efficiency of the proposed curation processes, and the completeness of the final product. Each student will be assigned a project and a client prior to the beginning of the course. Projects will be assigned based on prior discussion with the instructor balancing a combination of student interests, prior experience, client needs and availability of projects.
Course Prerequisites:
SI 501: Contextual Inquiry and Consulting Foundations or prior experience with client-focused project management
SI 506 Programming 1 and 507 Intermediate Programming or demonstration of ability to write simple programs and manipulate data
SI 622: Needs Assessment and Usability Evaluation
SI 623: Research Methods of Information Professionals (or prior coursework in statistics, research methods, or demonstrated research experience)
625: Digital Preservation

Students lacking these formal requirements should contact the instructor for permission to enroll based on demonstration of required competencies which may have been achieved through some combination of UMSI coursework, appropriate coursework prior to matriculating at UMSI, internships, documentable work experiences, or other structured learning.

Learning Objectives:
This course will draw on existing knowledge and skills (including ability to search for and evaluate existing policies, practices, and tools) that may be relevant to the project.

Students must demonstrate the following competencies to successfully complete this course:

1. Identify and translate digital curation and data management needs of individuals and organizations into a specific set of systems and services. These needs may include guiding data producers in making their data archive-ready, advising on data formats and metadata, preparing data for deposit into a repository, evaluating repository options, finding or customizing software and workflow tools that support specific curation processes, and improving the accessibility and usability of a collection of digital content.

2. Recommend viable options for long-term curation of digital information.

3. Design, select and evaluate a solution based on trial implementations and assessment.

4. Develop a sustainability plan.

Requirements and Assignments
This course will not present formally structured new material. There are no specific course readings. You are expected (with guidance from the instructor and others) to identify gaps in your specific knowledge (about the digital content, research methods, current or potential users, policy environment, formats, metadata standards, available...
tools, repository options, etc.), identify potential solutions, and evaluate their relevance and feasibility for your project).

There are 5 milestones for this project designed to keep you on track and on schedule:

1. Client Requirements: A formal statement of your client’s requirements  
   Due: January 26 at noon

2. Formal Problem Statement and Proposed Approaches: A statement of the problem and two or three strategies that you will investigate as possible solutions.  
   Due: February 19 at noon

3. Proposed Approach: A statement of your proposed solution  
   Due: March 9

4. Formal Implementation Proposal: A proposal for implementing your solution, including statements of responsibility and cost estimates  
   Due: March 23

   Due: March 30

**Project Journal**
You are required to keep a journal of your activities for this project, including:
   1. All meetings with clients  
   2. Consultation with experts  
   3. Sources consulted  
   4. Possible solutions, assessment, and reasons for pursuing or rejecting a particular approaches  
   5. Tests and experimentation (including failures, blind alleys, and rabbit holes.  
   6. Lessons learned
You will submit this journal with your final project report.

**Final Project Report**
You will submit a final project report, similar to the type of report that might be required of sponsor or funding agency for your project.  
Due: April 16.
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ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Original work: Unless otherwise specified in an assignment all submitted work must be your own, original work. Any excerpts, statements, or phrases from the work of others must be clearly identified as a quotation, and a proper citation provided. Any violation of the School’s policy on Academic and Professional Integrity (stated in the Master’s and Doctoral Student Handbooks) will result in serious penalties, which might range from failing an assignment, to failing a course, to being expelled from the program. Violations of academic and professional integrity will be reported to UMSI Student Affairs. Consequences impacting assignment or course grades are determined by the faculty instructor; additional sanctions may be imposed by the assistant dean for academic and student affairs.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way we teach may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) to help us determine appropriate accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; ssd.umich.edu/) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. I will treat any information that you provide in as confidential a manner as possible.

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing: The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students, while acknowledging that a variety of issues, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, and depression, directly impacts students’ academic performance.

If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (734) 764-8312 and https://caps.umich.edu/ during and after hours, on weekends and holidays or through its counselors physically located in schools on both North and Central Campus. You may also consult University Health Service (UHS) at (732) 764-8320 and https://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs, or for alcohol or drug concerns, see www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources.

For a more comprehensive listing of the broad range of mental health services available on campus, please visit: http://umich.edu/~mhealth/