



Training Needs Survey: Final Report

TDL DSpace Education Working Group

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Introduction

The Texas Digital Library (TDL) is a consortium of higher education institutions in Texas. TDL builds capacity for member institutions to preserve, manage, and provide access to digital collections of enduring value.

TDL was founded in 2005 by four Association of Research Libraries (ARL) member libraries in Texas (Texas A&M University, Texas Tech University, the University of Houston, and the University of Texas at Austin) and by 2006 was hosting DSpace repositories for its members. As of 2016, TDL hosts 16 DSpace digital repository instances on its servers for member institutions. DSpace is a widely-used open source repository software for managing and preserving digital content. Although the TDL hosts the repository instances, individual institutions are responsible for managing their repositories and the content stored therein.

The TDL DSpace Education Working Group convened in Spring 2016 with the objective of assessing, updating, and standardizing DSpace training offered to member institutions by TDL. In order to understand the type of training that repository managers need, the Working Group developed an exploratory survey. The “DSpace Training Needs Survey” was launched during the Texas Conference on Digital Libraries (TCDL) in May 2016, and remained open through June 2016.

One of TDL’s strategies is to create meaningful and innovative professional development programs. However, only limited background information is available regarding the extent, frequency, and success of TDL’s DSpace training program. With this survey project, the DSpace Education Working Group is attempting to start recording and assessing our progress.

Survey Method

Members of the 2015–2016 TDL DSpace Education Working Group included librarians from five member institutions who work closely with TDL-hosted DSpace instances. All members of the Working Group previously attended in-person or online DSpace training offered by TDL.

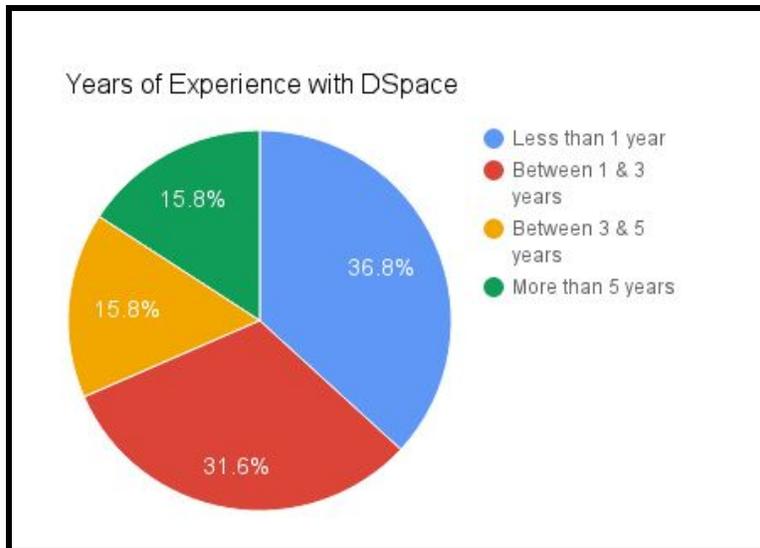
The exploratory survey included quantitative and qualitative data collection, and investigated two key areas of TDL DSpace training:

1. Identifying which elements of previous training were helpful, and which were less useful.
2. Finding gaps in coverage, and areas for improvement in future training.

The survey included 18 questions covering training in both introductory and advanced DSpace topics. The survey, which we introduced at a Birds of a Feather session at TCDL 2016, was made available as a Google Form, and distributed to institutional repository managers via the TDL-Community Google Group email. Each question was optional. Therefore, the number of responses recorded for individual questions may differ.

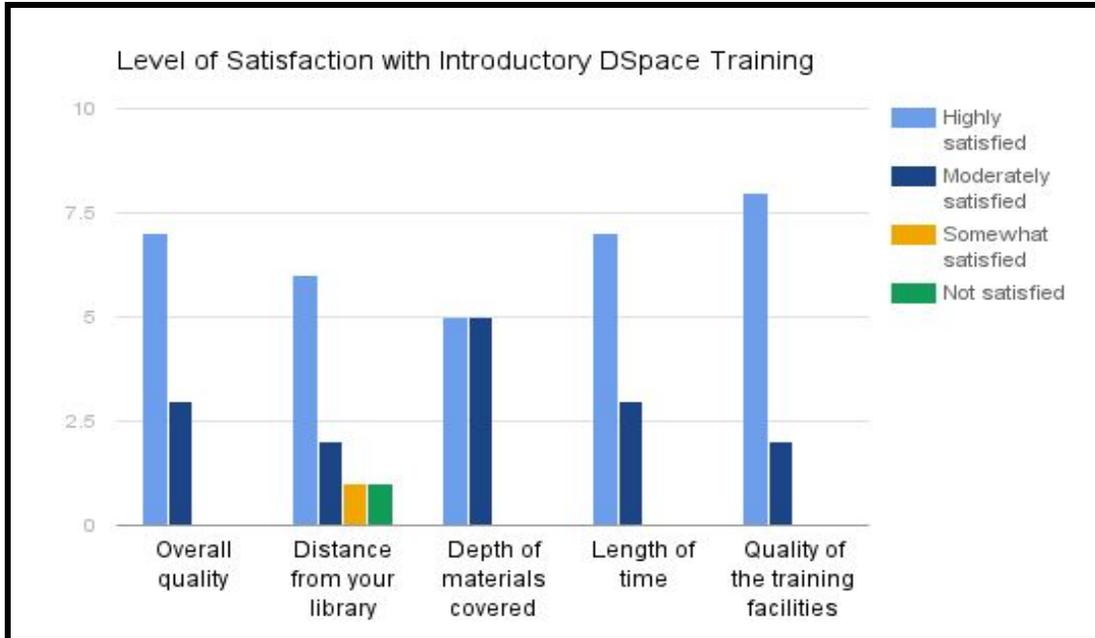
Results

A total of 19 participants answered questions in the survey. According to the responses, 13 out of the 19 survey participants had 3 years or less of experience using the DSpace software. Only three respondents had over 5 years of experience with DSpace. The majority, 11 of 19 respondents, previously attended at least one DSpace training run by TDL.

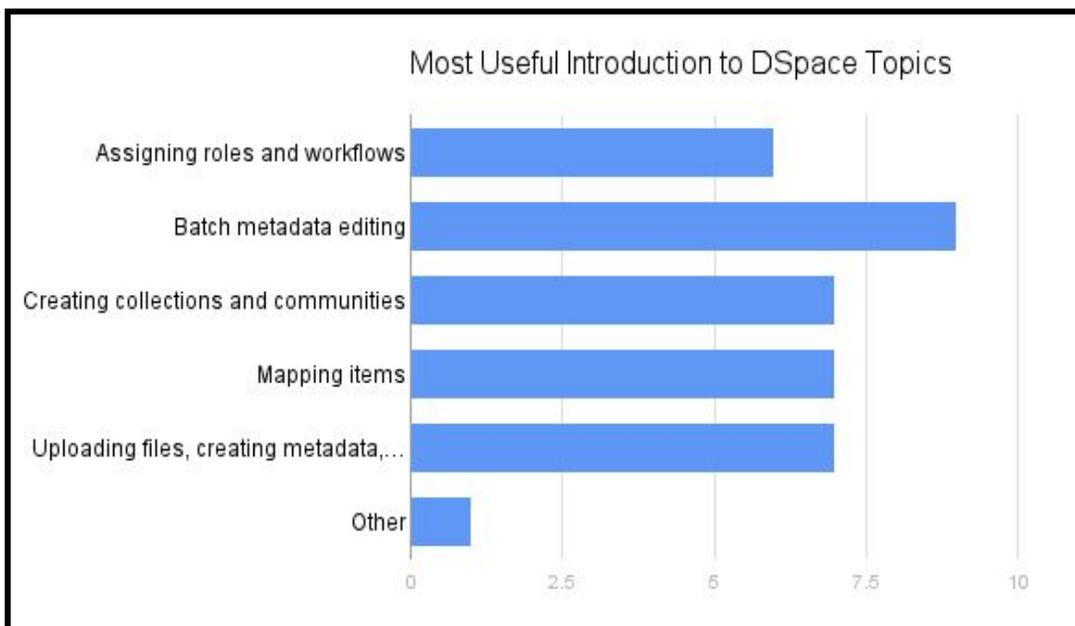


Introductory DSpace Training

Ten respondents answered questions pertaining to their satisfaction with "Introduction to DSpace training workshop" provided by TDL. Seven indicated that they were highly satisfied with the overall quality of this workshop, while 3 were moderately satisfied. Six participants also indicated that they were highly satisfied with the distance of the training locations from their home institution. Seven out of 10 were also highly satisfied with the duration of the training workshops, and 8 with the quality of the facilities. All 10 respondents indicated that they were moderately to highly satisfied with the depth of materials covered in the training workshops.

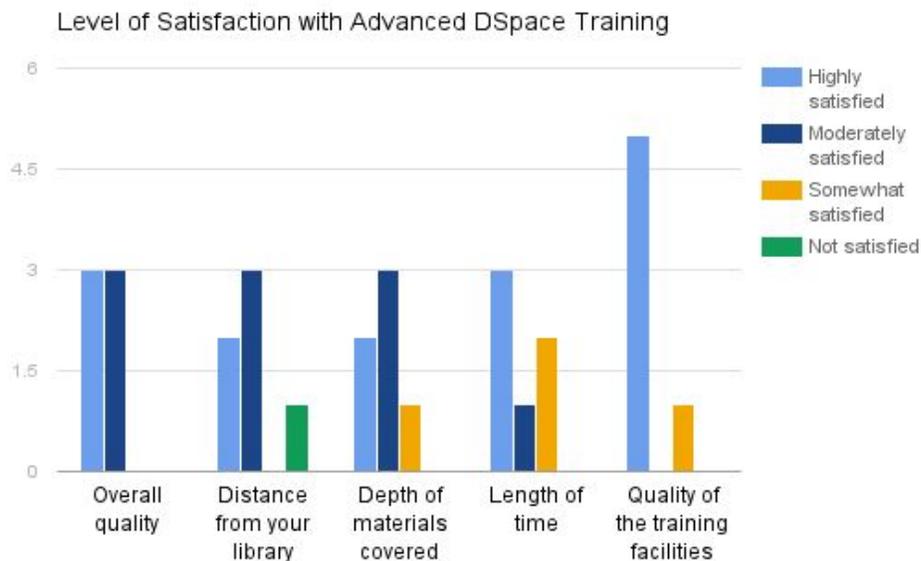


Twelve participants responded to a question asking which introductory DSpace topics they found most useful. Nine out of 12 indicated that batch metadata editing was one of the most useful topics. Other topics considered most useful to the majority of respondents include creating collections and communities; mapping items; uploading files; creating metadata; editing items.



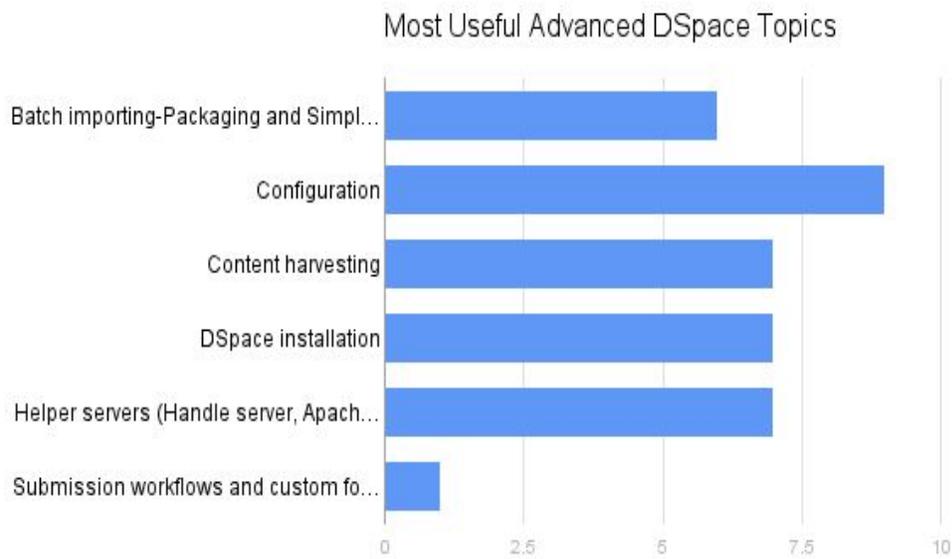
Advanced DSpace Training

Of the respondents, six responded to questions regarding Advanced DSpace Training. Half of respondents were highly satisfied (50%) or moderately satisfied (50%) with Advanced DSpace Training workshops. The majority of respondents indicated that they were somewhat satisfied or moderately satisfied with the length of time (50%) and depth of the materials (67%) covered in the training sessions. Most respondents were moderately satisfied (50%) with the distance of the training sessions from their home institution, though one respondent was not satisfied (17%).

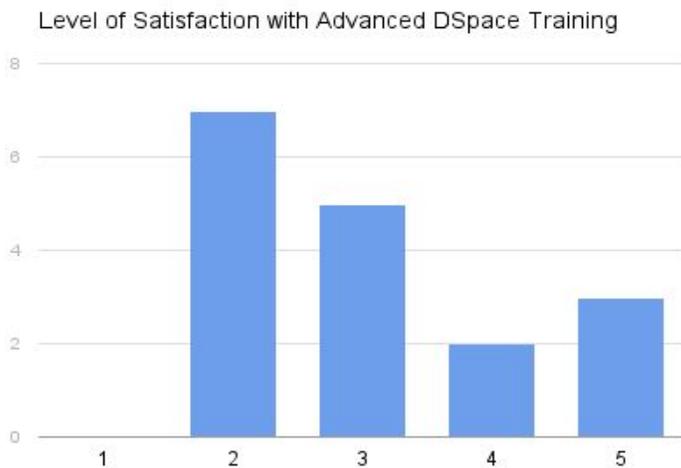


Comments relating to the Advanced DSpace Training indicated that respondents found the material too advanced and difficult to understand. In addition, one respondent noted that they would have preferred a training session on Linux instead of Microsoft.

Of the topics discussed in the Advanced DSpace Training workshops, respondents indicated that theming (67%) and batch importing - packaging and simple archive format (56%) were most useful. Respondents indicated moderate interest in other topics, including configuration (44%), content harvesting (33%), and submission workflows and custom forms (33%).



Respondents were asked to indicate on a scale of 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree) how much they agree with the following statement: “DSpace training is offered frequently enough to meet the needs of our organization”.

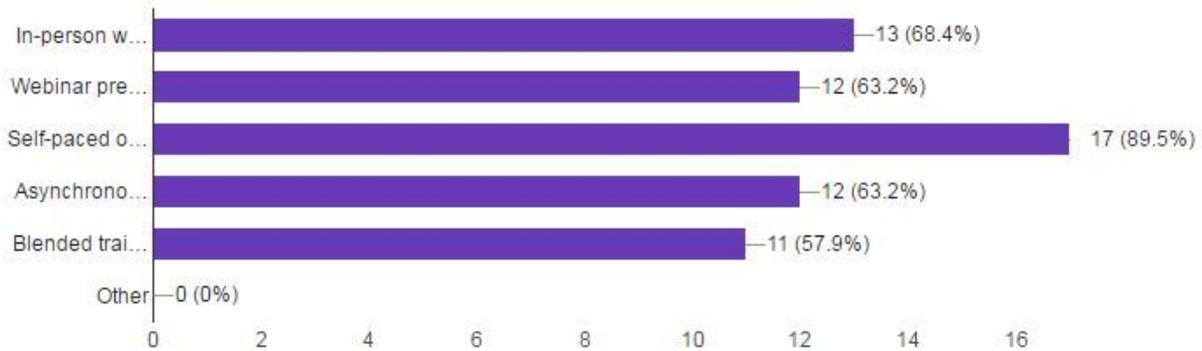


Training Formats

In this section, respondents were allowed to choose all of the training formats that they preferred. Out of 19 total respondents for the survey, 17 said that they would like self-paced online tutorials.

10) Which of the following training formats do you prefer? (Check all that apply)

(19 responses)



Recommendations

Through the TDL DSpace Training Needs Survey, the TDL DSpace Education Working Group identified a set of recommendations for future DSpace training planning:

1. There is an immediate desire for point-of-need training and assistance.
2. In-person Introduction to DSpace Training can be held in Austin, central locations, or online based on the needs of users, but we recommend shifting our focus to online training.
3. Hold online Intro to DSpace training courses; post recordings of these sessions for later asynchronous use, thus lessening the need for in-person training.
4. Create shorter online training courses for specific subjects (ex. Batch uploading, batch metadata editing). These can either be done live or prerecorded.
5. Create interactive exercises (with supplementary sample files, metadata, etc.) for self-paced training so that people can practice performing basic DSpace functions in the DSpace training repository.
6. Create written guides (illustrated with screenshots) for people needing a refresher on a topic.
7. Based on the survey results, we need to provide intermediate-level training on specific topics such as batch importing data and theming.
8. Offer a Train the Trainers session.

Implementation

We have already made progress towards some of our recommendations, and offer the following roadmap for the rest:

1. Compile a directory of “experts” who know enough about various DSpace topics to feel comfortable helping others.

2. Most large institutions in Texas fall within TDL's currently-established footprint, making it convenient for an in-person trainer to travel there. We could thus consider offering one large in-person training per year in a central location, with webinars serving smaller institutions and new personnel throughout the year.
3. We have already started offering Introductory DSpace online, with Texas Woman's University and UT-Rio Grande Valley as the first recipients. The introductory session was pared down to 2 hours, with some topics deferred for intermediate training sessions. Recordings are available in the TDL DSpace repository.
4. We have already created and delivered (again, to TWU and UT-RGV) a 1-hour Intermediate DSpace webinar on metadata upload, editing, and other batch operations. Recordings are available in the TDL DSpace repository.
5. The DSpace Education Working Group will create e-packets of exercises and sample files for learners to use in self-paced training, aiming for completion by Fall 2017.
6. We will produce illustrated guides (&/or walkthrough-style narration to accompany the training slides we already have), aiming for completion by Fall 2017.
7. The directory of experts (see: 1.) could serve as a pool of recruits to assist with the creation and/or delivery of intermediate-level training.
8. With Introduction to DSpace training no longer necessarily taking a whole day, and with Intermediate training being broken out by subject, we might have an easier time recruiting new trainers. The current "master & apprentice" system of trainer training still works too, but we might consider trying a lunchtime trainer recruitment & training session at a future TCDL.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shelley Barba (Chair, 2015-2017)

Anna Dabrowski

Susan Elkins

Nerissa Lindsey

Colleen Lyon

Laura Kane McElfresh (Chair, 2017-)

Alexandra Mitchell

Laura Waugh

Faedra Wills