TDL DSpace Education Working Group (DEWG)

Joseph Pruett, Laura Kane McElfresh, Colleen Lyon

TDL DSpace User Group Meeting, 2018-09-25
DEWG Membership

- Laura Kane McElfresh (Chair), Texas A&M Galveston Library*
- Lea DeForest, Texas Digital Library
- Susan Elkins, Sam Houston State University Libraries*
- Nerissa Lindsey, Texas A&M International Libraries
- Colleen Lyon, University of Texas at Austin Libraries
- Joseph Pruett, Angelo State University Libraries
- Ed Warga, Texas A&M Corpus Christi Libraries
- Laura Waugh, Texas State University Libraries
- Faedra Wills, University of Texas at Arlington Libraries*

- Shelley Barba (founding Chair; member emerita), Texas Tech Libraries*
- Alex Mitchell (member emerita), Texas A&M Galveston Library

*founding members
The TDL DSpace Education Working Group was formed in early 2016, with the charge to “assess, update, and standardize the DSpace training TDL offers to its members”.

A small group at first, we had our founding meeting on February 4th, 2016 under Shelley Barba’s leadership. Our first order of business: survey the TDL DSpace user community to gauge their training needs and their level of satisfaction with the suite of training services TDL offered at the time.

The results of that survey have guided our work to the present time.

Survey report: http://hdl.handle.net/2249.1/82158

(That link for the survey report will be on the final slide. You might also want to paste it into chat.)

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Three of the DEWG’s major landmarks are the DSpace Training Needs Survey; the transition to online Intro DSpace training instead of face-to-face only; and the creation of the DSpace documentation of time and having to split off some of the content into a follow-up “Intermediate” session, which actually was not bad. (It’s much easier to block out time for a pair of 2-hour webinars than for a single 4-hour one, and good to get some practice with the basics before plunging ahead into batch metadata operations and such.)

In early 2017, some new users at Texas Woman’s University needed training. Sending a trainer to Denton would not have been too difficult; but TWU was interested in the online format. So we did a repeat of the same 2 training sessions, because why not?manual.

We had an opportunity to try out online training in late 2016, when UT-RGV and Angelo State had people who needed training: a case where travel would have introduced significant lead time and expense. Intro DSpace worked fairly well online -- other than running out
Survey findings, DEWG response

- Point-of-need education
- Self-paced training
- Bridge between Intro DSpace and Advanced DSpace classes

The DSpace documentation manual in Confluence addresses needs for point-of-need education and self-paced training. Additionally, many DEWG members have volunteered to serve as “experts” for areas where we feel comfortable helping others.

Bridging the gap between Intro DSpace and Advanced DSpace remains an area of concern. By identifying DSpace users’ desired Intermediate DSpace training topics, we can address this concern while also meeting survey respondents’ expressed need for more frequent DSpace training.

Breaking Advanced DSpace training down into modular components is another possibility: an a la carte structure allows users to learn the topics they need, without committing to a 4-day course. We could also level the training appropriately for either repository managers or system administrators.

The DSpace documentation manual in Confluence addresses needs for point-of-need education and self-paced training. We also have several volunteer “experts” on the DEWG: many of us are experienced Intro DSpace instructors, and many of us have niche knowledge from our own work &/or from our participation in DSpace testing. Plus, if someone has a question, we can always bounce it around DEWG to find someone who can help!

We still would like to bridge the gap between Intro DSpace and Advanced DSpace. Survey respondents seemed fairly satisfied with Intro DSpace, but some respondents felt lost by Advanced DSpace. In fact, DSpace wizard and Advanced instructor James Creel says that Advanced DSpace was never meant to be the 4-day behemoth it became: offering all 4 modules together was only a matter of practicality at the time. Some of the Advanced material could be reworked as Intermediate topics, leaving the heavily technical and most difficult content for a pared-down Advanced DSpace program.
With our big deliverable (the Survey Report) completed, the DEWG has hit a bit of a quiet period. TDL has created a small questionnaire for DEWG members to examine what we think the group needs to be doing and assess our next steps.

- Intro training is pretty much all set; we just have to keep it updated.
- Intermediate-level training: created as needed, rather than just-in-case. How do we identify “as needed”?
  - Passive model: group goes semi-dormant (on call), waiting for requests for training
  - Active model: group works to stimulate interest in training, not just wait for TDL DSpace users to contact us
  - In fact, we hope this talk today might have helped prime the pump

Leaning towards active model, working in conjunction with TDL DSpace User Group. What that looks like, and what DEWG will become, is yet to be seen.
Thank you!

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