



# NASIG Newsletter

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## Serials & E-Resources News

### The Electronic Resources Librarian's Role in Digital Scholarship and Scholarly Communications

*Angela Dresselhaus, University of Montana*

Reported by Rose Reynolds

#### What Is Digital Scholarship (DS)?

Angela Dresselhaus' presentation focused on the digital humanities within digital scholarship. She introduced her talk with a quote from Jennifer Adams and Kevin Gunn at the Catholic Universities of America: "Digital humanities is an emerging field revolving around the intersection of traditional humanities disciplines and technology." After reading several definitions and descriptions of digital humanities, Dresselhaus defined digital humanities as a field where digital resources assist with the study of humanities. The lack of personnel in the past had made this next to impossible. Now, with technological innovations, staff can readily engage in activities such as data visualization, mapping, and text mining. One specific software product, WordSeer, was developed through the National Endowment for the Humanities and can perform text mining and provide visualizations of the data collected.

#### What Is Scholarly Communication (SC)?

Dresselhaus defined scholarly communication as the exchange of scholarly ideas. She explained that even though scholarly communication is not new, technology has transformed the expression of these ideas. Specifically, research can now take the form of an interactive database in the humanities or large data sets

in the sciences. It can also be conveyed through institutional repositories that are managed by libraries. Dresselhaus explained how institutional repositories assist with these endeavors. For example, at the University of Montana, the institutional repository showcases the work of students, faculty, and visiting scholars.

#### NASIG Core Competencies for Electronic Resources Librarians and Their Connection to DS/SC

##### Competency: Lifecycle of E-Resources

This includes acquisitions, licensing, and knowledge of metadata, cataloging standards, and reference management.

**Opportunities & Connections:** While many DS/SC projects are born digitally, the data maintenance is very similar to licensed electronic resources. The electronic resources librarian already has skills regarding familiarity with copyright, metadata, and rights management which can be applied to this new content type and the production of new content with these structures in mind. DS/SC work could also provide an opportunity for the electronic resources librarian to become more familiar with the peer review process which is a requirement for open access publications. Involvement of the electronic resources librarian in DS/SC could take the form of consulting on issues of metadata creation and data management, as well as author rights, fair use, and copyright.

**Competency:** Technology

The electronic resources librarian has a high level of comfort with electronic information and how it is delivered; this includes familiarity with hardware, software, and various standards, as well as preservation issues and tools, mark-up languages, and the intricacies of systems and link resolvers.

**Opportunities & Connections:** DS/SC projects exist in the same technological environment as electronic resources. The electronic resources librarian is already familiar with working in the back-end of systems such as the ILS or the OpenURL link resolver and is familiar with a variety of vendor platforms. An electronic resources librarian's comfort and familiarity in this area can be leveraged to assist in customizing an institutional repository or with the digital preservation of data. Involvement in DS/SC could provide an opportunity for the electronic resources librarian to explore areas of hosting, data curation, and researcher-driven digitization initiatives.

**Competency:** Research and assessment

This includes the ability to collect, analyze, and manipulate data to provide a meaningful interpretation and the ability to follow established research methods.

**Opportunities & Connections:** The electronic resources librarian is accustomed to evaluating electronic resources by collecting statistics and synthesizing them to provide meaningful measures. DS/SC provides an opportunity to apply these skills to developing new services and then assisting in the assessment of these services for key stakeholders both within and outside of the library. There is also an opportunity for the electronic resources librarian to provide consultations regarding compliance with funding mandates for data management and the publication of findings.

**Competency:** Effective communication

The ability to interact and effectively convey complex ideas to a wide audience including vendors, patrons, librarians, and technical support.

**Opportunities & Connections:** The electronic resources librarian is already familiar with working with vendors in all aspects of the electronic resources lifecycle. In DS/SC the electronic resources librarian could take on the role of consultant for marketing, grant preparation, rights management, data management, and the navigation of publishing agreements. The electronic resources librarian can also help promote to faculty why DS/SC activities are important to the campus and the library.

**Competency:** Supervising and management

The ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships.

**Opportunities & Connections:** Many initiatives in DS/SC are project based and require management of resources and personnel. These skills are particularly important during the launch and piloting of new initiatives.

**Competency:** Trends and professional development

The electronic resources librarian is committed to maintaining knowledge in current trends in the field including research and information presentation, as well as the library's dual role of access provider and content generator.

**Opportunities & Connections:** The electronic resources librarian stays abreast of trends in scholarly communication.

**Competency:** Personal qualities

Flexibility, open mindedness, and the ability to function in a dynamic and rapidly changing environment are key to success in the field. Additionally, the electronic resources librarian has strong organizational skills, keen attention to detail, and patience.

**Opportunities & Connections:** These qualities combine to create a person that is comfortable with complex problems and intricate situations that require systematic troubleshooting and creative solutions. The electronic resources librarian can apply these qualities and skills to DS/SC by assisting with troubleshooting, data management, and data curation. In addition, there is an opportunity for an electronic resources librarian to work with researchers on their proposals and assist with bringing a project from concept to reality.

Dresselhaus concluded her presentation by reinforcing the idea that NASIG and electronic resources librarians are ready for the evolving opportunities present in digital scholarship and scholarly communication. She provided several helpful resources that serve as a good starting point for one to begin.

**Resources to start exploring DS/SC:**

ACRL Digital Humanities Discussion Group. 2015. *Association of College & Research Libraries*. <http://www.ala.org/acrl/aboutacrl/directoryofleadership/discussiongroups/acr-dgdh>

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