



# DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP AT HARVARD

THE FIRST FOUR YEARS OF THE  
DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP  
SUPPORT GROUP

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HARVARD  
UNIVERSITY



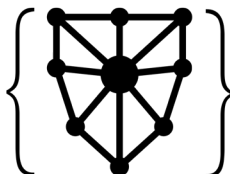


# IN BRIEF

Since 2015, the Digital Scholarship Support Group (DSSG) has brought together faculty and staff representing over a dozen units from across the University to coordinate, design, and support digital methods and instruction, innovative research methods, and world-class technical infrastructure at Harvard. The group draws from an extensive network of in-house expertise to increase the impact of digital scholarship initiatives in research, teaching and learning.

Over the DSSG's first four years, its members have pooled their resources to kickstart a number of new initiatives, including offering a series of introductory and advanced digital scholarship workshops, providing research support via drop-in office hours, and organizing and hosting the inaugural edition of a regional symposium highlighting multidisciplinary research and teaching. The DSSG also coordinates the Digital Teaching Fellows program, which trains graduate students and pairs them with faculty members, facilitating the integration of digital tools and methods into FAS courses, sparking innovative digital active learning projects, and fostering new models for faculty-student interaction. Finally, the group serves as a single point of entry to a broad network of individuals who are transforming the landscape of digital scholarship at Harvard.

This report details the Digital Scholarship Support Group's emergence and growth, outlines its activities, and envisions a future for digital scholarship at Harvard.





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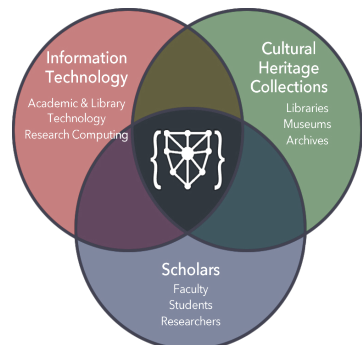
# THE DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT GROUP

The Digital Scholarship Support Group (DSSG) provides faculty, students, and staff interested in incorporating digital methods into their teaching and research with a single point of entry to the many resources available at Harvard. The group brings together faculty and staff with technical, pedagogical, and subject-specific expertise in a range of areas across disciplinary and divisional borders. Together they create the technical and personnel resources necessary to support digital scholarship. DSSG members are based in a number of campus organizations, including academic departments in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University Information Technology, the Harvard Library, and Harvard-affiliated institutes and centers.

## ORGANIZATION

The DSSG was founded in 2015 by the Department of History, Academic Technology, and the Harvard Library as a way to formalize a group of individuals that had coalesced around a series of digital initiatives in the Department of History and Academic Technology. The group assembled more or less organically as a means to address the lack of generalized, accessible, consistent, and discoverable support for Digital Scholarship at Harvard, particularly for the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Drawing on a broad range of knowledge from across the University, the DSSG's members include representatives of academic departments, research centers, museums, as well as multiple units within the Harvard Library and Harvard University Information Technology (HUIT).



The DSSG's core activities are planned and carried out by the Standing Committee, which meets regularly throughout the year and has executive responsibility over the activities of the group. The Standing Committee, which is made up of core members of the DSSG strategically drawn from FAS Academic Technology, Arts and Humanities Research Computing, the Harvard Library, the Archives, the Harvard Art Museums, the Institute for Quantitative Social Science, the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, and faculty, provides unique insight on the activities and infrastructure associated with digital scholarship. The DSSG is co-chaired by two members of the Standing Committee, one faculty and one staff, who are appointed to the roles on a rotating basis. Overall governance of the group rests with the Oversight Committee, a group of senior Harvard faculty and staff that provides strategic direction for the DSSG and advises the Standing Committee on plans and priorities.

At least twice per month, the members of the core Standing Committee join forces to address opportunities and challenges regarding digital scholarship and humanities computing at Harvard. They design, organize, and coordinate training, workshops, events, and other forms of support. And, in the course of these activities, the DSSG further leverages collaboration through a working knowledge of one another's units. This critical working knowledge is crucial for staffing decisions, organizational changes, and other concerns, such as the Library's interest in medium-term storage or scholarly publishing. The knowledge base offered by the DSSG facilitates quick, agile analyses of issues related to digital scholarship, while facilitating a "no wrong door" approach to connecting questions and requests with the appropriate support organization or individual, thereby forging the shortest path to exactly the right expertise.





## STRATEGY

The DSSG aims to highlight and coordinate, not duplicate, the work and resources of other units, stepping in to fill gaps where necessary. The group's primary role is to provide a framework where the DSSG's constituent units, and other interested parties, can share resources and expertise with each other and with the departments and centers across the University which are engaged in training, education, and knowledge production.

The DSSG also serves as a forum for developing a shared vision of the future of digital scholarship at Harvard. The group approaches the scope of digital scholarship as an umbrella under which a number of methodological approaches, scholarly trends, and epistemological perspectives can cluster. The main focus is on the scholarly use of digital evidence and methods which have the potential to fundamentally transform the research and teaching landscape in the Humanities and humanistic Social Sciences.

*The scholarly use of digital evidence has the potential to fundamentally transform the research and teaching landscape at Harvard*

Digital Scholarship by its very nature places greater emphasis on collaboration, interdisciplinarity, and process than do traditional approaches. This shift in modes of practice, when combined with the inherent complexity of digital tools and specialized infrastructural requirements that often accompany it, can uproot it from traditional disciplinary practice. We believe that in order to fulfill its promise, the practice of digital scholarship must see past the instrumental aspects of new technologies and focus on the theoretically informed adaptation of the methods that they implement. Because the process behind this kind of thoughtful integration requires iteration and refinement, which are often time-intensive, we advocate in particular for digital initiatives that embrace long-term planning and sustainability.



A key area of emphasis for the DSSG is to effectively bridge teaching and research. While the integration of digital methods into disciplinary practice happens largely in research contexts, making these developments sustainable requires capacity-building, which in turn requires ongoing teaching, training, and support. Developing in-house expertise is essential not just to maintain existing resources, but also to take on new projects. Multilateral engagement is also critical: support for digital scholarship at Harvard is most effective when the correct stakeholders are included in the collaboration, whether they be faculty, researchers, staff, graduate students, undergraduates, or any combination thereof.

*It is crucial to see past the instrumental aspects of new technologies and focus on the theoretically informed adaptation of the methods that they implement*

Seeding and sustaining digital innovation also requires a great deal of technical support in the form of infrastructure, both physical (e.g. suitable spaces) and digital (e.g. tools, servers, and storage), informed access to resources in archives, museums, and libraries, as well as personnel to provide assistance and training. These disparate needs require institutional coordination beyond departmental and divisional boundaries to develop and sustain them. This is why a networked approach to supporting digital scholarship, which brings together and coordinates units from across Harvard, has been so successful to date.



FIRST ANNUAL  
**BOSTON AREA**  
**DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP SYMPOSIUM**

HOSTED BY  
**HARVARD UNIVERSITY**



bit.ly/BADSS

**python + {Web APIs}**



- Comfortable with basic Python?
- Interested in querying real-time or faceted big data?
- Want to process data with web services?

Learn to integrate REST APIs into your Python workflow to...

- Get info from the Harvard Art Museums' online records from Omeka sites
- Push items to Omeka sites
- Interact programmatically with the web

Harvard Art Museum

November 8th, 11:00am - 2:00pm  
Lunch will be served  
Registration (free) capped at 12:  
<https://bit.ly/hvdAPI17>

DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT GROUP

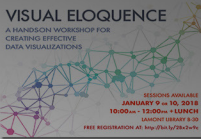
DATA AND/IN THE HUMANITIES

Scholar Carol Osofsky  
(Librarian for Collections and Digital Scholarship, Widener Library)

THE HARVARD UNIVERSITY LIBRARY  
100 UNIVERSITY STREET, 3RD FLOOR  
HARVARD UNIVERSITY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138  
LEARN HOW TO FIND IT AT [WWW.ACCIDENTALWEB.COM](http://WWW.ACCIDENTALWEB.COM)

**VISUAL FLOQUENCE**  
A HANDSON WORKSHOP FOR CREATING EFFICIENT DATA VISUALIZATIONS

SESSIONS AVAILABLE  
WEDNESDAY 9-10 AM, 2018  
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM - LUNCH  
LUNCH MONETARY \$10  
FREE REGISTRATION AT [bit.ly/hvdAPI17](http://bit.ly/hvdAPI17)



**Digital Teaching Seminar**

A hands-on seminar on integrating digital tools and methods into teaching and learning for faculty, students, and staff of all experience levels

A Foundations Series seminar presented by the Harvard University Digital Scholarship Support Group  
[dssg.fas.harvard.edu](http://dssg.fas.harvard.edu)

The Boston Area Digital Scholarship Symposium brings together scholars from greater Boston and beyond to share their work in digital scholarship

The 2019 symposium will feature faculty talks and poster presentations with a focus on Institutional Models of Collaborative Support

April 10, 2019 @ Harvard University  
Smith Campus Center, 10th Floor



ACADEMIC TECHNOLOGY | HARVARD UNIVERSITY | HARVARD LIBRARY | HARVARD UNIVERSITY Digital Scholarship Support Group


Wednesday, January 25, 8:00am - 6pm  
Cabot Library - Lower Level Instruction Space

**DIGITAL TEACHING METHODS**

Winter Teaching Week 2019

Timeliness & Data Visualization Online Exhibits  
Text, Images, & Video Annotation  
Multimedia Assignments  
Active Learning Tools

[bit.ly/wtw19-2019](http://bit.ly/wtw19-2019)



**What is IIT?**  
Learn how to use the IIT system to create interactive digital exhibits

October 11 (Thu) 10-12 PM  
October 12 (Fri) 10-12 PM  
October 13 (Sat) 10-12 PM

NEEDS IN A DIGITAL HANGAR  
GIZA IS MY CLASSROOM  
WHAT DO MACHINES SEE WHEN THEY LOOK AT ART?



**TOUCH THIS PAGE**  
MAKING SENSE OF THE WEBS WE READ

Harvard University Digital Scholarship Support Group

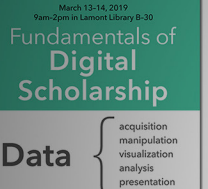


March 13-14, 2019  
7am-2pm in Lamont Library B-30

**Fundamentals of Digital Scholarship**

acquisition manipulation visualization analysis presentation


Register at [tinyurl.com/digitalscholarship-2019](http://tinyurl.com/digitalscholarship-2019)



CEIS | PRINCE ABDELRAHMAN BIN HALAF ISLAMIC STUDIES PROGRAM at HARVARD UNIVERSITY

**Methods in Islamic Studies**  
Fall 18

Friday October 13, 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Room 130-C, CHES  
\$100 (limited to \$5)



**python + {Web APIs}**

- Comfortable with basic Python?
- Interested in querying real-time or faceted big data?
- Want to process data with web services?

Learn to integrate REST APIs into your Python data processing workflow...

March 13, 2:00pm - 4:00pm  
Registration (free) capped at 20  
<https://goo.gl/g8m7w8> (Link of Boston Web 3)

HARVARD LIBRARY SUPPORT GROUP

**NEEDS IN A DIGITAL HANGAR**  
GIZA IS MY CLASSROOM  
WHAT DO MACHINES SEE WHEN THEY LOOK AT ART?




**TOUCH THIS PAGE**  
MAKING SENSE OF THE WEBS WE READ



A hands-on introduction to the digital research workflow for faculty, students, and staff

Register at [tinyurl.com/digitalscholarship-2019](http://tinyurl.com/digitalscholarship-2019)

Harvard University Digital Scholarship Support Group  
[dssg.fas.harvard.edu](http://dssg.fas.harvard.edu)

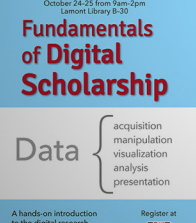


October 24-25 from 9am-2pm  
Lamont Library B-30

**Fundamentals of Digital Scholarship**

acquisition manipulation visualization analysis presentation

Register at [tinyurl.com/digitalscholarship-2019](http://tinyurl.com/digitalscholarship-2019)



**python + {Web APIs}**

- Comfortable with basic Python?
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- Want to process data with web services?

Learn to integrate REST APIs into your Python data processing workflow...

March 13, 2:00pm - 4:00pm  
Registration (free) capped at 20  
<https://goo.gl/g8m7w8> (Link of Boston Web 3)

HARVARD LIBRARY SUPPORT GROUP + Department of History

**Digital Scholarship Support Group**

Spring 2019  
**Office Hours**

Questions about digital scholarship or digital research methods in the humanities? Stop by DSSG Office Hours!

Every other Thursday  
Cabot Library Ice Cube  
11am - 12pm

Every other Wednesday  
Lamont Library Room 220  
3pm - 4pm



[bit.ly/dssgOfficeHours](http://bit.ly/dssgOfficeHours)

FINDING AN ALIEN BIOSPHERE WITH COMPUTATIONAL CHEMISTRY

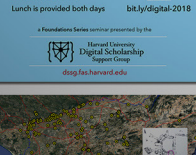
TUESDAY NOVEMBER 27, 2018  
3:30 - 4:00  
DISCOVERY BAR IN CABOT SCIENCE LIBRARY  
HARVARD SCIENCE CENTER



A hands-on introduction to the digital research workflow for faculty, students, and staff

Register at [tinyurl.com/digitalscholarship-2019](http://tinyurl.com/digitalscholarship-2019)

Harvard University Digital Scholarship Support Group  
[dssg.fas.harvard.edu](http://dssg.fas.harvard.edu)



HARVARD LIBRARY PRESENTS  
**24-Hour Hackathon**  
New Search Methods in the Humanities

Harvard Library, 1 Oxford Street, Cambridge, MA  
March 28-30, 2018 - March 30 - 8pm

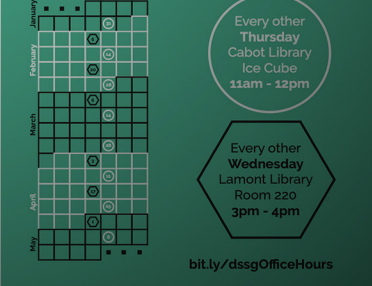
CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP!

**3D Scanning Deep History**

3D Digital Future Discovery Center  
Harvard University  
100 University Street, 3rd Floor  
Cambridge, MA 02138

Monday, April 16, 10am - 12pm  
Cabot Library Ice Cube  
All are welcome!

**MORGANTINA VR**  
MORGANTINA VR: A 3D DIGITAL FUTURE DISCOVERY CENTER  
Harvard University  
100 University Street, 3rd Floor  
Cambridge, MA 02138



ALWALED BIN TALAL ISLAMIC STUDIES PROGRAM

**Research Methods in Islamic Studies**

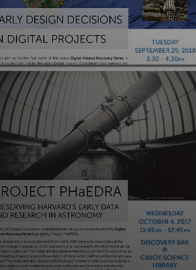
Friday October 13, 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Room 130-C, CHES  
\$100 (limited to \$5)



**PROJECT PHAEDRA**  
PRESERVING HARVARD'S EARLY DATA AND RESEARCH IN ASTRONOMY

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 4, 2017  
11:00am - 12:00pm

DISCOVERY BAR  
CABOT SCIENCE LIBRARY  
HARVARD SCIENCE CENTER



**HARVARD DATAFEST 2019**  
"A Data Science Bootcamp"

Harvard University  
100 University Street, 3rd Floor  
Cambridge, MA 02138



**3D Scanning Deep History**

3D Digital Future Discovery Center  
Harvard University  
100 University Street, 3rd Floor  
Cambridge, MA 02138

Monday, April 16, 10am - 12pm  
Cabot Library Ice Cube  
All are welcome!



## IMPACT

The DSSG's initiatives have had a deep impact on the Harvard community. Through the Digital Teaching Fellows (DiTF) program alone, the group has thus far supported over 75 courses and faculty, 50 DiTFs, and over 1,000 students in 13 departments across two academic divisions. Beyond this, the DSSG invested significant time and resources in developing much-needed software infrastructure for digital methods in teaching, learning, and research, including substantial development of the Omeka online exhibition platform, which has been a key component of over three dozen FAS courses and faculty research projects so far.

The DSSG's greatest impact, though, has come from its digital literacy initiatives: foundational seminars designed to serve as a springboard for students, faculty, and staff to explore the potential of digital scholarship in both teaching and research. These digital literacy opportunities have proven enormously successful, with 500 attendees from across the spectrum of roles and positions at Harvard. Among the 200 staff members who have participated in these workshops are over 100 library staff who, based on their feedback, have benefited enormously – both from the training itself and from the unscripted interaction with faculty and students, which has improved their understanding of the needs of the Library's users.

## DIGITAL TEACHING FELLOWS PROGRAM

BY THE NUMBERS



**75**

COURSES AND FACULTY



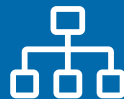
**1000**

STUDENTS



**50**

DIGITAL TEACHING FELLOWS



**13**

DEPARTMENTS



## ONGOING INITIATIVES

The DSSG's core activities focus on four areas: providing instruction in digital scholarship theory, tools, and methods; supporting teaching and research; advocating and building community; and developing infrastructure.

### PROVIDING INSTRUCTION IN DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP THEORY, TOOLS, AND METHODS

The DSSG's instructional initiatives are designed to provide opportunities for faculty and students to acquire digital skills. The DSSG organizes a year-round seminar series designed to provide training and instruction in digital methods for research and teaching. The seminar series is centered around introductions to digital approaches to research and teaching, which provides a framework for more advanced topics. By first providing a framework, we facilitate a more flexible approach to learning about the wide variety of tools and approaches used in digital scholarship today.

Our approach translates the general research process of the Social Sciences and Humanities into a data-processing workflow, thus providing a solid intellectual framework to anchor the myriad methodologies, techniques, and tools that comprise digital scholarship. This helps participants build a sound foundation of immediately applicable skills, while also developing an overall understanding of the entire ecosystem to help them make decisions, seek further support, and acquire more advanced skills. The ultimate goal is to offer a conceptual framework that can contextualize any digital skills – even if acquired in isolation – into a coherent whole, thus offering participants a sense of continuing progress and achievement and encouraging them to pursue further development.





## Foundations Seminar Series

The bedrock of the DSSG's digital literacy efforts are two Foundations seminars: Fundamentals of Digital Scholarship and Digital Teaching Methods. Each foundations seminar is offered on a semiannual basis, with Digital Scholarship taking place in mid-Spring and Fall, and Digital Teaching Methods being offered immediately prior to each semester, with the January iteration taking place as part of the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning's Winter Teaching Week program.

Fundamentals of Digital Scholarship is a two-day seminar designed to introduce participants to the core stages of digital scholarship's research workflow: the acquisition, manipulation, analysis, and presentation of data. The seminar is intended to serve as a springboard for students, faculty, and staff who wish to explore the potential of digital scholarship. It provides a solid foundation from which participants can continue to develop these skills, whether on their own or through a series of

advanced, subject-specific follow-up seminars currently in development. The seminar is structured as a series of hands-on sessions that provide participants with the opportunity to work with real-world datasets that relate to the humanities and social sciences.

The Digital Teaching Methods seminar, two days in the Fall and one day when offered as part of Winter Teaching Week, focuses on the use of digital tools and methods in teaching and learning. It

provides a hands-on introduction to several approaches that have proven successful in the classroom, including online exhibitions, annotations, timelines, and mapping. In this seminar, we not only discuss the practical

*The ultimate goal is to offer a conceptual framework that can contextualize any digital skills — even if acquired in isolation — into a coherent whole*





mechanics of employing these tools and approaches, but also the pedagogical needs that they serve. The focus is not on superfluous additions, but on using technology to enhance learning. In each case, the discussion is grounded in specific pedagogical examples and use cases.

## Workshops

Since its inception, the DSSG has offered advanced and subject-specific workshops, both independently and in collaboration with other departments and academic programs at Harvard. These workshops have also been offered as part of a larger seminar series at Harvard and beyond, including DataFest, the Research Methods in Islamic Studies series, and Boston DH Week. Ranging from general topics like data in the humanities, text mining, and data visualization, to technically-oriented subjects like Python programming, web APIs, and the International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF), these workshops are an essential vehicle for the dissemination of digital scholarship skills on the Harvard campus.

## Introduction to Digital Humanities: an Online Course for HarvardX

During the past year, a number of members of the DSSG Standing Committee have helped develop a new online course for HarvardX. The course, targeted at a diverse audience including, for example, students, scholars, librarians, archivists, museum curators, and public historians, is called “Introduction to Digital Humanities” and it teaches participants how to manage the many aspects of digital humanities research and scholarship. The course is intended as the first of three modules which will lead to a micro-masters certificate in Digital Humanities. A crucial concern of the DSSG has been to ensure that modules developed for the course are also suitable and available for on-campus use.



## SUPPORTING TEACHING AND RESEARCH

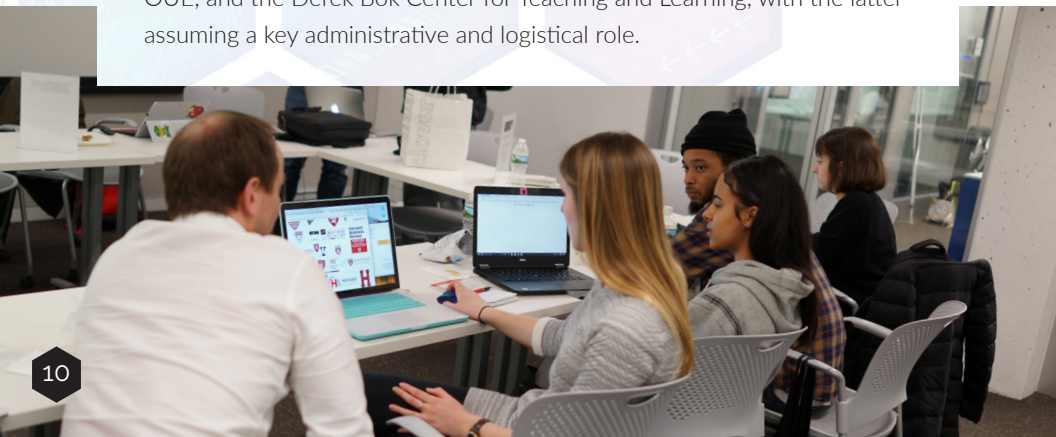
The DSSG supports the use of digital methods in research and teaching by making expert advice and special infrastructure available to members of the Harvard community, both to aid in their efforts to build new forms of engagement at the curricular level and to support their research agendas. In this regard, the DSSG aims to provide a single point of entry (“No Wrong Door”) to the resources available at Harvard.

### Digital Teaching Fellows program

Begun in 2013-14 as an initiative from the Department of History, and expanded in 2014-15 with the assistance of a grant from the Harvard Initiative in Learning and Teaching (HILT), the Digital Teaching Fellows (DiTF) program was designed to enable the thoughtful integration of digital tools and methods in courses across the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Through the program, the DSSG is able to offer additional Teaching Fellow support, as well as guidance and consultation, to instructors who are adding new digital activities into their classes.

Since 2015, the DSSG has collaborated with the Office of Undergraduate Education (OUE) to continue this program, which has supported over 75 courses and faculty, 50 DiTFs, and over 1,000 students in 13 departments across the Divisions of Arts & Humanities and Social Sciences, the General Education program, and the Graduate School of Design.

In the 2019-20 academic year, support for the DiTF program will begin shifting to a collaborative effort between the DSSG Standing Committee, OUE, and the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, with the latter assuming a key administrative and logistical role.





## DSSG Office Hours

In the 2018-19 academic year, the DSSG began piloting digital scholarship office hours, which aim to provide faculty, students, and staff interested in incorporating digital methods into their teaching and research with consultative advice and support.

Part of the DSSG's core "no wrong door" policy and designed to help Harvard affiliates across the spectrum – undergraduates, graduate students, postdocs, faculty, and professional staff – kickstart or refine digital scholarship projects, the office hours initiative has proven enormously successful.

Office hours are held weekly, alternating between Wednesdays at Cabot Science Library and Thursdays at Lamont Library. During these sessions, DSSG Standing Committee members and partners provide consultation on suggest tools, methodologies, and approaches, and connect researchers with relevant resources, organizations, and peers. They are open to students, faculty, and staff, providing an opportunity for consultation on projects generally and on specific issues in ongoing projects.

Over the past year, we assisted 26 unique attendees over 30 sessions, with projects ranging across History, Anthropology, Evolutionary Biology, Sociology, EALC, Psychology, Classics, French, English, and numerous library and art museum units. Some of the questions involved text analysis, data mining, computer vision and image recognition, digital repositories, digital storytelling, data management, content management systems including Scalar and Omeka, digital pedagogy, TEI encoding, and digital mapping/GIS.

In the coming year, we hope to continue the success of this initiative, keeping our doors open to new consultations and collaborations. We hope to expand the numbers of the DSSG members and affiliates participating in office hours, both to diversify the expertise that attendees have access to and to give more staff members hands-on digital scholarship consultation experience.



## Individualized Course and Research Project Support

DSSG Standing Committee Members and their constituent groups provide significant support for courses and research projects as part of their day-to-day work. The networked nature of the group, and the access it provides to individuals and organizations within the University, enables members to support courses and research projects more efficiently and effectively, in part by facilitating shortest-path access to the most relevant support and expertise.

## ADVOCACY AND BUILDING COMMUNITY

Since its inception, one of the DSSG's key goals has been to provide a forum for sustained dialogue among the represented units. This allows for all parties to fully understand one another's needs and objectives, thus enabling fruitful, stable, long-term collaborations to flourish. Likewise, we believe that a crucial component of a successful digital strategy is the fostering of a community of practice across the University that, among other things, can facilitate comparisons of approaches and support models.

As an example, while a Foundations seminar like Digital Teaching methods has a targeted constituency – in this case, DiTFs – they are open to all members of the University community. Having a blend of people and roles participating together in the sessions is an important element in creating a more collaborative culture, as well as in the DSSG's promotion of a “no wrong door” approach to providing assistance and handling referrals.

## Training for Librarians

In October 2018, thirty-eight librarians participated in a voluntary training session titled “Deconstructing Digital Scholarship Consultations in the Library.” This session was a precursor to wider participation by librarians in the DSSG's Digital Scholarship Office Hours pilot program, which brought together seven research and liaison librarians with the unique digital scholarship-related needs and concerns of those they support.



Guidelines from the workshop were crafted to support further librarian orientation, while these individuals' participation helped them develop contextualized knowledge that can serve to secure an essential role for them in the furthering of digital scholarship at Harvard.

In FY 2019, the DSSG was awarded an S.T. Lee Grant for Library-Faculty collaborations. This funding was enormously helpful in supporting the DSSG's efforts to expose more library staff to digital scholarship issues and concepts. A centerpiece of this effort was a two-day Library Carpentry workshop, which was offered in January 2019 in partnership with the Library Learning Initiative and the Harvard Library Research Data Management Program. Enrollment was attained via manager nomination, and attendees were taught library-specific data skills they could immediately apply to their daily work.

The next step in building on this will be to help facilitate bringing more librarians into the broader work of digital scholarship. In alignment with the group's Continuing Initiatives, the DSSG would be a collaborator and enabler in this effort, rather than serving as a sole actor. Consultations and training provided by the DSSG would stem from collaborations with the Library Learning Initiative and the demands of individual library units.

Additionally, the DSSG Standing Committee participated in the interview process for the newly-created Digital Scholarship Program Manager position, a central Harvard Library role intended to build connections and collaboration across campus. A desired outcome would be for this new hire to leverage the DSSG, its connections, and the foundation it has built to increase engagement across schools in support of the Library's strategic goals for supporting digital scholarship campus-wide.



## First Annual Boston-Area Digital Scholarship Symposium

In April 2019, Harvard hosted the First Annual Boston-Area Digital Scholarship Symposium, an event which featured presentations by faculty from seven area institutions on the collaborative support models underpinning their digital scholarship-related research and teaching efforts. The Symposium was attended by well over 100 faculty, librarians, researchers, technologists, and students from more than a dozen institutions.

Planning for the Symposium was spearheaded by members of the DSSG Standing Committee, who recruited representatives from universities within the informal Boston Digital Humanities group to assist in the selection of faculty presenters from their respective institutions. DSSG planners also partnered with the MIT Programs in Digital Humanities to lay the groundwork for the second iteration of the event, which will be held in Spring 2020 at MIT.



**BOSTON  
AREA  
DIGITAL  
SCHOLARSHIP  
SYMPOSIUM  
2019**





## Digital Futures Discovery Series

This series of talks began under the auspices of the Digital Futures Consortium at Harvard (DFC), an organization chaired by DSSG Standing Committee Members Marty Schreiner and Jeff Emanuel, and will be continued in Fall 2019 and beyond as a collaboration between the DSSG, Cabot Science Library, and Lamont Library. The DFC was sunset in June 2019 in recognition that its *raison d'être* had been fulfilled, as a result of the furthering of digital methods and tools through collaboration and the sharing of experiences and expertise having been absorbed into the core missions of several positions and units across the University, including the DSSG. The Digital Futures Discovery Series brings scholars on the frontiers of digital knowledge-making to a Harvard audience in a small, interactive setting. From an archaeologist reconstructing tombs in virtual reality to an astrophysicist using high performance computing to search for life among the stars, these presentations of disparate subject matters demonstrate the unifying potential of technology in scholarly pursuits.



# DEVELOPING INFRASTRUCTURE

Building infrastructure for digital scholarship has tremendous potential to increase the adoption of digital approaches to scholarship by reducing barriers to new modes of working. The DSSG leverages its cross-divisional membership to develop broadly applicable University-supported infrastructure as well as the in-house expertise essential to sustain digital scholarship at Harvard.

## Omeka as a Service

A key DSSG infrastructure initiative has been the development and deployment of an Omeka-based online exhibition platform. The Omeka Classic hosting service is managed by two groups within HUIT Academic Technology – Academic Technology for FAS and Academic Platform Development – and is currently home to 87 course and research project-based sites. A multipurpose content management system with an emphasis on museum or archival collections, Omeka has been used for everything from student essays to interactive maps to large collections of objects unearthed in the excavations taking place biannually in Harvard Yard. The DSSG has supported the development of Harvard-specific plugins to enable single sign-on via HarvardKey, to make searching faster and more robust, and to make managing student and instructor roles on course-affiliated Omeka sites more efficient and flexible.



## Digital Toolkit

The Digital Toolkit (DTK) is a virtual computer which is pre-loaded with some of the most commonly-used applications for data visualization and analysis. The DTK was initially developed in collaboration with FAS-facing engineers from HUIT

Academic Technology's Academic Platform Development group for the purpose of supporting digital methods courses in the Department of History.

The DTK is designed to avoid the common problem of having to devote substantial time during the term to ensuring that students all have the right tools set up properly to carry out the work for the class. Students need only log in to a remote terminal and they'll be ready to work on research, assignments, and projects.





# OUTLOOK: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The overarching goal of the DSSG is to continue building capacity across the University to engage in, support, and advocate for the supportable integration of digital tools and methods into teaching and research. This includes the development of partnerships across centers, departments, and schools, and the furthering of communities of practice that can guide, inform, and support anyone interested in practicing digital scholarship at Harvard.

In the short term, the DSSG plans to respond to the continuously-increasing demand for its training activities and other successful initiatives, while also developing new programs to bolster areas of opportunity and concern in a sustainable manner.

## UPCOMING INITIATIVES

### Advanced Seminars

As discussed earlier, the DSSG has long offered subject-specific and advanced-level workshops that build upon the methods and techniques taught in the Foundation seminars. In 2019-20, the DSSG will be offering at least three new specialized seminars: Multimedia Publishing, Digital Mapping, and making data accessible through Application Programming Interfaces (APIs).



## Digital Scholarship Certificate

Growing demand in the academic market for experience with digital methods, and the increasing rate at which junior academic positions require digital training, make it more necessary than ever to provide graduate students with such training opportunities. In 2019-20, the DSSG will begin investigating the feasibility of creating a learning path that would culminate in a Digital Scholarship certificate. The goal is to use the group's existing core offerings to create a program leading to a certificate that students and staff alike would be awarded upon completion of the Fundamentals series and a number of advanced seminars, along with other requirements yet to be determined. Additionally, the DSSG anticipates engaging with the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning to gauge the practicability of sponsoring a Digital Methods track within the Center's existing Teaching Certificate curriculum.

## University-Wide Digital Scholarship Newsletter

With the size and complexity of our campus, communication and awareness of what others are doing is difficult. To create a light-weight, targeted and useful means for the digital scholarship community to share information and to enable a means for building community and collaborations, a campus-wide newsletter for these topics is being devised. On July 31st this summer, a small cross-school and cross-unit group will participate in a facilitated session to define the form, framework, scope and sustaining of a Digital Scholarship Newsletter. The aim is to launch this online newsletter the latter part of September 2019. This session is being facilitated by Harvard Library HPAC Communications Director Kerry Conley.



## Summer Internship

While faculty have frequently expressed interest in incorporating students into their research projects, it is exceedingly difficult to identify students with the proper technical background and interest. Additionally, faculty are not always equipped to monitor and assess the technical work of a student contributor. To help address this, we are currently in the process of designing a program of paid summer internships that we hope to debut in 2020. The program will target students, and will provide a stipend and housing, along with a rigorous program of training and activities geared towards providing participants hands-on experience on cutting-edge digital methods and tools while working closely with DSSG members and faculty leads on DSSG supported research projects.

## Office Hours Expansion

The DSSG will continue to offer weekly office hours in 2019-20, with an added focus on training librarians in the Services for Academic Programs group to a level where they can comfortably staff these sessions independently.





## Infrastructure: Scalar pilot, web hosting, and medium-term storage

Building on the success of past infrastructure projects like developing and supporting a hosted Omeka service for the FAS, the DSSG is collaborating with FAS-facing engineers from HUIT Academic Technology's Academic Platform Development group to pilot Scalar, an open-source web publishing platform that enables the presentation of non-linear that incorporate a variety of media. The code developed to meet Harvard's teaching and research use cases will be re-integrated into the main Scalar project and shared with the broader community of scholars.

The DSSG is also working with FAS Research Computing (RC) to fill the gap between desktop computing and high-powered, research cluster computing by developing services and best practices for web project hosting and the provisioning of medium-scale compute environments.

Additionally, the DSSG is anticipating partnering with the Harvard Library in 2019-20 on a "medium-term storage" solution for digital artifacts that need to be preserved for more than a year, but which are not ready for the more permanent storage of the University's Digital Repository Service (DRS).





# THE DSSG STANDING COMMITTEE

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