USING DIGITAL COLLECTIONS FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT RESEARCH

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Eastfield College

A Few Facts about Eastfield College

◦Founded in 1970.

◦One of seven independent community colleges under the Dallas County Community College District.

◦Located in Mesquite, Texas.

◦Offers academic credit transfer, AA, AS, and Applied AS degrees.

◦Student population = about 14,000/semester

◦Hispanic-serving institution.

Eastfield College (EFC)

- Mission: To provide excellence in teaching and learning.
- Student engagement and student success are key to this mission.

- Engagement stems from "learning environments in which students feel connected" (Harper and Quaye 8).
- An analysis of community college students' success stresses that because of diverse educational experiences, "robust and proactive high-impact practices (HIPs)" should be incorporated into learning to enable "students to reflect on and make connections between such disparate experiences" (McNair, Couturier, and Cristian 6-7).
- Imperfect and open nature—Digital Humanities is ideal as an HIP for undergraduate exploration and experimentation.
- DH entices students to be "active participants and stakeholders in the creation and preservation of [their] cultural materials" (Burdick et al. 23).

Digital Humanities (DH) at EFC

- Purpose:
  - provide strategies to enrich teaching and to strengthen students' engagement and ownership of their academic experience.
  - acknowledge students' awareness of the use of DH in higher education and their desire to prepare for its use for transfer or for the workplace.
- Leadership:
  - administrative support.
  - DH committee—art galleries manager, librarians, faculty members with varied backgrounds.

Piloting DH in English 1302

◦Purpose of English 1302—argumentation and research.

◦Uses for DH in English 1302:

   ◦tools, methods, and strategies for critical thinking.

   ◦tools, methods, and strategies for primary research—preventing plagiarism.

   ◦new experiences with and approaches to composition.

Examples of Student Assignments

Analyzing appeals to ethos by creating memes:

KILLS A MAJOR CHARACTER AND ACCOMPLISHES HIS GOAL WITH A SMILE ON HIS FACE. ALSO HAS A VERY CATCHY SONG.

SCAR IS THE BEST DISNEY VILLAIN.

Transformation!

Would you be inspired to lose weight by this man?

WANTS TO CONTROL THE COUNTRY

CAN'T EVEN CONTROL HIS HAIR

Would you vote for a man who can't even control his hair?

◦Arguing the value of place using geomapping with *ThingLink*:

Chicago

(Please use the following URL if the link does not work.)
https://www.thinglink.com/scene/764163036087844865

Hershey, Pennsylvania

(Please use the following URL if the link does not work.)
https://www.thinglink.com/scene/786279732051181569

Collaborative argument assignment:

Arguing the power of song lyrics through a textual analysis of Edwin Starr's 1970s song, "War," using *Voyant.*

Enhancing Teaching

◦Becoming familiar with the Southern Methodist University (SMU) [CUL Digital Collections](http://digitalcollections.smu.edu/all/cul/).

(Please use the following URL if the link does not work.) http://digitalcollections.smu.edu/all/cul/

◦Having an opportunity to learn by participating in the Digital Collections Development Practicum offered through the Norwick Center for Digital Services,
SMU Central University Libraries.

What Is the Norwick Center?

◦The Norwick Center for Digital Services (nCDS) is a unit of SMU's Central University Libraries (CUL)

◦nCDS offers the following services:

  ◦engaged learning projects.

  ◦Digital Humanities practicums.

  ◦independent study opportunities, and tailored research internships that provide hands-on experience and training in the digitization and web presentation of unique and rare cultural heritage items held in CUL special collections.

Introducing Cindy Boeke.

◦Digital Collections Librarian.

◦Develops digital collections at the Norwick Center.

◦Heads the Digital Collections Development Practicum for the Norwick Center.

Participating in [nCDS Practicum](#) provided information on processes and systems used for

- Digitization guidelines and procedures.

- File naming and workflow for creating digital archives.

- Guidelines for creating metadata, including using controlled language.

- Methods for uploading and identifying digital collections within the social media venues.

- Expanding the scope of the items available and the potential for digital collections to reach more extensive audiences.

(Please use the following URL if the link above does not work.) http://digitalcollections.smu.edu/all/cul/email/digitalhumanities/ digital_humanities_practicum.pdf

Engaging Students through Research Using CUL Digital Collections at SMU

◦ Arguing how the past impacts the present and/or future, students were asked to do the following:

  ◦ find one or more pieces in the CUL Digital Collections.

  ◦ create an independent interpretation of the digitized item.

  ◦ use it as evidence to support their arguments.

Some topics students argued: aspects of WWII, automobiles and their influence on society, and fashion as inspiration.

Season's Greetings from A.W. Seipp. DeGolyer Library, SMU.

Stanley Marcus with Two Models. Degolyer Library, SMU.

Frank J. Davis. Ordnance road signs. DeGolyer Library, SMU.

An SMU Practicum
for Eastfield College Students?

◦Developing a practicum would "expose students to various opportunities outside the classroom," empowering students to explore areas of interest, to research, and to create a portfolio of related academic and social experiences (Gupton et al. 253).

◦Efforts were made to explore the possibility of creating an appropriate practicum for community college students.

◦Planned outcomes

◦active learning opportunities in digitization, metadata creation, and digital asset management.

◦understanding and use of primary resources

◦an informal bridge program between the community college and SMU or other 4-year institution.

◦introduction to library, research, and museum professions.

Mini-Pilot of the Practicum

◦ Summer 2016, three Eastfield College students were invited to participate in a mini-pilot of the practicum.

◦ Only one student participated.

◦ The student was introduced to working with archival materials.

◦ Her active learning included digitization and cataloging of 93 primary source materials using specific guidelines and uploading items to the CUL digital collection. Here is one example: [Elmer and Dianne Powell Collection on Mexico](http://digitalcollections.smu.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/pwl/id/446/rec/60)

(Please use the following URL if the link does not work.) http://digitalcollections.smu.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/pwl/id/446/rec/60

Final Thoughts

◦This program has great potential.

◦Collaboration between two institutions is exciting, expansive, and an important approach to enhancing student learning.

◦Pitfalls: logistics, bureaucracy, financial concerns, and igniting student interest.

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