

Report of the course ÖLUL13 H18-1 Digital Library Management 15 ECTS BMDD118h

The course in Digital Library Management is included in the international Master's programme LIS: Digital Library and Information Services. In autumn 2018 it was run during the second part of the first term after the Technology for Digital Library 1 and Information retrieval 1 courses. This change has been introduced for the first time in the programme. All three courses complement each other introducing students to the main components of digital libraries – technology and information organization/retrieval, organizational background, and main components of digital libraries seen from different perspectives. It was feared that running of the technology- and mathematics-related courses before the softer course oriented towards societal and organizational issues would cause a major drop out of the students. Out of 47 students registered to the technological course, eight have left the programme, remaining ones continue their studies. The effect to the registration and completing the Digital Library Management course is not visible in comparison with the years 2015, 2016 or 2017:

Table 1: Comparison of completion of the Digital Library Management course in four years

Year	Registered students	Completed course	Dropped out	Continue
2018	31	16	1	14
2017	29	14	5	10
2016	34	20	1	13
2015	33	12	2	29

This mode seems to be more acceptable to the students than previous instance when three courses ran in parallel with each other and five students have dropped out. Out of the 14 students who continue studies after the first term, seven have collected from 1,5 to 11 ECTS within Digital Library Management course. Out of the remaining seven, two have not collected points or submitted something in any of the courses during the first term. The rest have submitted at least one task in Technology for Digital Library 1 or Information Retrieval.

The course in Digital Library Management leads to a number of learning outcomes important to the programme. After completing the course the students should be able to:

- To identify different types of digital libraries
- To explain problems related to management, planning and implementation of digital libraries from a theoretical perspectives and Describe and explain their implications for practice
- To describe general financial, human resource, technology, and time management procedures required for running a digital library
- To describe legal issues involved in creation and running a digital library and apply this knowledge in organisational environment
- To Design a plan for cost-benefit analysis , marketing and evaluation of the digital library and its services

The course is delivered through filmed and written lectures, individual studies of literature, participation in group discussions, submission of individual written assignments of the main topics included in the course: user demand for digital libraries, their aims and missions; collection development (acquisition forms and channels, main structural parts, management of access and finding tools); building of digital services; planning, implementing, marketing, and evaluating of digital libraries; ethical and legal issues involved in running digital libraries; requirements for professional competence in digital library area. The final task draws on all other tasks in the course and requires applying what students have learned within a project improving a certain feature of a concrete digital library (both selected individually by the students over the whole period since the start of the course).

In the autumn 2018, the course was run by four teachers: Elena Maceviciute and Karen Nowé (responsible for the course, lecturing, communicating with students, monitoring participation, examining submissions), Tom Wilson and Rachel Pierce (leading discussions, presenting lectures, examining submissions).

There were 31 students registered to the course, including four who were repeating the course and six students admitted through SIDA Mozambique programme. Only one student has never logged into the PingPong, one earlier student has officially discontinued the studies in the mid-term due to personal circumstances, the others had to slow down and concentrated on completing the other courses. 23 students completed at least one of the tasks and 16 have passed the examination, which is a slight improvement from the previous year if we count only the originally admitted students. Five did a very good and excellent job, two passed on the D level. Nine others are still working to complete the tasks required for the final assessment. The students from Mozambique have shown very good results: four have completed the course in time, two have collected 6 ECTS each and working on the remaining tasks.

Overall, teachers on the course are satisfied with the work of the students, though the lower quality of the tasks was noted by those who are involved in the course for a longer time. Only some students demonstrated independent thinking, good analytical skills, were interested and actively involved in studies, obviously reading the literature systematically. Many have shown less advanced skills, but one can see that the time for reading and thinking was less and tasks were conducted more superficially. There was less time to learn from the mistakes in the first tasks as the correction time often was too close to the submission of the next task.

Six students have filled in the evaluation questionnaire after the course was completed. They report new or better understanding of digital libraries or their environment:

"The most important outcome of the course is probably that I have a far better idea of both the macro-environment in which digital libraries exist, and the micro-environment of a specific digital library. I have an idea about the library structure and think I can grasp, at large, some of the most important tasks to control and implement. I have also acquired a firm belief in the importance of strategical planning, in relation to users, funders, budgeting and employees. The importance of keeping up to date with the development on the field has also become obvious through the course tasks."

In general, the students give high marks to the structure of the course, course literature, benefit derived from working on tasks and communication with teachers. Of those who answered the questionnaire, no one spent more than 25 hours working on the course tasks and most regret the lack of time blaming their full-time jobs or family situation. Only one student admits that the time spent for working on the course was not adequate, but that student has spent no more than 10 hours a week for the tasks that need 40 hours (the only one of the respondents who has not yet completed the course).

It seems that teachers involved in the course have experienced more problems than the students, especially, in relation to visible progress in the quality of submitted tasks. The students evidently were also under some pressure to submit in time, as only four to five students submitted the tasks by the end of deadline and all others needed extra time for each task. The teachers will try to rework the requirements for the tasks without losing their connection to the learning outcomes and to organize the work more efficiently for the next autumn. They are also planning to use at least one day during the residential period to introduce the students to the Digital Library Management course through visits to Göteborgs libraries and discussions.

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