

Report of the course ÖLUL13 H17-1 Digital Library Management 15 ECTS BMDD117h

The course in Digital Library Management is included in the international Master's programme LIS: Digital Library and Information Services. It is one of the first courses in the programme, running parallel with Technology for Digital Library 1 and Information retrieval 1 courses. This change has been introduced for the first time in the programme. Technology for Digital Library 1 and 2 used to be run successively before that. Nevertheless, 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. 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 2017, the course was run by two teachers: Elena Maceviciute (responsible for the course, lecturing, communicating with students, monitoring participation, examining submissions), Tom Wilson (leading discussions, presenting lectures, examining submissions). There were 45 students registered to the course, including seven who were repeating the course (three of those admitted through SIDA project with Rwanda). Six students have never logged into the PingPong, two have quit the programme in the mid-term due to personal circumstances, three had to slow down to half-time speed and concentrated on other courses. 27 students completed at least one of the tasks and 18 have passed the examination, which is a

slight improvement from the previous year (25 and 15 respectively). Sixteen did a very good and excellent job on these tasks, two passed on the D level. Nine others are still working to complete the tasks required for the final assessment. Only one of the Rwandan students is working on the completion tasks, two others have not logged into the activity or shown any sign of life.

Overall, teachers on the course are very satisfied with the work of the students. Those, who work constantly on the tasks, demonstrate independent thinking, good analytical skills, are interested and involved in studies. Some, of course, are less engaged or maybe lack study skills, but cover the ground by hard work.

Those, who had not finished the course so far, mainly run into the difficulties to balance the demands from the job or family life with studies.

Only three students have filled in the evaluation questionnaire after the course was completed, despite the repeated requests from the teachers. One of those who filled in the questionnaire was quite dissatisfied with the “outdated course content”, “confusing material organization on the PingPong”, and “channels of communication with teachers.” The other two gave mainly very positive feedback. However, the teachers feel that there was quite a lot of things to take into account from the negative feedback provided by the critical student. The PingPong site is getting confusing and cluttered over the years, some of the topics and the design requires updating, and basic concepts, on which the course was based, need to be refreshed. These comments also show that some of the shortcomings pointed out by the previous group of students still remain, especially the confusing course site and multiple information. Some other comments regarding the number of participants in the online seminars, provision of additional materials to help with the tasks were addressed successfully.

The exposed shortcomings are already taken into account in the revised course plan and hopefully a new teacher with course responsibilities will be involved in running the course from the next year bringing fresh ideas and fresh energy into the revision of the course site and content.

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