

# George Mason University Libraries

## Digital Scholarship Center (DiSC) Newsletter

Summer 2018

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Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Digital Scholarship Center (DiSC) Newsletter! We're celebrating our (almost) **first full year** as a unit with this newsletter launch. Looking forward, we plan to send out news and updates each semester.

For more frequent updates, [follow us on Twitter](#)

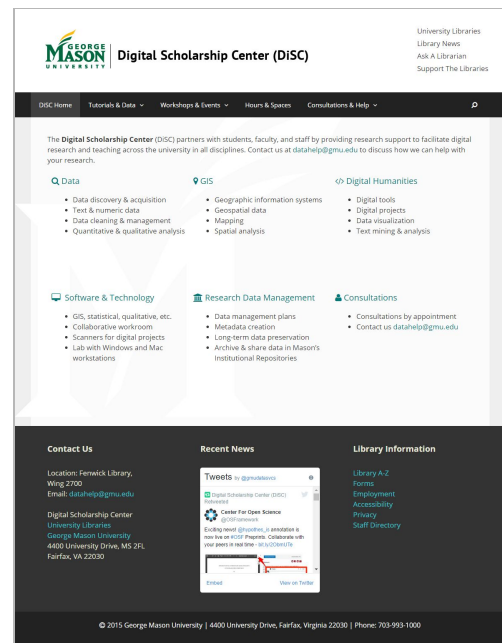


### The Birth of DiSC

The beginning of the fall semester 2017 marked the **official beginning** of the DiSC service. At that point, the lab was set up and ready to go. We offered walk-in assistance for quick questions, consultations by appointment, workshops, library instruction sessions, and more. The official DiSC website — [dsc.gmu.edu](http://dsc.gmu.edu) — was launched as well.

Over the past academic year, DiSC hosted a number of groups and events. The **Digital Humanities Working Group** (DHWG) hosted presentations, discussions, and workshops. Some topics covered include:

- \* Tropy
- \* Omeka-S
- \* Gephi
- \* Elizabeth Fairfax Cookbook Project



General **DiSC workshops** covered the basics of statistical, GIS, qualitative software, and data management and cleaning techniques. Other [workshop topics](#) included:

- |             |                  |                                      |
|-------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| * SPSS      | * ArcGIS         | * Surviving a Data Analysis Project  |
| * Stata     | * QGIS           | * File Management and Organization   |
| * R         | * ArcGIS Online  | * Data Documentation and Description |
| * NVivo     | * Excel for Data | * Network Visualization with Gephi   |
| * Python    | * CARTO          | * Web Scraping Using Beautiful Soup  |
| * StoryMaps | * OpenRefine     |                                      |



Along with the Center for Social Science Research, DiSC co-hosted two workshops on **Text Analytics for Mining Twitter Data** by Dr. Stuart Shulman from [DiscoverText](#). Attendees received a 6-month free trial.



School's "Quant Week" training sessions.

DiSC staff also presented workshops for **GradReCon**, a Graduate Student Life and University Libraries joint event, as well as for the Schar

As always, **any** library staff are welcome to **sign up for our workshops**. If none of our workshop times work for you, **just ask** to see what we can arrange.

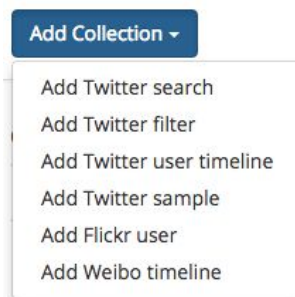
## Helping Our Colleagues, Learning from Each Other

DiSC staff and affiliates were also involved in leading a number of workshops and discussion groups for library staff. Many of these were based on information gathered from the **Digital Scholarship Skills Inventory** distributed by the Digital Scholarship Committee in early 2017. In the inventory, we asked respondents what skills they want to learn. We compiled the results and started planning training sessions, beginning with the most requested topic: Web Scraping.

Accordingly, we led our first session in January of this year on **Web Scraping**. In this session, we went over web scraping concepts, and led attendees through exercises using two tools that don't require coding: [Tabula](#) and the [Chrome Scrapper extension](#). In order to make the most of our time together, we used a flipped classroom approach wherein we asked attendees to review concepts and materials before the session so that we could spend more time focusing on learning the tools and answering questions.

Related to the January session, just this past month, DiSC organized a workshop by colleagues from GW Libraries on using **Social Media Data for Research and Archiving**. DiSC arranged for this workshop because of the increasing number of requests that we've been receiving for access to historical social media data. DiSC has been handling these requests and mediating access to [Social Feed Manager](#) (see below) and related tools. We felt that library colleagues could benefit from learning more about the complexities in using social media data for research.

Related to this presentation, **Social Feed Manager** was set up for use by Mason researchers in late spring 2017. We offer mediated, case-by-case access because of issues with setting up accounts, terms of use, and managing data extractions.



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Joy Suh chaired the **Data Discussion Group** (DDG), an informal group for library staff interested in learning more and sharing their knowledge about data. DDG topics and presenters for this past year included [research data management](#) (Margaret Lam), cleaning library data with [OpenRefine](#) (Helen McManus), an overview of [statistical concepts](#) (Debby Kermer), building effective [survey questions](#) for data analysis (Debby), and a discussion on [text mining](#) resources in the library (Wendy Mann).

DDG held its last meeting in June. Over the summer, it will be merging with DHWG, and was renamed as the **Digital Scholarship Working Group** (DSWG). Like DHWG, DSWG will be external facing (not limited to Mason Libraries staff) and like the DDG, it will incorporate data related topics. The first meeting of the fall semester will be on **September 20 at noon**. Aaron McCollough will be leading a [Jekyll](#) tutorial. All fall DSWG sessions have been added to the Libraries' workshop calendar.

## Reaching out Beyond Mason

On May 17 and 18, 2017 Peggy Greisinger, Wendy Mann, George Oberle, and Jen Stevens led sessions at the **Library of Congress' Collections as Data: Hack-to-Learn** event. The event was organized by the Library of Congress with help from George Washington University Libraries, and George Mason University Libraries. Wendy Mann was involved in the planning efforts along with colleagues from GW and LC. She recruited the above mentioned Mason Libraries staff, as well as two Department of History PhD students (Joshua Catalano and Amanda Regan), to present workshops.

The logo for the Hack-to-Learn event, featuring the text "HACK-TO-LEARN" in white, bold, uppercase letters on a black rectangular background.

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The archived program is available here:

<http://www.digitalpreservation.gov/meetings/hack-to-learn/hack-to-learn-site.html>

In addition to the speakers noted above, several library staff attended the event. Thanks to all who contributed and attended!

DiSC staff presented on "Discovering and Building Digital Scholarship Skills" at the March 6, 2018 Washington Research Library Consortium (WRLC) Annual Meeting. In June, Wendy Mann presented an overview of the planning process to develop DiSC and highlighted DiSC services for the Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL) "Digital Scholarship Show & Tell" Webinar series.

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## Fenwick Fellows

This past academic year, DiSC staff worked with two Fenwick Fellows on their digital projects. **Jennifer Ashley**, Assistant Professor, Global Affairs Program, is using [Omeka Classic](#) for her project on the 30th anniversary of the Chilean plebiscite. In addition, **Alok Yadav**, Associate Professor, English Department, is using [Omeka-S](#) for his bibliography of anthologies of African-American literature. Staff consulted on workflows and taught both Fellows how to use Omeka. We also converted data, recommended metadata identifiers and schema, and imported and uploaded data into Omeka-S.



## Open Science Framework (OSF)

Margaret Lam and Wendy Mann facilitated getting **OSF for Institutions** launched at George Mason University. OSF for Institutions allows researchers to more easily share their data and collaborate on projects. Users can control how much access others have to their data.



Users can now log in using their university username and password, and associate their projects with George Mason. Margaret is also the [OSF Ambassador](#) for George Mason. Mason's official landing page for OSF is <http://osf.io/institutions/gmu>

## Renovation

Depending on the timing, anyone walking through 2700 Fenwick may have noticed a lab in disarray or work being done on the lab. Additional **electrical outlets** and **network ports** have been installed, **monitors** were hung, and the back wall of the lab was **painted a snazzy blue color**. Goodbye boring beige!

## Save the Date!



We will be hosting a [Library Carpentry](#) session on **December 13 and 14, 9am - 4:30 pm**, 1014 A&B Fenwick Library. Details will be provided in early fall.