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Learning to love data (week)

Creating data services awareness on campus

In May 2017, *The Economist* ran a cover story titled “The world’s most valuable resource is no longer oil, but data.” Given the continued growth in the sourcing, curating, and storing of data for academic research, it seems the academy would agree. In response to this growing need at Seton Hall, a mid-sized research university, the Seton Hall University (SHU) Libraries conducted an assessment of the current and emerging data requirements of the researchers and students on campus.

The result of this investigation was the formation of a Data Management (DM) Committee to design and implement DM services for the campus. In addition, the university libraries decided to join the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) in order to broaden the research data offerings available to the academic community. As these developments were all coming together at the end of 2017, the rollout was planned for the winter 2018 and, as luck would have it, the second week of February was the official Love Data Week or #lovedataweek.

As noted on the Love Data Week website, the “purpose of the Love Data Week event is to raise awareness and build a community to engage on topics related to research data management, sharing, preservation, reuse, and library-based

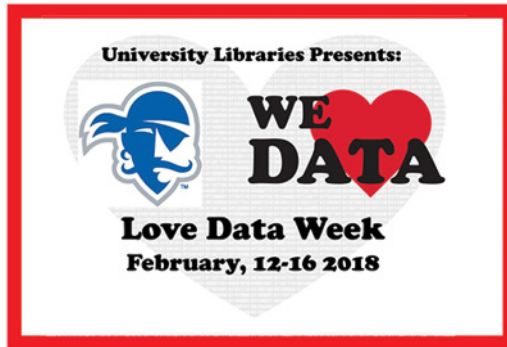
research data services.”¹ Originally inspired by the Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis University Library’s “I Love Data” week, Love Data Week has grown into an annual event with participation by institutions across the United States and around the globe. The organizers invite engagement at several

possible levels, from social media campaigns to raise awareness of data issues or intuitional services, to participation in webinars, or planning local events. For the SHU DM Committee, it offered an ideal branding opportunity for the planned rollout of our data

management campaign.

Identifying stakeholders

Our first challenge was to identify faculty members across campus who would be likely users of our newly acquired data repository as well as data management services, in general. In this, our subject liaison structure was very helpful. Liaisons for business, education,



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psychology, public policy, and other likely areas reached out to faculty and department chairs to identify appropriate researchers. We were able to identify several faculty members with data-heavy research projects, as well as a few who were already users of the ICPSR data and were open to helping promote that resource.

Another important stakeholder for data management is the University's Office of Grants and Research Services, as most grant proposals now require the submission of a data management plan. Conversations with the grants office and researchers helped us understand the current state of data usage and informed our Love Data Week programming decisions.

Planning workshops

The rollout of our new data repository was an important element of our Love Data Week plans. Thanks to the support group at ICP-SR, we were able to plan two Introduction to ICPSR webinars in the hopes of having at least one work for the schedules of interested faculty. These were to include information regarding finding data within the repository, storing data, as well as opportunities to store sensitive or protected data. Also important to the University Libraries was the introduction of data management services. For this purpose, we designed a presentation to answer some

common questions, including Why are data management plans required? What are the benefits of sharing research data? What are the options for storing research data? and Where can researchers turn if they have any questions about these issues?

Lastly, we really wanted to get a better understanding of how faculty members use research data in their disciplines and what challenges or opportunities they see in this area. For this, we asked four data-intensive researchers from the list we had identified to present at a moderated panel. We had enthusiastic responses from faculty interesting in sharing experiences and their understanding of the data practices in their disciplines. The panel included faculty from Health Administration, Educational Leadership, Public Administration, and Computer Science.²

For the inaugural Love Data Week, these four sessions were deemed sufficient to meet our early rollout objectives. As a new committee charged with rolling out data services, including sourcing and storing research data, as well as supporting data management plans, the event was an educational exercise for the organizers and the attendees. There are indeed many additional data topics that could be explored during Love Data Week. Some of these include citing data, data analysis tools, cleaning data, the data lifecycle, government data sources,

About Love Data Week

From humble beginnings in 2016, Love Data Week has grown to an international event for data specialists inside libraries and beyond including researchers, data centers, archives, and more. Each year, the planning committee, led by Heather Coates, digital scholarship and data management librarian and interim codirector, IUPUI University Library–Center for Digital Scholarship, selects a theme and topics to provide a structure to build on to create local events, have conversations within their research community, or bring data issues to the classroom. Overall, Love

Data Week has grown dramatically, both nationally and internationally, based on Twitter analytics and traffic on <http://lovedataweek.org/>. In 2016, the event started with 30 institutions participating in the United States. By 2017 and 2018, the event included nearly 100 organizations and institutions spread across the globe.

Love Data Week 2019 will run from February 11–15. Check the Love Data Week website (<http://lovedataweek.org/>), for more information about themes and ideas to support your events in 2019.

the ethical use of data, and best practices for data protection.

Promoting Love Data Week

The umbrella branding of Love Data Week was incredibly helpful in the promotion of our workshops and services. Using open source Love Data Week images, we designed posters that were hung in a display window at the main library. The bundling of events and #lovedataweek18 branding elevated the initiative to a level the university marketing department deemed worthy of a write up in the weekly campus-wide news blast. Posters were put up around campus detailing the schedule of events, and the university provost even sent out a note from her office. Once again, library liaisons to appropriate departments were asked to reach out to their areas to let them know about the workshops and encourage their faculty and graduate students to attend. And, of course, as the hashtag indicates, social media is a great way to advertise, and posts promoting the events were included in the Facebook and Twitter feeds of the University Libraries.

What we learned

When the week came, the level of discourse, the amount of information shared, and the number of participants in attendance was encouraging. In a late winter averaging a storm a week, Mother Nature spared us, and the workshops all went off as scheduled. The discussions engendered by the programming were lively and informative and seemed to reflect researchers' desires to share their stories, ideas, and frustrations. Feedback from participants included positive responses to engaging with colleagues from different disciplines and learning about data processes and tools from a new perspective.

As a result of these efforts, awareness of our data services is much greater on campus—even among faculty and students who were unable to attend. And in a budgetary atmosphere of “use it or lose it,” our newly acquired data repository is now well known to our researchers. The events of the week gave the DM Committee a

greater awareness of the data-interested faculty and student researchers at the university and created some ongoing conversations among these researchers.

The relationship between the DM Committee and the University's Office of Grants and Research Services has continued to grow since the Love Data Week planning sessions. These initial meetings laid the groundwork for a more complete understanding of the data services needs of the academic community for both the Research Services Office and the DM Committee, and the two groups have since collaborated on several data management plans.

The presentations and discussions of the week also brought to light common questions and misunderstandings about research data, unearthed new resources to explore, and refined the committee's understanding of data services needs on the campus. This new information led to changes and additions to the Data Services LibGuide and informs the continued work of the committee. The events over the week also offered librarians who were not on the DM Committee a fairly concentrated introduction to the new research data products and services. The sessions were heavily attended by liaison librarians looking to gain insight into new avenues of support for the students and faculty in their areas.

Not surprisingly, there has already been talk about a repeat with new programming for #lovedataweek2019 at Seton Hall University. What we ultimately discovered was the value of an established, internationally recognized event goes beyond good branding. It offered an unmovable deadline on which to focus our team's data management goals and justified a larger campaign, which allowed us to reach a broader audience than any one event would warrant.

Notes

1. Love Data Week website, <http://lovedataweek.org/>.
2. More information about the 2018 programming is available at <https://www.shu.edu/news/university-libraries-sponsors-love-data-week.cfm>. ZZ