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Team Teaching, Humor, and Informal Polling Techniques in NECDMC - Based Research Data Management Workshops at Brandeis University

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In this section, we discuss the importance of organizing your working data, including storage, backup, and security measures. It is crucial to decide where to put your data and how to protect it. Legal and ethical considerations must be taken into account when managing research data. There may be laws about where and how data should be stored. Sharing and preserving your research data is important for academic integrity and collaboration. The future of your data is also a critical consideration, as technology and storage solutions evolve.

Before

Introduction
Spring semester 2015, Brandeis Library & Technology Services Research and Instruction unit launched research data management workshops based on the NECDMC curriculum. The workshop lesson plan was very structured and closely modeled the NECDMC modules. The one-hour workshop was expected to consist of three sections:

• Co-presented material in unscripted lecture format
• NECDMC module's hands-on exercises
• Q&A

In no workshop did we get to the hands-on exercises. This was due to the attendee's concentration on lecture material and their questions on topics outside the scope of the workshop. We determined that our descriptions of the workshop didn't best convey the topics covered, and our emphasis on theory and best practices left listeners confused as to how the information applied to their own research.

Legal and Ethical Considerations
There may be a law about that

Sharing and Preserving
The future of your data

Informal Polling
Extremely informal – no clickers or apps, just several deliberately phrased yes or no questions placed throughout the workshop.

We encouraged attendees who indicated they had personal experience with the topic to share their stories. We instructors had our own anecdotes to share, with the IT Hardware Repair Shop and the Help Desk Intern. Their strengths in the areas of storage, backup, and security solutions were especially relevant. Collaborating on slide and lecture design alone provided valuable insights into the different approaches to research data management services. We were able to add depth of technical detail, whereas in earlier workshops the best we were able to provide was a list of roadblocks to future research.

Our colleagues from IT expressed similar interest in the literature and felt themselves better prepared to field data management questions that range beyond traditional IT areas.

Organizing Your Working Data

Storage, Back-up & Security
Where to put it and how to protect it

There May Be a Law About That

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Team Teaching
One pedagogical technique we pursued was inviting instructors from another discipline to lead the workshops with us. We partnered with colleagues from the Technology Help Desk and Data Support sections from IT: The Desktop Systems Specialist from the Hardware Repair Shop and the Help Desk Interns. Their strengths in the areas of storage, backup, and security solutions were especially relevant.

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In the first workshop, we decided to employ a mix of humorous anecdotes about data management disasters (with the user in question thoroughly anonymized), and cartoon-like comics when possible and appropriate within the time constraints. Comics from the webcomic xkcd were especially amusing, after determining that even without prior familiarity, the message conveyed about the data management errors was clear and amusing.

Conclusions
While we did not have a large enough sample size to perform rigorous evaluation of learning outcomes, we can state that student engagement during the workshops was noticeably greater, their questions were more on topic, and showed true understanding of the material and its relevance to their personal research.

We even have evidence of attendees applying this knowledge. One attendee, who from comments and questions made it clear her hard drive had never performed a backup of her main laptop, was astonished to learn that Brandeis sells heavy-duty desktop external drives equipped with Rebit, a third-party backup software. She expressed the need for better backup practices and the value of a backup to her friends.

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