Frameworks for a Data Management Curriculum

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Introduction: University of Massachusetts and Worcester Polytechnic Institute Libraries partnered on an IMLS grant to address a need for formal data management instruction. This poster outlines frameworks for a modular data management curriculum that can be integrated into undergraduate and graduate science, health sciences, and engineering courses in multiple formats (e.g., online self-paced, face-to-face, and hybrid).

Methods: An Education Committee identified learning objectives from a literature search of online data management courses and interviews with UMMS and WPI students and faculty about students’ data management practices. A simplified data management plan for student projects was developed. Topics covered in this plan were then mapped to an outline of seven course modules. From interviews with faculty, cases illustrating real-life data issues in science and medical research settings were written. Readings, lecture points, activities, assessments, and these cases were included in the lesson plan for each course module. Content for module 5 was developed and integrated into a prototype tutorial.

Seven Course Modules

Learning Objectives: Learning objectives in each course module reflect components of National Science Foundation data management plan requirements.

Content: Key points that address the module’s learning objectives are outlined in the Lecture Content section of the lesson plans.

Cases: Case scenarios portray data management issues in diverse research settings. Faculty have the option of having their students read full length cases or excerpts of cases for specific modules.

Next Steps: The Lamar Soutter Library has proposed further funding to fully develop the course content, expand the selection of research cases, and pilot the course modules with the following partnering institutions: University of Massachusetts Amherst, Northeastern University, Tufts University, and the Marine Biological Laboratory at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute.

Project Team

Steering Committee
UMMS: Elaine Martin, Mary Piorun and Donna Kafel (Project Manager)
WPI: Tracey Leger-Hornby and Siamak Najafi

Education Committee
UMMS: Lisa Palmer, Myrna Morales, David Lapointe and Patricia Franklin; WPI: Christine Drew, Laura Hanlan, Glenn Gaudette, John Sullivan and Erica Stults

External Consultants
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Project Sponsors

This project is made possible by a grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services and with funds from the National Library of Medicine under Contract No. NB1 LM 4-3009.