

Review of: "Project-Based Learning for Graduate Students in Digital Humanities"

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The topic of the essay by T. Augst and D. Engel is of great interest to the humanities field of study, where digital applications have been experimented since many (at least eight) decades, but have for longtime remained the playground of fews, considered at the same time as “magicians” able to bring to life special effects and technical figures not fully belonging to academia.

On the other side, Digital Humanities have become in the last years a vast subject matter making use of such a rich set of tools, methodologies and services. The project-based learning approach is very convincing when it comes to address specific projects, and the ones presented in the paper illustrate this topic very well.

Yet, the most complicated issue with students from humanities disciplines asked to conceive digital-related projects is the (almost total) lack of IT/data literacy, a fact that determines usually a rather “analog” approach to the few familiar digital tools. It is not clear from the paper what the “digital background” of the students is and if, during the initial phases of the project, the students were exposed to an overview of the base technologies and methods of Digital Humanities. Some of the changes of target illustrated in the paper are very revealing in this direction.

Some more words on the replicability of the experiment would be helpful and the paper would greatly benefit from a data annex with detailed information about project names with short descriptions and recurrent topics of the regular meetings and subject of lectures, if any.