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UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI PRESS RELEASE

Announcing the Establishment of UC's First Digital Scholarship Center

September 26, 2016 - The University of Cincinnati Libraries, in partnership with the McMicken College of Arts and Sciences (A&S), is establishing UC's first Digital Scholarship Center.

To be located in the Walter C. Langsam Library, the Digital Scholarship Center will provide a place for faculty and students to explore digital humanities/digital scholarship (DH/DS) in the humanities, social sciences, and sciences, as well as cross-disciplinary teaching and research. The mission of the Center will be to serve as a catalyst for creative hybrid forms of research and teaching, bringing together humanistic methods with technical innovations to test paradigms and to create new knowledge at the boundary between disciplines as they are conventionally imagined in the humanities. The establishment of UC's DH/DS Center will also take advantage of opportunities at the national and regional levels. The Center will serve as a base to expand UC's scale of impact in the national digital humanities conversation, by showcasing the range of existing projects and collaborations that faculty have developed.

Projects and collaborations will use methods such as data analysis/visualization, computational text analysis, machine-learning techniques on unstructured historical data, digitization/imaging/3-D modeling, geographic information systems (GIS), text encoding, digital collections/exhibits, and metadata curation on humanistic and cultural datasets that conventionally have not been studied by these approaches. The DH/DS Center will be co-directed by Arlene Johnson, associate senior librarian and digital humanities strategist, and James Lee, assistant professor in digital humanities with a specialization in early modern British literature.

"The establishment of UC's first Digital Scholarship Center continues the mission of the Office of the Provost to ensure quality learning and research opportunities for students and faculty by expanding the technological infrastructure that supports academic excellence. It is a crucial step in reimagining the student experience and investing in faculty and research as an educational resource that is collaborative and interdisciplinary in nature," said Peter Landgren, interim senior vice president for academic affairs and provost.

The creation of the Center is an outgrowth of the Digital Humanities/Digital Scholarship Strategic Initiative launched in 2014 to develop a fuller understanding of current DH/DS scholarship and digitally-inflected pedagogy at the University of Cincinnati, and to plan for future possibilities for excellence in these areas. Since fall 2014, the development of outstanding learning opportunities such as the Digital Humanities Speaker Series and the THATCamp annual unconference has been the initiative's focus.

"Faculty engagement in the Digital Humanities/Digital Scholarship Strategic Initiative and the programs they have offered thus far shows support and need for a Center and the services and leadership they can provide in creating DH/DS projects," said Ken Petren, dean of the

McMicken College of Arts and Sciences. “The Center will serve as a base to expand UC’s impact in the broader DH/DS conversation by showcasing the range of existing and new projects and collaborations that UC faculty develop.”

The first step in establishing the Center will be to transform Langsam Library 460 as the initial site for this new DH/DS space at UC. In April 2016, UC Libraries, working in collaboration with A&S and IT@UC and the Third Century eLearning Initiative, received support from the Office of the Provost to create a collaborative, technology-enabled space for faculty and researchers to work with hardware, software, and tools to support digital scholarship and pedagogy.

“Leveraging the initial funding for the digital scholarship space, in combination with the deep cross-disciplinary collaboration between UC Libraries and the College of Arts and Sciences on the Digital Humanities/Digital Scholarship Strategic Initiative will facilitate the successful establishment of UC’s first Digital Scholarship Center,” said Xuemao Wang, dean and university librarian.

Arlene Johnson has been with UC Libraries since 2000. Previously she served as head of Circulation and Multimedia Services. Since 2007 she has served as selector and liaison for the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures. She has been focused on DH/DS since 2014 and chaired the Digital Humanities/Digital Scholarship Strategic Initiative. James Lee joined UC in August 2016 and is a joint hire between UC Libraries and the McMicken College of Arts and Sciences, Department of English and Comparative Literature. Coming from Grinnell College, Lee brings with him both the technical and humanistic expertise in DH that will help UC to enter into dialogue with a network of other prominent players in the DH landscape. He is bringing his current digital projects, including Linked Reading (<http://purl.lib.uiowa.edu/linkedreading>) and the Global Renaissance (<http://renaissanceglobe.com>), under the aegis of UC’s Digital Scholarship Center. He has published his work in a wide range of fields, and his research has been supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

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