

The Data Curation Profile as a Tool for Archivists

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As the need for better practice in the curation and preservation of data gains prominence in research communities, archivists, records managers, and other information professionals are being called upon to apply their skills to these burgeoning fields. In order to address the numerous challenges of providing data services within research communities, information professionals need effective tools that will enable an informed understanding of researcher needs and requirements in the acquisition, maintenance, and archiving of their data.

The Data Curation Profiles (DCP) Toolkit is a semi-structured interview built to assist information professionals in identifying the data needs of faculty researchers. Developed by the Purdue University Libraries and Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois, the DCP Toolkit serves as a means of exploring issues surrounding the sharing, curation and preservation of research data from the researcher's perspective. Although developed by librarians, the DCP Toolkit was informed in part by archival theory and practice. The toolkit includes a template of 14 sections that resembles a records inventory through which archival concepts such as appraisal, digital preservation, and provenance of research data are raised with researchers. Using the toolkit, it is then possible to create a DCP that could serve as a finding aid for a dataset.

Just as archival science has helped to shape the DCP Toolkit, we envision the toolkit as a means to help archivists engage with researchers to address a growing area of need. This poster will address both how archival/records management practice has informed the DCP Toolkit and how the DCP Toolkit could help guide archival practice in working with data.

About the authors:

Jake Carlson is a Data Services Specialist and Associate Professor at the Purdue University Libraries, where he explores the application of the theories, principles, and practices of library science beyond the domain of traditional "library work." In particular, Carlson seeks to increase the Libraries' capabilities and opportunities to work in data-related research. Much of his work is done through direct collaborations and partnerships with research faculty. Carlson is one of the architects of the Data Curation Profiles Toolkit developed at Purdue and the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois.

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