How are researchers documenting their day to day activities?
Project Team

• Informatics Interest Group
• Members:
  o Marci Brandenburg, chair
  o Leena Lalwani
  o Mark MacEachern
  o Scott Martin
  o Merle Rosenzweig
  o Yulia Sevryugina
Informatics Interest Group

• Charge
  o Identify and capitalize on opportunities to collaborate with researchers in interdisciplinary informatics domains
  o Investigate, develop, acquire, implement, and promote cutting edge and non-traditional knowledge, skills, technologies, and tools for partnering with individual researchers as well as labs, centers, and institutes
  o Promote and raise the profile of the university library by value added contributions to grants, planning, projects, and goals of partner researchers
Project Background

- Evaluate non-traditional resources
- University license of an electronic lab notebook
- We wanted to get a sense of how researchers were documenting their work
Project Details

• Purpose:
  o How researchers document their research
  o Pilot
  o Provide IIG with research experience

• IRB: HUM00147763
Methods

• Methods:
  o Survey
    o To gather information about lab notebook use at U-Michigan
    o Population: Labs in engineering, health sciences, sciences
    o Created in Qualtrics
    o Distributed via email (through liaisons/informationists)
Methods

Methods:

○ Follow-up Interviews
  ○ Targeted one unit (Molecular, Cellular, & Developmental Biology)
  ○ Recruitment emails sent by department liaison
    ○ In phases, including follow-up, starting in July 2018
  ○ Two interviewers present at all interviews
  ○ Interviews recorded (with participant consent)
Methods

Methods:
- Coding
  - Obtained funding to transcribe interviews (Scribie and Rev)
  - Two team members coded interviews independently, resolved disagreements
- Sample types of codes:
  - Print and electronic notebook usage
  - Benefits and limitations
  - Backup
  - Retention
  - Sharing
Results

• Survey (n=77)
  o Questions
    o Paper, electronic, or both
    o Archival practices
    o Electronic platform (if relevant)
    o Willingness to participate in follow-up
Results

• Interviews (n=6)
  o Questions
    o Does lab primarily use print or electronic notebooks for recordkeeping
    o Do conditions in lab or nature of work influence choice of notebook
    o Pros and cons of print and electronic
    o Backup (frequency, process, views)
    o Notebook recording standards or policies
    o Do lab members share contents of notebooks
    o Awareness of institutional notebook
Results

• All used paper; two used both

• Paper
  o Ability to enter information at bench
  o Ability to easily carry it around
  o Not easy to share with others
Results

- Electronic
  - Backed up regularly
  - Easier to share
  - Not convenient to have at the ready

- Commercial products
  - Concerns that company may go defunct or data would be lost
  - Concerns that product may not be tailored to their needs
Presentations

• SLA poster, MLA lightning talk, and Midwest MLA presentation
• Hosted internal lightning round event for other librarians involved in research
Thank you

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