

June 2, 2015

Human Resources Manager  
University of Miami Libraries  
P.O. Box 248214  
Coral Gables, FL 33124-0320

Re: Digital Humanities Librarian staff position

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to apply for the position of Digital Humanities Librarian at Richter Library. I began working with digital humanities while finishing my Ph.D. in English. In the process, I became involved in building DH activity and infrastructure across multiple departments on campus. That focus on infrastructure and community building led to my current library-based position supporting digital scholarship at McMaster University. I am seeking a permanent library-based position because I am energized by the work of helping people discover local and non-local resources and collaborators and develop effective plans for short and long-term projects; and I believe that the library is the best fit for my skillset and expertise.

I completed my Ph.D. in English at the University of Washington in 2014. While writing my dissertation, I founded the Demystifying Digital Humanities workshop series (DMDH, <http://www.dmdh.org>) with my colleague Sarah Kremen-Hicks in 2012. DMDH provides participants with an introduction to major trends and practices, working with programming languages, and project ideation and development. Our participants have included undergraduates and graduate students, faculty, and staff from twenty-one departments and degree programs. I worked closely with staff from the UW Simpson Center for the Humanities, UW Libraries, and UW Information Technology in order to ensure that the workshops promoted networked growth of DH activity across campus. Starting and running DMDH provided me with invaluable experience in administration and marketing. Perhaps more importantly, facilitating DMDH provided me with invaluable knowledge about what DH means in a wide range of academic disciplines, what sorts of research questions students and faculty were framing, and the challenges they encountered.

In my current role in the Sherman Centre for Digital Scholarship in McMaster's Mills Library, I developed and taught McMaster's first undergraduate DH course, collaborating with McMaster's Maps & Data Department and Special Collections so that the course subject matter would highlight the library's extensive collections of WWI maps and documents. My other duties at the Sherman Centre have included consulting with faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students to find proper tools, think through issues of sustainability and adapt to new genres and mediums for scholarly communication. Students and faculty are often unaware of the range of services that places like the library and Sherman Centre offer to support digital humanities learning and research. Increasing the Sherman Centre's visibility (and thus clarifying the role that libraries play in supporting digital scholarship) has been one of my main goals as a postdoctoral fellow. My efforts have resulted in several new collaborations with faculty and students in the departments of English, History, French, Languages & Linguistics, and Communications.

My own entry into the digital humanities was in 2009, when I came up with the idea for *Visible Prices* (VP, <http://www.visibleprices.org>), a tool to help readers understand the significance and purchasing power of prices that appear in literary texts. Working to take VP from an idea to a reality has been an excellent education in several fundamental areas of digital scholarship. I have learned how to find potential platforms and experiment with them in order to effectively assess their suitability and sustainability for my particular objectives. I have also learned how to clearly articulate the objectives of VP for both general and specialist audiences, and to explain how VP integrates with traditional research questions.

In the process of building *Visible Prices* and training as a digital humanist, I have dealt with a range of obstacles. Figuring out how to surmount these obstacles has been one of the most significant aspects of

my DH education. My own experiences in problem-solving mean that I am rarely surprised by the questions that students and faculty ask. Even when questions involve tools where I have little or no expertise, my experience with VP combined with my work with participants in the Demystifying workshops have given me broader knowledge of the digital humanities that allows me to think through questions in terms of the data involved, and identify resources and search keywords that will lead to solutions.

A robust digital humanities community supports multiple levels of engagement with digital scholarship: some people build tools and projects, while others produce more traditional scholarship that engages with digital sources and projects. I envision working in a role that helps members of the University of Miami community attain sufficient informational and technological literacy to pursue their individual goals. Such a role would cultivate networked support and participation from a range of academic programs and departments. This will help to ensure the sustainability of University of Miami digital humanities resources. Equally importantly, it will help academic programs develop a better understanding of what digital scholarship involves, and support student research featuring digital components. I am tremendously excited about the possibility of helping to develop digital humanities at the University of Miami from within Richter Library, and look forward to discussing the Digital Humanities Librarian position further.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paige Morgan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The name "Paige" is written in a larger, more prominent script than "Morgan".

Paige Morgan