

Connecting the dots: the use of faculty personal homepages in the information value chain: a case study

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Title: Connecting the dots: the use of faculty personal homepages in the information value chain -- a case study

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Abstract

Effective academic librarianship involves successful liaison with academic units gained through an understanding of their academic cultures. Librarians normally consider that priority should be given to informing faculty about new resources and services that frequently overload faculty receptivity. A different approach is to learn about individual faculty work and subsequently tailor communication to specific faculty interests. This study analyzes individual faculty home pages as indicators of recent research and teaching activity and of the degree to which faculty employ digital tools. Faculty personal homepages can also be studied to assess the evolution of the open access movement and the development of institutional repositories. An informal electronic survey of librarians, and Library and Information Science (LIS) students at a large public research university, was conducted in the spring of 2006 in order to ascertain how

librarians use individual faculty home pages. Images of selected faculty homepages are presented that reveal the idiosyncratic ways that faculty present themselves. The findings also point the way toward the use of homepages as a local knowledge base that can help academic librarians design targeted services for individual faculty members.

I. Introduction

- Definition of a Faculty Personal Homepage (FPH) is a webpage profiling individual faculty work and other personal information whether maintained by individual faculty or by his/her academic unit at departmental level.
- Content of FPH serves as a useful knowledge base for reference services and as a selection tool for collection development
- Contents of FPH serves as a precursor of the content of Institutional Repositories
- FPH serves as a good indicator of the degree to which faculty employ digital tools
- FPH can be used as aids to develop targeted services instead of overloading faculty with the indiscriminate distribution of information about library services and resources

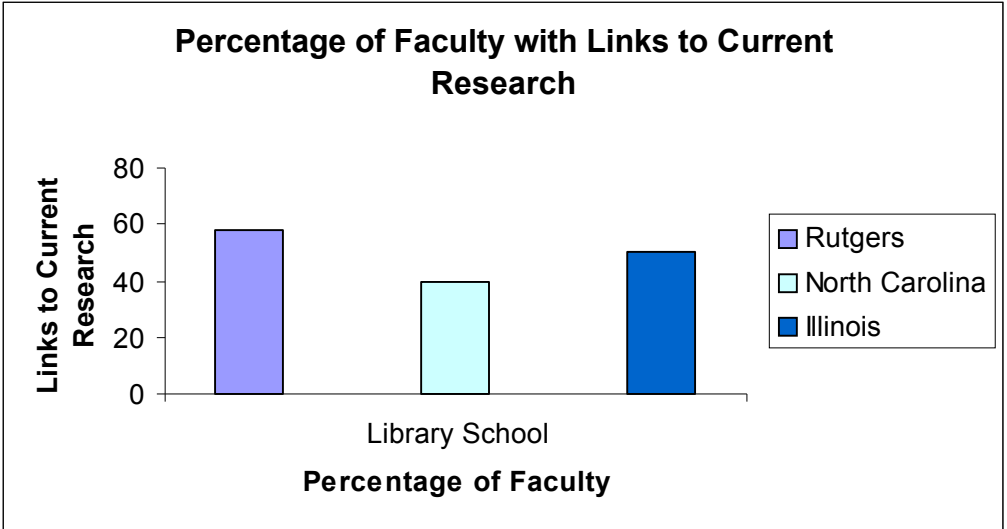
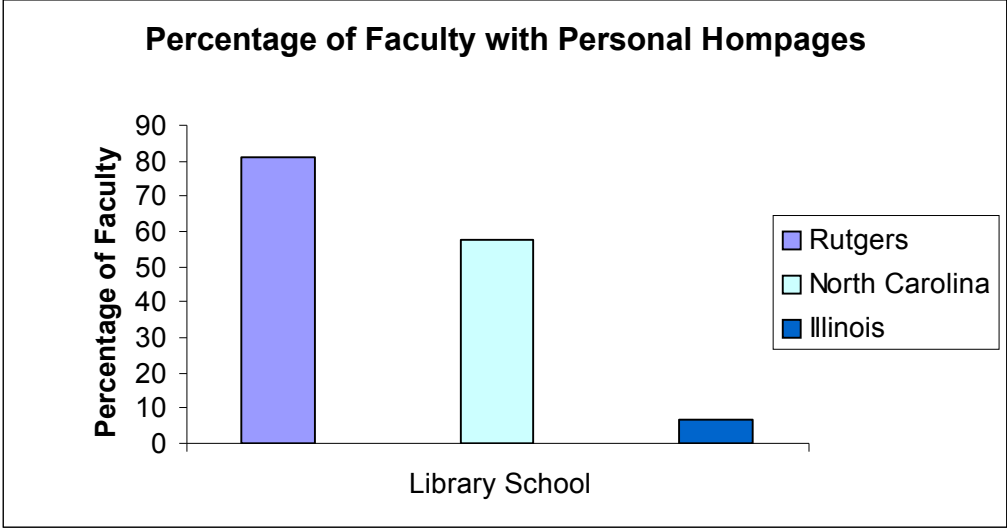
II. Methodology

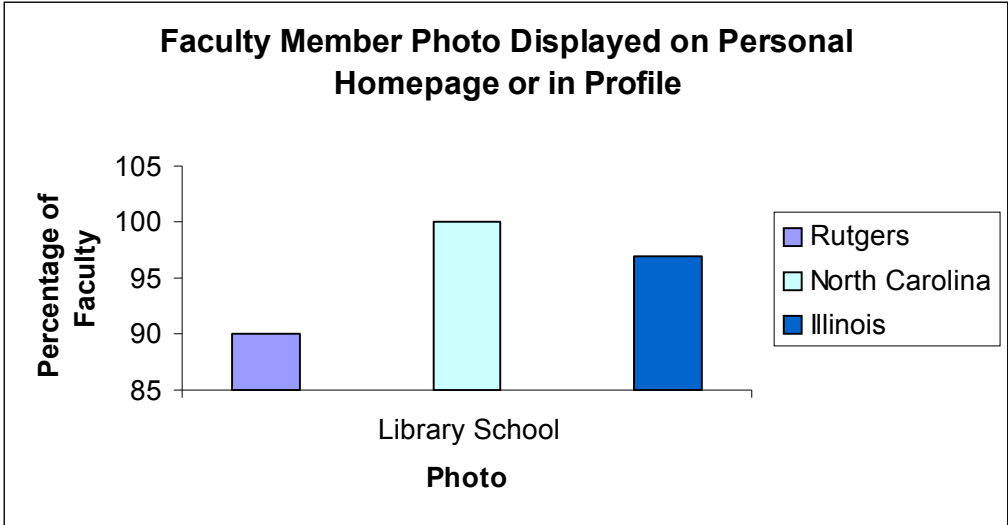
- Employed Web content analysis method in examining the content FPH of the LIS faculty at Rutgers and two other institutions (the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) for comparison purposes in the Spring semester, 2006
- Conducted electronic surveys of librarians and LIS students at Rutgers regarding their use of FPH in the Spring Semester, 2006.

III. Preliminary Findings:

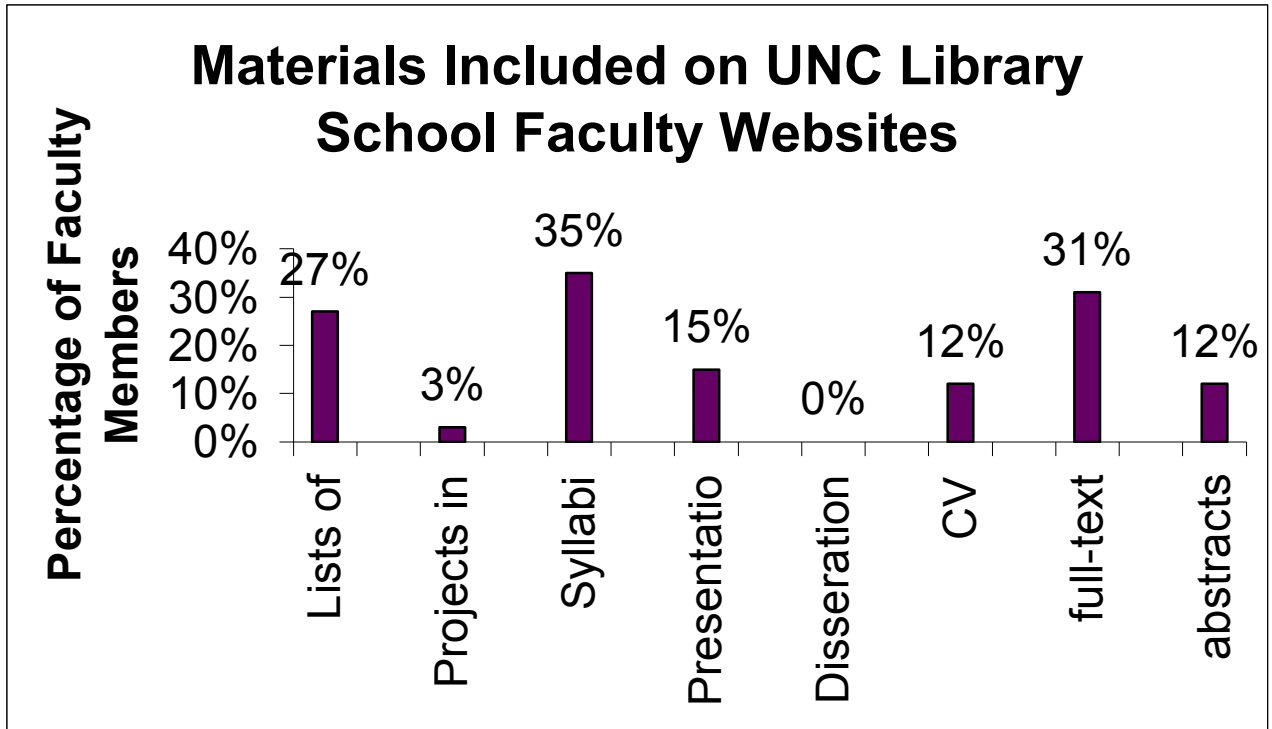
From the Web Content Analysis:

- **The Web content analysis of LIS faculty personal homepages at three institutions of revealed the following comparative distribution:**



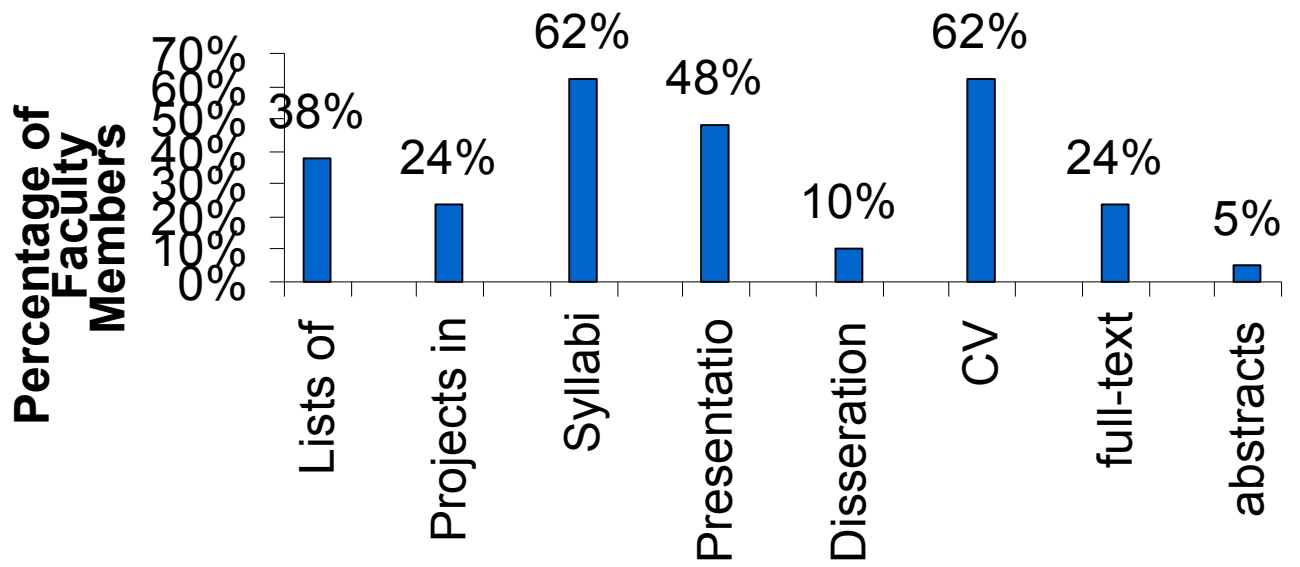


- **The Content Analysis of UNC Library School faculty revealed the following distribution by type of materials posted:**



- **The Content Analysis of Rutgers LIS faculty revealed the following distribution by type of materials posted:**

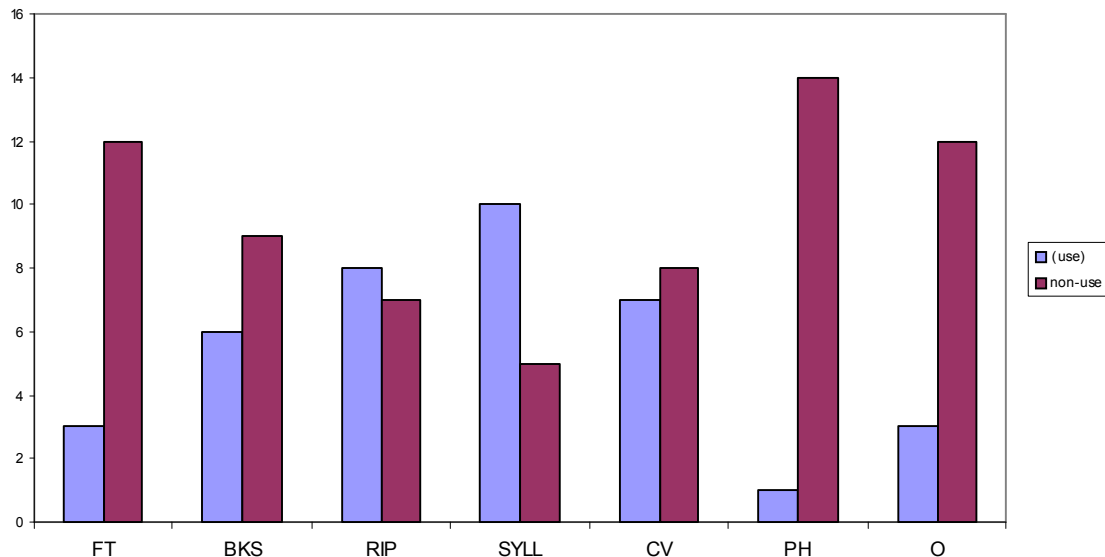
Materials Included on Rutgers Library School Faculty Websites



Findings from the Electronic Survey of librarians' and students' use of FPH at Rutgers

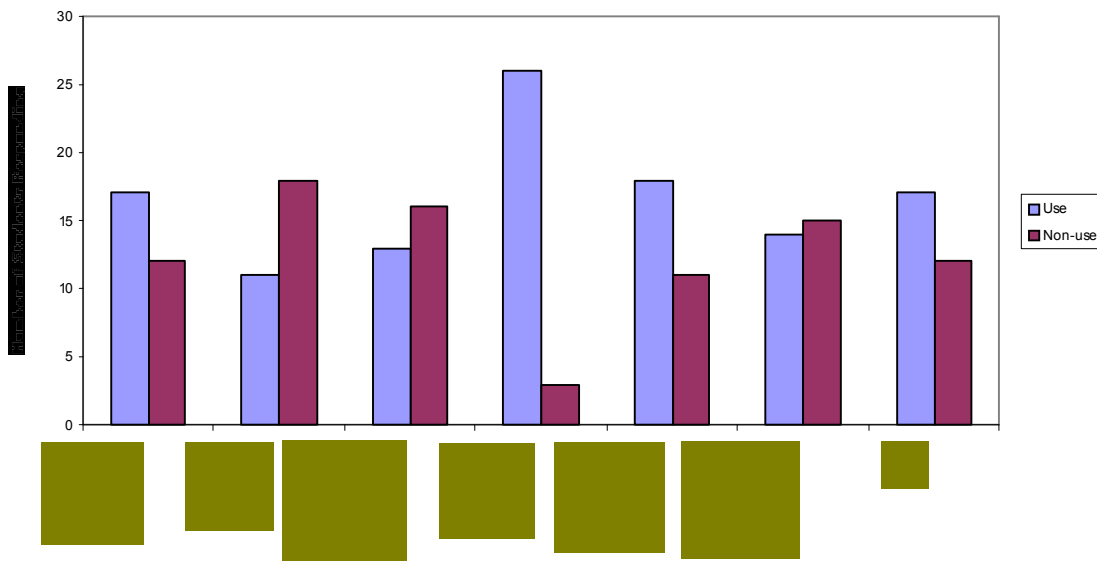
- Distribution of Librarians' use of FPH

Librarian use of FPH



- **Distribution of LIS students use of FPH**

Student Use of FPH



Preliminary Conclusions

-
- Web content analyses reveal faculty research agendas and research in progress that can help librarians to develop collection strategies that will facilitate the research enterprise
- FPH serves as an important citation verification tool for librarians
- FPH serves as an important resource site for preparing library instruction sessions
- FPH is becoming an increasingly essential tool for teaching
- FPH serves as a source of information regarding faculty use of, and familiarity with digital tools and digital resources