



Proposal Defense
Doctor of Philosophy in Library and Information Science

**“Toward A Conceptual Model for Users’ Online Open Government Data Interaction” by
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Committee:

- Daqing He, Professor, Department of Informatics and Networked Systems, School of Computing and Information
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- David Walker, Lead software developer, Western Pennsylvania Regional Data Center

Abstract:

Acknowledging the value of Open Government Data (OGD), the development of OGD and its portals have been rapidly proliferating around the world. Consequently, a massive amount of government data, from federal to state to local levels, is available via various OGD portals. Also, the emphasis of OGD projects has gradually shifted from a publisher-centered paradigm to a user-centered paradigm. As laws and regulations have caught up with the open data policies making it more widely accessible to the public, improving data use has become the new principal aim of publishing OGD. However, the extant studies argue that there have often been challenges in interacting with data, such as finding or understanding the data. Whereas, the area of human data interaction is still an emerging field with few studies focusing on how humans interact with data. In particular, there are very few studies focusing on how humans interact with OGD.

Therefore, motivated by the existing challenges of interacting with OGD and the corresponding research gaps in human data interaction (HDI), this dissertation aims to empirically probe into OGD user online interactive behaviors, pinpoint contextualized user challenges of interacting with OGD, so as to develop a set of evidence-based design guidelines for facilitating users in better data use. By synergizing the Framework for Human Structured Data Interaction and a Conceptual Model of Sensemaking, research questions and study instruments are refined. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods, including transaction log analysis, qualitative content analysis, and interviews with critical incident technique, are conducted in this dissertation project. The two research sites to be studied in this dissertation are local-level OGD portals: Open Data Philly and Western Pennsylvania Regional Data Center. This dissertation is expected to contribute a holistic view and a deep insight into user OGD behaviors, and evident-based design guidance that will facilitate seeking and understanding OGD.