Brief Bio and (PR)2: Problems & Pitches – Rants & Raves by Griffin Weber

Self Introduction

Dr. Griffin Weber is an Assistant Professor of Medicine and the Chief Technology Officer of Harvard Medical School. His research focus is in expertise mining and social network analysis. He invented the open source Harvard Catalyst Profiles research networking software (http://profiles.catalyst.harvard.edu), which creates researcher profiles and links them together through both Passive Networks, which are automatically generated based on information known about investigators, and Active Networks, which the users themselves create by indicating their relationships to other researchers. These networks have numerous applications, ranging from finding individual collaborators and mentors to understanding the dynamics of an entire research community. Dr. Weber is co-Chair of both the national Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) Research Networking Group and Bibliometric Analysis Interest Group, and an active member of the CTSA’s Social Network Analysis Group. He is also a member of the Technical Advisory Board of the VIVO Consortium. Dr. Weber is also an investigator on Informatics for Integrating Biology and the Bedside (i2b2), an NIH National Center for Biomedical Computing, for which he developed a web-based open source platform that enables a variety of functions including queries of large clinical repositories, visualization of temporal data, identification of random matched cohorts, and statistical comparison of groups of patients. He created the Shared Health Research Information Network (SHRINE), which is a federated query tool that connects multiple i2b2 databases. The Profiles and i2b2 software are both used in dozens academic health centers around the world.

Relevant Publications


Home Page: http://connects.catalyst.harvard.edu/profiles/profile/person/32213

Software:
- ProfilesRNS – http://profiles.catalyst.harvard.edu
- i2b2 – http://i2b2.org
- DIRECT – http://direct2.experts.org
General Questions

1) What is your main interest in attending the workshop?
Understand the approaches a diverse group of experts are taking towards research networking.

2) What three features or functions of researcher networking (i.e., tools and services related to assisting researchers with finding people, resources, data, projects, and scholarly works) are most critical to adoption?
A commitment from senior leadership to supporting research networking through communication, policy decisions, and financial resources. Faculty advocates who participate in governance of the software and build support from the ground up. Integration of research networking into investigator workflows, such as biosketch creation and faculty activity reports, so that using the software will save them time and effort.

3) What three features of researcher networking are most critical to success after adoption, or sustainability?
A plan to keep the data up-to-date. Surveys, focus groups, informal interaction with researchers, and web log analysis to see what changes need to be made to the software. Continued outreach in the form of talks, training, promotional materials, etc.

4) Are you aware of especially innovative approaches to any of these features or functions?
UCSF has experimented with a number of approaches (contests, brochures, newsletters, etc.) to increase/sustain adoption of research networking.

5) What features of researcher networking are most important to you as a researcher, for your own use?
Discoverability (others learning about my work); identifying the leaders in a field; understanding the factors that lead to successful collaborations.

6) Are you or your group working on any of these features?
My group has grants funding: (a) development of the open source Harvard Catalyst Profiles software, (b) using research networking to recommend teams, (c) using research networking to address issues related to diversity in the workforce.

7) What would you like to learn / achieve at the workshop?
What others view as important directions in the future of research networking; what tools people are building to go beyond “basic” biomedical profiles (e.g., titles, positions, Pubmed articles, etc.).