

# **Annual Report**

## **Alumnae Library**

### **FY 20-21**

#### **Initiatives**

In FY 20-21, Alumnae Library took the lead in making itself into an environment that could offer safe spaces to learn and study during a pandemic. Despite the threat of Covid-19, library staff worked hard to create a safe, predictable, and creative learning environment. It found diverse ways to engage students from various backgrounds (and possessing the full spectrum of interest levels). More than in previous years, staff engaged rigorously in teaching students (and sometimes faculty) how to access resources for themselves while working and learning remotely. Staff took seriously its overall goal to help remote students become not point-and-click robots, but evaluators of information, to become engaged enough in their research to become independent in their learning.

Working with faculty, library staff tested new databases to find those that serve our mission, programs, and our new centers (e.g., Urban Studies Abstracts for the Center for Equity in Urban Education). New databases were added to our collection, and unused ones were jettisoned, through a review process that involves statistical analysis and “ear-to-the-ground” openness with faculty needs.

One member of staff created a Federal Depository Library Manual and a Subject Guide that works as a repository for digital files of the library’s print collection of Masters’ Theses and Doctoral Dissertations. This repository is available at <http://researchguides.elms.edu/> .

In keeping our consortia agreements (which allow us to work with other libraries for purchasing and planning benefits), the library continued to work with the Eastern Academic Scholars Trust (EAST), which allows it to responsibly delete print materials from its shelves, as EAST coordinates retention agreements of materials for its member libraries; each member library agrees to keep and steward certain titles, so that other EAST members can know print materials will always be available. In essence, EAST gives our library guaranteed access to nine million print books regionally and guarantees the preservation of the scholarly record through retention commitments. EAST members were also all introduced to new technology which allows libraries to purchase intelligently, avoiding purchasing the same print items as other libraries in the region (to create a better overall shared holding).

## **Daily Responsibilities**

As for day-to-day responsibilities, library staff efficiently managed the newly combined Circulation and Learning Commons Service Desks by hiring, training, and scheduling both part-time paraprofessional night staff and student worker staff. In two teams, staff worked remotely 2.5 days per week and onsite 2.5 days per week. Cataloging staff continued to both digitize (using a volunteer worker) and catalog the college's older Masters Theses and Doctoral Dissertations.

Our Technical Services Department added various print and digital materials that enhanced the library's collection. Library staff also maintained the Alumnae website and its Worldshare Management Services Knowledge Base (which allows students to search our entire collection, books, multi-media materials, and articles, through one interface).

Library staff managed an approximately \$400K materials budget. They made necessary changes this past fiscal year, working with the Business Office to change the way the library purchased books so that it could more efficiently spend its budget. Library staff worked with faculty for purchases of physical item (books, DVDs). All library staff participated in gathering information for the library's annual IPEDS report. Despite the Covid-19 Pandemic, library staff continued to be engaged in Research Assistance via interactions with students virtually (Zoom, email, question forms on our web page, text messaging, and phone calls). Reference assistance was offered both during regular library hours and after hours (remotely), weekends included. The College Archives continued to make its materials accessible by appointment. In two teams, staff worked remotely 2.5 days per week and onsite 2.5 days per week. Staff monitored all virtual requests from 8:00 am until midnight.

The library continued to be responsive to student needs, managing extended hours during finals and, using its Student Activities Fund Line, continued to offer Stress Buster Activities, coffee, tea, pastries, and pizza during finals. Library staff in Archives continued to both inventory and digitize auditory materials, creating a repository on the Internet Archive. Digitizing Archives is a long-term project that is likely to take anywhere from 8 to 10 years.

Library staff continued to serve as liaisons to all divisions and schools, as well as to associated groups such as The Irish Cultural Center, The Polish Cultural Center, The Sisters of St. Joseph, Student Services, and the SGA.

## **Currency (Training and Professional Development)**

Staff kept up to date by participating in Worldshare Management System webbased workshops, which allow staff to stay current with the software that runs our catalog and most of our databases. Library staff also attended The Eastern Academic Scholars Trust (EAST) Conference, held annually to keep all participants

updated on the cutting edge theories and practices behind shared print repositories—a necessity given the need to repurpose library space to support modern student learning needs. Subjects touched on included digitization.

One staff member continued to publish, working on the follow up to his book *Listen to Rap: Exploring a Musical Genre* (Greenwood, 2019) with its companion globally-flavored text, *Listen to Hip Hop: Exploring a Musical Genre* (currently at final editing and indexing stage, and due out in 2021). He used what he learned from publishing three books on the subjects of rap and hip hop to create a proposal for a course on hip hop culture (discussed further later).

### **Collegiality and Service to the College**

Some members of library staff continued to work with teaching faculty across campus through committee memberships and liaison positions. Library staff served on the following college committees: Technology Committee, Online Support Team, Student Conduct Judicial Panel, Faculty and Academic Standards Committee, Courses and Curricula Committee, Assessment Committee, Tenure and Promotion Committee, serving as chair on Tenure and Promotion (the second consecutive year a librarian has been chair). Library staff served as members of the Academic Success Team, the Advising Committee, the Institutional Review Board, the Technology Committee, the Courses and Curricula Committee, the Assessment Committee, and the Faculty Governance Committee, as well as Faculty Recorder and the official editor of *The Faculty Handbook*. As such this means that a librarian is the official editor of *The Faculty Handbook*, responsible for keeping all versions of the handbook in archival form, as well as maintaining the current handbook at all times. Two librarians served on Tenure and Promotion and took active leadership roles in organizing an overhaul of the college's Tenure and Promotion sections of the *Faculty Handbook*.

Aside from guest lecturing in various courses, library staff taught for-credit courses in Information Literacy. Library staff have submitted two courses for review to the Division of the Humanities for its Interdisciplinary Studies initiative: Global Hip Hop Culture and Photography, the latter being part of the new Greenfield Community College satellite location online degree program.

### **Currency and Service to the Profession**

Library staff kept current with trends in academic librarianship and education, something that is absolutely necessary for any academic librarian. Part of being an effective and efficient academic library is having staff who know when procedures and policies are outdated or simply no longer feasible; this is difficult at best if one does not network with colleagues at other institutions to find out how issues and

procedures are currently handled (learning from others makes a lot more sense than trial and error). During FY 2020-21, library staff attended many virtual conferences and webinars, on subjects both in the field and on broader subjects. Within the field of librarianship, staff attended webinars and virtual conferences on The Politics of Collections, Institutional Repositories, Challenges Facing Resource-Limited Small Academic Libraries, Controlled Digital Lending, The Role of Libraries on Broadband Adoption and Literacy, Special Collections, Current Realities Facing Libraries, Leveraging OER, Metric Types—Counter Reports, OCLC Discovery, Fundamentals of WorldCat Knowledge Base Collections, The Socially-Distanced Library, NELA 2020 Virtual Conference Series, the Everyday Library Leadership Series, the Depository Library Council Virtual Conferences (2), the Massachusetts Library System (MLS) Annual Meeting, the OCLC Cataloging Community Virtual Meeting, the Conference on Academic Library Management (CALM), the Electronic Resources Management Interest Group (ERMIG), the NASIG 2021 Annual Conference, the ACRL NEC and NELIG Joint Annual Conference, and the New England Technical Services Librarians (NETSL) conference. Library staff also attended webinars and virtual conferences on broader subjects: Community Through Connection, Hip-Hop for Social Change, Micro-Aggressions. Culturally Responsive Teaching in the Online Classroom, Students Organizing Against Racism, Student Engagement in Online Learning, a Student Support Services Informational Session, the Empowered Educator, Faculty Technology, Designing Accessible Online Learning, and COVID-19: Facts about the Vaccine.

Library staff continue to serve as members of the Colleges and Universities of Greater Springfield (CUGS) Library Work Group, The Eastern Academic Scholars Trust (EAST) Executive Committee, The Partnership for Shared Book Collections Digital Surrogates Working Group and Best Practices Working Group (as co-chair for the latter), and staff hold memberships in the American Library Association (ALA), the Massachusetts Library Association (MLA), the North American Serials Interest Group (NASIG), the American College and Research Libraries New England Chapter (ACRL NEC), the New England Library Association (NELA), the Western Massachusetts Regional Library System (WMRLS), the Serials Support Group, and the Center for the Book Arts (NYC).

One member of staff co-authored a Wikipedia article on Collective Collections and served as lead author on two national-level documents: Best Practices for Shared Print Preservation and Best Practices for Shared Print Education and Awareness (located at [sharedprint.org](http://sharedprint.org)). Library staff also volunteered to score the Horace Smith Fund Fellowship applicants.

## **Goals for the Coming Year, FY 21-22**

## **Initiatives**

Library staff will continue to contribute directly to the teaching mission of the college by establishing IDS 1108 (a for-credit Information Literacy course) as an official course through the Curriculum Committee, by creating new IDS courses that unite music and English (meeting both the arts requirement or the English requirement as well as at least three core outcomes); by completing the creation and implementation of a 3-credit online course on Photography, which will be part of the new GCC online degree program for the Division of Humanities (this includes creating a syllabus, course materials, and a Moodle presence); and by continuing to contribute to EDU 3207 for the Education Division.

In the library proper, staff will formalize a preservation program for our rare books, update our current research guides, add new research guides as needed, continue the digitization project of the Masters' Theses and Doctoral Dissertations, which will include digitizing approximately 5,000-10,000 pages, cataloging the digitized files, making the new digital files available to the campus community, and working with the faculty/departments/divisions to set up a process of acquiring copies of new student work (This past year, staff digitized 14,489 pages of the library's collection of Masters' Theses and Doctoral Dissertations).

Staff will work with faculty, departments, divisions, and schools to create a process of acquiring born-digital Elms theses and dissertations/capstones to place in the library's collection. Library staff will also continue in the digitization and cataloging of its historical collections, especially of its textual and audio files (various lecture series), a process which we have already begun after identifying the necessary technology (NOTE: the College Archives photos files are 75 percent digitized).

## **Daily Responsibilities**

To better our ability to meet our daily responsibilities, library staff will continue to present a rationale for the approval for a full-time Night Circulation Manager and Preservation Coordinator. Staff will continue to proactively meet faculty and student needs, addressing all their concerns as they are brought to our attention. When necessary, we will seek help from Administration, the Center for Student Success (CSS), and other entities to find ways to accommodate those student needs. We will continue to reschedule our student workers and library staff for extra hours of operation as they arise.

Staff will also continue to learn the new features of the Ellucian-Elms Connect budget/purchasing system, continue with the next steps in learning original cataloging, continue supporting all departments and schools through a robust liaison

program, and continue with cataloging rare books. Staff will also work towards reintegrating Circulation and the Learning Commons Service Desk into one single entity. Finally, reference staff will continue to engage students both on a practical (trade skills) and theoretical (the ethics, philosophy, and psychology, and such of their disciplines) level in one-on-one sessions.

Library staff will also continue to work with DNP (Doctor of Nursing Practitioner) program on integrating a resource check within its capstone process. Staff will continue to integrate our old Learning Commons duties into Circulation and will work with Humanities on ensuring that Information Literacy is embedded into ENG-1001 courses consistently. Library staff will also conduct an Information Literacy program review, which will involve researching and developing an ACRLcompliant rubric to embed into ENG-1001. The rubric will replace the current Information Literacy exam. Finally, staff will coordinate and market periodic APA informational sessions for students and establish APA drop-in workshops.

### **Currency (Training and Professional Development)**

Both faculty and staff status librarians plan to get as much workshop training as possible. Our sense of collegiality allows for this, as staff members are always willing to cover their colleagues' when these colleagues need to be in training or at conferences or in workshops. Staff will continue to identify free and low-cost professional development opportunities, since we no longer have ready funds for such. They will attend workshops that help to insure their proficiency with our current OCLC Worldshare Management System software (our Integrated Library System, or ILS). They will also attend OCLC Online User Conferences, as well as the consortia's relevant webinars and scheduled phone calls (its "Office Hours"). Faculty status librarians will continue to grow professionally and work towards creating scholarly communications by publishing and/or grant writing, and they will explore the possibility of serving on more statewide, regional, and national committees.

### **Collegiality and Service to the College**

In FY 21-22, library staff are poised to continue to serve as Faculty Recorder, as well as members of the following committees: Assessment, Curriculum, Faculty and Academic Standards, Academic Advising, and Technology. Two members of the library staff will serve on the Tenure and Promotion Committee.

We will also continue to make the library more responsive and helpful to faculty and students by growing the Liaison programs for specific disciplines and entities, both on campus and with associated entities (e.g., The SSJ, The Irish Cultural Center, The Polish Cultural Center). College-wide, library staff are poised

to work with the Division of the Humanities and the School of Nursing's DNP program to ensure that Information Literacy is consistently embedded into courses.

### **Service to the Profession**

Library staff will continue to increase the library's profile statewide by maintaining memberships with The Digital Commonwealth, Boston Public Library, The Cooperative Libraries of Greater Springfield (CLGS), EAST (as an Executive Board member and Chair), and The Partnership for Shared Book Collections (national-level). The desired outcome is to increase the library's grant worthiness for NEH, NEA, LSTA, and IMLS preservation grants by the end of 2022. While we are behind in this plan due to past unforeseen new administrative priorities (migration to a new system; staffing and then de-staffing and re-integrating a Learning Commons, preparing the second floor—including the Rare Books Room—for a Student Success Center, re-evaluating the collection so it can be shifted upwards, the loss of a full-time position). If we are faced with no new unpredicted priorities, we can spend time on grant identification.

Library staff will also continue with professional development, in the way of publications (books and peer-reviewed articles), photography shows, and presentations/attendance at conferences (as the library's finances permit) and workshops/webinars. Library staff have book contracts for publications in Fall 2021. Staff will continue to take on leadership initiatives with CLGS, with the intent of strengthening its power regionally and with the Massachusetts Higher Education Commission (MHEC) and any potential CLGS Purchasing Cooperative.