Sacred Heart University Library
Annual Report 2019-2020

The previous annual report for 2018-2019 omitted to report that Melissa Volman and Beth Rogers-Ho joined the library staff as part-time evening & weekend reference librarians in the spring of 2019. Otherwise there were no changes in personnel in 2019-2020, although five staff members were furloughed May 1-July 31, 2020.

The most prominent event of the year was the disruption of normal library services with the suspension of on-ground classes on March 9, and commencement of working from home on March 16, 2020. These changes necessitated many new developments, in some cases sudden: use of Microsoft Teams and Zoom, very extensive collaboration with faculty members and CEIT to facilitate the transfer of on-ground classes to the online environment; suspension of services regarding tangible collections and ILL; and the evolution of new patterns of communication and collaboration. Special COVID-19 free access to thirty-six collections of full text and streaming video was integrated into the library discovery service and marketed to faculty. Certain resources received over 1,000 interactions from faculty and students during this period.

Before the disruption of the Spring semester, the entire Library staff took time to update and re-define the library's mission, vision, and brief strategic goals. After review by the Provost, these statements read:

> Mission: Sacred Heart University Library empowers the University community with quality resources, services, and expertise, to meet personal and intellectual goals and to navigate an increasingly complex information environment within a safe and inclusive space.

> Vision: The Library will strive to become the academic heart of the university through sustainably curating trusted knowledge resources and stimulating intellectual pursuits.

Strategic goals:

1. Support innovative teaching and learning by breaking down barriers to information
2. Create dynamic spaces that foster intellectual pursuits and the sharing of information.
3. Increase awareness and visibility of library resources, services, and expertise.

This mission, vision, and statement of goals have continued to be pertinent, and have guided the library as in the unexpected, new context of online-only instruction and working from home that began in March.

The Public and User Services group undertook a number of projects, especially as regards tutorials and delivery of online research consultations and services, even before March 2020. A new NU 602 tutorial that was long in preparation was finally made available to students in May.

Librarians closely collaborated with planning for the First Year Writing Seminar classes, Critical Thinking classes, and introductory business courses, as well as problem-based instruction in several subject areas (especially business and physical therapy). Because digital and tangible periodical subscriptions were transferred from Basch/Prenax (a relationship over twenty years old) to Ebsco Subscription Services, practically all periodical subscriptions were re-evaluated October-December, and owing to Ebsco pricing and negotiated arrangements, significant new content became available in the Sage Premier journals collection, JAMA Pediatrics and Psychiatry, Data Planet, Nature, and others, with minimal impact to the library's ongoing budget. Continuing JSTOR demand-driven and evidenced-based monographic resources programs continued to receive significant use.

After migration to the Koha integrated library system in May 2019, various features remained to be normalized and reviewed in subsequent months; overall the migration was a considerable success and has saved the Library substantial funds which enabled subscription to numerous new resources. Migration to Ebsco Subscription Services, begun in October 2019 for subscription year 2020, required substantial review and upgrade of the Ebsco Knowledgebase, work which has continued with migration to Ebsco Holdings & Link Management and Full-Text Journal Finder, of which the public interface will be introduced during the later months of 2020. This migration will allow additional funds to be re-dedicated from library information technology to digital resources for users at a time when the University continues to expand the curriculum and enrollment (as least as foreseen). The Library also implemented LibKey Discovery, which for the first time has enabled SHU Library links to be visible in PubMed Central, Wikipedia, and elsewhere; the library also configured Sage Lean Library finder in April for trial use during the later (disrupted) portion of Spring semester. The Digital Services team also began redesign of the library's web site and web presence through user testing, ongoing upgrades of user interface, and continuing identification of necessary alterations to assure continued accessibility.

The library continued intensive review of collections budgets and re-evaluation of resources such as BMJ Best Practice and other databases. A substantial upgrade of tangible collections regarding race and racism was planned but disrupted due to financial limitations beginning in March. (This upgrade was planned before the national events of May and June.) Continuing review has also clarified the use of the university's budget object codes to identify subscriptions that support the library services platform and ancillary services such as Springshare (library time and space management, library guides and the library web site). Planning for FY2021 has gone forward mindful of the uncertainties of the FY21 budget.

The Library continued to assess its services and resources throughout the year, especially as regards First Year Seminar instruction, and continued review of the use of library resources in academic projects such as the History Department's senior projects. The library also conducted usability testing of various features of the library's online services, the results of which have informed continuing and anticipated re-design of the library's web presence.

The Library continued to market its resources and services with outreach to the wider community. Prominent among these projects were the presentation of the Library Scavenger Hunt, and self-guided gamification that introduces library services and resources, and the "Mystery at the Library: An Escape-The-Room Experience" (game) which was highly successful among those who played it, particularly in January. The IT division has expressed in using the Escape-The-Room as a team building exercise. Both the Hunt and the Escape-The-Room exercises must be reviewed in light of restrictions on spaces and groups required for re-opening the library and the university. The Marketing group also prepared a variety of new printed resources, the production of which was disrupted in March. Promotions of the book collection included a highly successful "Date with a Book" campaign in December, as well as development of popular fiction and nonfiction titles for staff, students, and faculty. These projects will be continued as possible and advisable following re-opening.

The Academic Festival 2020 was presented online on April 24 based on the Digital Commons repository, and in conjunction with the Office of Academic Affairs. The Library continued to work with Lehigh University Library regarding digitization of the Gloria Naylor Collection, a project brought to a temporary halt by the disruptions following the COVID 19 pandemic. The Library and the History Department have collaborated on a *Remembering COVID-19 Archive* and already numerous submissions have been published. Digitization was begun on the *NBC Peacock* collection that the library received in the previous year.

The Library continued to act on its core values of stewardship, sustainability, and trust. These can be just pretty words, but the events of the last year have demonstrated how critical is each. The library's careful stewardship of its resources since 2000 meant that it built out a digital infrastructure which allowed swift transition to online-only resources and services in 2020. The library's critical value of sustainability has allowed the library to continue to support the University's teaching and learning in the face of uncertain on-ground and budgetary realities, and will be able to continue to do so amidst all the uncertainties of 2020-2021.
The trust that the SHU community has placed in its libraries—and that its librarians have earned—has enabled teaching and learning to go on in a respectful, morally engaged, and globally-inclusive manner. In a global context characterized by conflict, disinformation, and the willful disintegration of shared senses of truth, this trust has assisted the University with advancing its core mission at a time when the mission and value of higher education has been openly attacked.   It has been a privilege to serve the university community and every one of its members in this time of anxiety, uncertainty, and unexpected change.

pgf/06-23-2020