

## **Sacred Heart University Library Annual Report for 2020—2021**

This annual report is prepared in lieu of a request for one more detailed than a few bullet points for the Board of Trustees. It is intended to communicate to future librarians some of the library's adjustments and developments during the so-called "COVID year."

### **1. Human Resources**

Ula Lechtenberg resigned as Instructional Design Librarian in August 2020, and finished her work by the end of that month. Her employment line was not re-authorized. In the meantime, the Center for Excellence and Innovation in Teaching hired at least two instructional designers, who have worked with the library since their arrival on campus. Zach Claybaugh resigned as OER and Digital Learning Librarian effective the end of June, 2021. His employment has not of this writing (August) been re-authorized. However, subsequently a search for a Research Librarian in the Health and Social Sciences has been authorized. Geoffrey Staysniak was promoted to Director of the Health Sciences Library effective February 1.

### **2. Building Services**

COVID policies in place by August, 2020 indicated that the library reduce its seating capacity substantially; in the end approximately 158 student study locations were created on all three levels. Seating was controlled by a SpringShare LibApps application that allowed students to reserve a desk, and then check in upon arrival at that desk. For Fall Semester, the library employed student entryway assistants to make sure that users understood policies and to help them identify where their desired seat was located in the building. These student entry assistants were always hard to manage, and as the pandemic worsened in October, several of them were out at any given time because of requirements to isolate themselves, or their entirely residence hall floor. Instruction went 100% online in early November, and most students left for the remaining few weeks before Thanksgiving, when they were previously scheduled to disperse. The library had very few or no users. In the building.

Spring semester combined online and on-ground instruction and proceeded as planned throughout the semester. The library did not then employ so many entryway assistants, but allowed users to navigate to their seats while entryway assistants who continued to work minded the building entrance. Building usage was in any case very light, because many students did not want to study in the library wearing their required masks.

Beginning in late January, the University pre-empted the lower level for COVID testing, so students were not able to use that level for study. Resource Management librarians moved to the second floor or to the far rear offices (previously used by ESL). A controlled entryway was set up in so that entering library users were not mingled with those entering for testing.

Beginning in May, the University and the Town of Fairfield began construction of a 9-1-1 call center in the southwest area of the lower level; this lease will run for 25 years at \$1 per year. No thought was given to library uses for that space.

### 3. Instructional and Public Services

Instructional and reference services were conducted almost entirely online; face-to-face interaction with a user was an exception, not the usual. The usage statistics will be available in the library's annual information, but librarians experienced higher usage of chat and video reference. Librarians made maximum use of Springshare LibApps to manage their time and contacts with users. Service was continually adjusted and improved throughout the year.

The Health Sciences team finished the NU602 online tutorial, which greatly economized the use of the Geoffrey Staysniak's time in consultations with these students. Zach Claybaugh created an First Year Writing Seminar Essential link for the usual assignment in that course, which users found very helpful. The Health Sciences team later in the year complete a new Health Sciences Library Resource Module (tutorial) for students in those topics. As in previous years, librarians judged multidisciplinary undergraduate student writing and presentations as part of the Academic Festival, which continued to be published on the Digital Commons platform.

The Library participated in MISO surveys of faculty, staff, and students in February.

### 4. Resources Development and Management

The library published a new, uncluttered design for its web site in August, and continued to update and revise content pages throughout the year. The Library began to use Third Iron Libkey to speed users' linkage to full-text articles and digital books, as well as making other adjustments that improved the response and efficiency of the suite of digital services. InterLibrary Loan service was improved by participation in OCLC ILL Express.

The Library completed a thorough review of journal subscription, using usage data and turn-away from Ebsco Subscription Services. This resulted in the reduction of subscriptions to high-cost, low-usage journals and the reassignment of funds to journals from which users had been turned away due to the lack of a subscription.

The library prepared and submitted a proposal for additional funding for the Blau Collection on Jewish-Christian Relations. The Library also trialed for possible subscriptions Drama Online, Social Explorer, and purchased perpetual access to African American Newspapers and African American Periodicals (Newsbank). Insofar as no library funds were expended to support professional travel and presentations, the library was able to purchase more monographs (both digital and printed) than in previous years with the re-directed funds. The Library also added records for books in the Directory of Open Access books to the discovery service.

## 5. Service in the Community, and People

Librarians were involved in several community service projects, as well as service with the production of various commencement exercises. Zach Claybaugh presented led sessions of the 2021 Connecticut Open Educational Resources Summit, March 1-4 (online). Gavin Ferriby chaired the Connecticut Council of Academic Library Directors (CCALD), which produced and provided policy guidelines for academic library reopening, and submitted testimony to the State Appropriations Committee on behalf of CCALD members during the biennial state budget hearings. At the end of the year, Dr. Rupendra Paliwal stepped down as University Provost, succeeded by Dr. Robin Cautin (Dean of the CAS) as Interim Provost.