In 2009, Sacred Heart University Library chose Digital Commons¹ to be the platform for the University's digital institutional repository. At the end of December, 2021, the site recorded its two millionth download² of University scholarship and information. What is Digital Commons, and how did it become a primary vehicle for the presentation of the University's work to the world?

A digital institutional repository³ is an online archive for collecting and publishing the University’s intellectual contribution, both the scholarship of its faculty, and the documentation of the University's work. Digital Commons is open access⁴ by design, meaning that all its contents are available to the world at large to download under the terms of Creative Commons licenses. (When faculty publish articles in copyrighted journals or books, Digital Commons presents a link to those contents at a publisher’s designated location.)

A digital institutional repository also means that the site's contents and links are described and formatted in consistent patterns using consistent terminology. Controlling this "metadata" enables the user to find articles, books, and other resources in a comprehensive and consistent matter. Though often invisible to users, such metadata often makes the difference between finding and frustration. High-

¹ [http://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/](http://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/)
⁴ [https://sparcopen.org/open-access/](https://sparcopen.org/open-access/)
Quality metadata is the secret sauce that enables Digital Commons to disseminate the University’s scholarship so reliably.

In the early years of Digital Commons faculty and administrators sometimes questioned why the University should support such a platform. They regarded Sacred Heart University as a student-centered, teaching institution in which scholarship was intended to support faculty member’s commitment to high-quality instruction. Some wondered whether the University could produce enough content to make Digital Commons worthwhile. In the years since 2009, as faculty members published more, content grew and grew.

Digital Commons presents and links faculty scholarship first and foremost, as well as doctoral theses and projects. Its reach has expanded to include student publications, both scholarship and writing such as student newspapers, magazines, yearbooks, and documents such as the Remembering COVID-19 Community Archive. Digital Commons also includes:

- Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision
- Sacred Heart University Scholar
- The Irish American Community Collections
- NBC Peacock North, a publication by NBC alumni/ae employees (in preparation)

Allied to Digital Commons are individual sites for 352 individuals in faculty, administrative, and staff positions (called “SelectedWorks”). While these sites are organized by each person, and belong to that person, the content is closely threaded to the organizationally centered Digital Commons. These sites have allowed faculty to present their scholarship and service in a consistent manner visible to search engines and researchers outside the University.

Digital Commons has enabled the University to:

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5 [https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/covid19/](https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/covid19/)
6 [https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/jcps/](https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/jcps/)
7 [https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/neje/](https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/neje/)
8 [https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/shuscholar/](https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/shuscholar/)
9 [https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/irish/](https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/irish/)
10 [https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/media-nbcpeacock/](https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/media-nbcpeacock/)
11 [https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/sw_gallery.html](https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/sw_gallery.html)
• Collate faculty research otherwise fragmented across departmental and disciplinary lines, as well as across varying publishing genres such as journal articles, book chapters, systematic reviews, and content in popular media;

• Increase the visibility of the faculty and staff scholarship both outside and within the University through search engine optimization;

• Enhance the University’s intellectual leadership, credibility, and prestige by presenting scholarship in a consistent, elegant, and useful manner;

• Preserve scholarly and institutional contributions from simply disappearing into obsolescent web sites and document formats.

After twelve years, and two million downloads around the world, Digital Commons at Sacred Heart University has fostered and extended the University's mission "to make a difference in the global community" and core value to promote "the common good of society."

A concrete example of extending the University's mission and value through open-access scholarship is the SHU Faculty COVID-19 Research site. Since 2020, University faculty have authored or co-authored 28 papers on virus- and pandemic-related subjects which have been downloaded 529 times, in locations as diverse as Kenya, Malaysia, the Philippines, Pakistan, and Saskatchewan, Canada. (Numbers are from the end of February and will have increased with time.) The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged scientists, educators, and public leaders at a time of societal division and conflict, and the scholarship of University faculty has sought to meet these challenges.

12https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/covid19-facultyresearch
A Very Special “Thank You” to our Student Library Assistants!

By Sharaya Smith

Each year our Circulation Department is overwhelmed with requests both for undergraduate work-study and graduate work positions. Each year our staff is capable of selecting only a small number of eligible candidates.

Some students take full advantage of the opportunity and commit to the position for the long haul, while others eventually move on to different jobs or programs throughout campus.

The SLA library learning experience spans workplace, academic and human processes — how the library works and interacts with its users.

Our SLAs have organized shelving areas, decorated the building, connected laptops to printers, and directed guests to various places around campus, along with everything else that comes with the job. They consistently supply us with information on what students are looking for and they offer suggestions on how to best provide the items and services that they need. The GSLAs are responsible for a number of library duties, most importantly dealing with an assortment of unfamiliar requests. They have made
themselves available to open and close the building on already strained schedules, while trying to find time to be out living their very best lives and I can’t blame them for it.

The past couple of years have been increasingly stressful on our student workers due to the restrictions of COVID-19. However, they have not allowed the changes to negatively affect how they show up for work or in life. Our students have been flexible in their availability to make up for things like snow days, shift swaps, and quarantines. They’ve helped select popular books to add to our borrowing collection. They’ve also exposed us to a wealth of information such as: social media trends like BookTok, the many animal islands of Japan, Wordle, where to find the good food on campus, as well as some things that we did not really want to know about like long Furbys. They’ve worn their masks correctly and without complaint. They’ve shared parts of themselves with us and they’ve allowed us to share parts of ourselves with them.

I want to thank each of our graduate and undergraduate student workers for helping us during this stressful time. We couldn’t get the job done without you!

New Resources and Library Guides
The Library has recently published:

- **Anatomy and Physiology Resource Guide**
- **Grey Literature for Health Sciences Guide**
- **Human Clinical Nutrition Research Guide**

New Resources in Collections, both digital and tangible, can be found at New Resources @ shulibrary, and include New Books on the First Amendment (of the US Constitution), Social Work, and Theater Arts and Performance Studies.

Library Staff Recommends:

13. [https://library.sacredheart.edu/anatomy_physiology](https://library.sacredheart.edu/anatomy_physiology)
14. [https://library.sacredheart.edu/healthsciences_greylit](https://library.sacredheart.edu/healthsciences_greylit)
15. [https://library.sacredheart.edu/nutrition_research_guide](https://library.sacredheart.edu/nutrition_research_guide)
16. [https://library.sacredheart.edu/newbooks](https://library.sacredheart.edu/newbooks)
17. [https://library.sacredheart.edu/newbooks/artsandsciences#s-lg-box-wrapper-25377746](https://library.sacredheart.edu/newbooks/artsandsciences#s-lg-box-wrapper-25377746)
18. [https://library.sacredheart.edu/newbooks/artsandsciences#s-lg-box-wrapper-29836234](https://library.sacredheart.edu/newbooks/artsandsciences#s-lg-box-wrapper-29836234)
From Susan Luchars, Resources Development and Assessment Librarian:

Cloud Cuckoo Land: A Novel, by Anthony Doerr (Scribner)

This book is a masterpiece that I will go back to in the future -- to revisit these characters, the diverse lands and societies in which they live, and to experience the joy of a wacky tale told over time, again and again. As a librarian, I particularly enjoyed Doerr’s focus on libraries as the learning and information hub of past and future societies. For the future library, consider a metaverse / virtual reality world that offers in-person interaction with all existing knowledge on a given topic!

Between Two Kingdoms: A Memoir of a Life Interrupted, by Suleika Jaouad (Random House)

This memoir by a young woman diagnosed with leukemia just as her adult, post college life commences, is beautiful and personal, real and tragic. I read the book quickly, very eager for the next chapter even though the recurrence of cancer and loss becomes practically a given – for Suleika and the friends she makes during her treatments. Towards the end of the book, Suleika ventures cross country by herself and her adventures are both nail-biting and surprising.

From Libby Knapik, Director of Instructional Library Services:

Our Country Friends: A Novel, by Gary Shteyngart (four stars): (Random House)

In the rolling hills of upstate New York, a group of friends and friends-of-friends gathers in a country house to wait out the pandemic. Over the next six months, new friendships and romances will take hold, while old betrayals will emerge, forcing each character to reevaluate whom they love and what matters most.

A Little Hope: A Novel, by Ethan Joella (four stars) (Scribner)

Freddie and Greg Tyler seem to have it all: a comfortable home, a beautiful young daughter, a bond that feels unbreakable. But when Greg is diagnosed with a rare and aggressive form of cancer, the sense of certainty they once knew evaporates.

We Are Not Like Them: A Novel, by Christine Pride and Jo Piazza (four stars) (Atria Books)

Told from alternating perspectives, an evocative and riveting novel about the lifelong bond between two women, one Black and one white, whose friendship is indelibly altered by a tragic event — a powerful and poignant exploration of race in America today and its devastating impact on ordinary lives.
Doctors and Friends, by Kimmery Martin (four stars) (Berkley)

Written prior to Covid-19 by a former emergency medicine physician, Doctors and Friends incorporates unexpected wit, razor-edged poignancy, and a deeply relatable cast of characters who provoke both laughter and tears.

The Lincoln Highway: A Novel, by Amor Towles (five stars) (Viking)

In June, 1954, eighteen-year-old Emmett Watson is driven home to Nebraska by the warden of the juvenile work farm where he has just served fifteen months for involuntary manslaughter. But when the warden drives away, Emmett discovers that two friends from the work farm have hidden themselves in the trunk of the warden’s car.

From Geoffrey Staysniak, Director of the Health Sciences and Nursing Library

Cultish, The Language of Fanaticism, by Amanda Montell. (Harper Wave Books)

Montell analyzes the social science of cult influence: how cultish groups from Jonestown and Scientology to SoulCycle and social media gurus use language as the ultimate form of power. Through juicy storytelling and cutting original research, Montell exposes the verbal elements that make a wide spectrum of communities “cultish,” revealing how they affect followers of [notorious groups], but also how they pervade our modern start-ups, Peloton leaderboards, and Instagram feeds.

From Gavin Ferriby, University Librarian

The Magician: A Novel, by Colm Tóibín (Scribner)

The Magician tells the story of Thomas Mann, whose life was filled with great acclaim and contradiction. He wrote some of the greatest works of European literature, but never returned to Germany after the horrors of Nazism. A family man, he kept his sexuality secret, and bore witness to the suicides of friends and relatives. Tóibín’s novel summons up a lost world, as he probes the sources of Mann’s creativity as well as his own.
This Semester: Past and Upcoming Events!

Congratulations to our BOOK FACE winners!

PROF. RENÉE DELAHAYE

PROF. MICHAEL FRECHETTE

VICTORIA ZACAROLLI

Thank you to all who participated in the SHU Library’s Book Face Contest. We look forward to seeing your Book Faces again next year!
SHU LIBRARY FLAMINGO BEACH PARTY DAY

FLOCK TO THE LIBRARY FOR SOME FUN BEFORE FINALS!

LIBRARY ENTRANCE
THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2022
1 TO 4 PM