

2017 PROGRESS REPORT



Agricultural Communications Documentation
Center

ACES Funk Family Library, University of Illinois

2017 Progress Report

AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS DOCUMENTATION CENTER

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

As a special resource and service of the ACES (Funk) Library, the Agricultural Communications Documentation Center is revealing itself as increasingly robust, recognized, and valuable. It contributes uniquely within the four-part “Framework for Strategic Action” of the University Library.

- It strengthens the campus infrastructure to support scholarship and innovation through resources and services for the full life-cycle of scholarly communications.
- It enhances user success in information retrieval and use, including a variety of outreach, engagement, and marketing strategies.
- It maximizes the use and impact of library services and collections through application of emerging technologies, new service models, and changes in scholarly communications.
- It capitalizes on the University Library’s national and international leadership by expanding access to unique collections and resources, and by leveraging international engagements to develop unique collections, services, and partnerships.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Staffing and Operations

Staffing in the Agricultural Communications Documentation Center changed in several ways during 2017.

Elizabeth Ray continued to serve as the assistant manager and webmaster on a quarter-time appointment. She oversaw the website updates, reviewed and added citations, processed collections, and headed projects for ACDC.

In May 2017, Caeli Cleary graduated from the Agricultural Communications Program with a focus in environmental journalism. As a student assistant in the center, during early 2017 she added numerous citations, processed new collections, and created a digital exhibit.

In summer 2017, Hailley Shaw joined the staff as a quarter-time graduate assistant. She is working on her Master of Library and Information Science degree here at the University of Illinois. She reviewed and added hundreds of citations to the online database, worked on the James Grunig Collection, monitored new books of possible interest, and helped process collections.

Prof. Pat Allen, former head of ACES (Funk) Library, continued as ACDC administrative coordinator on a part-time basis. He spearheaded the hiring of a second graduate assistant and created numerous lists of documents that have been reviewed and their citations added to BibLeaves.

Prof. Lulu Rodriguez, Director of the Agricultural Communications Program, contributed throughout the year in programming and strategic planning.

A plan to increase collaboration and communications with ACES (Funk) Library staff was continued through Elizabeth Ray and Hailley Shaw attending the bi-weekly ACES Library staff meetings and Ray's spring semester working at the ACES Funk reference desk as a graduate assistant.

Volunteer associates continued to play a vital role in ongoing success of the center. They identified relevant literature from throughout the world, assisted in project development, offered counsel, and provided contacts. Volunteers during 2017 included Jim Evans, emeritus professor of agricultural communications, University of Illinois; Joyce Wright, professor emerita, University of Illinois Library; Paul Hixson, emeritus chief information officer, University of Illinois; and Liz Harfull, professional rural communicator in Australia.

System Development

BibLeaves, the web-based bibliographic system used by ACDC and other library units at the University of Illinois, continues to be the resource locator for the ACDC collection. A public side enables searching for citations and the ability to email or text search results. A staff side is used to add new bibliographic information. Library IT continued to test and implement enhancements.

Staff members continued to assess the need and explore potentials for ACDC to increase its capability for digital archiving, especially in regard to audio-visual materials. Ray also reestablished contact with University Library Media preservation associates to help with the continued preservation of the physical AV materials in ACDC.

The ACDC website had a major switch over from CMS to WordPress in the beginning of the fall semester. The University library IT oversaw the transition with inputs from the ACDC and Funk ACES Library staff. All relevant information was transferred to the new website. The new website remains user friendly with added visual appeals. Users frequently comment how easy it is to navigate the site. Graduate assistant Ray continued to update the site regularly.

Staff members completed a project to create links on the website to connect ACDC with University Archives collections related to agricultural communications. A new "Archival Collections" section of the ACDC website includes:

Association Archives

National Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow Archives

American Agricultural Editors' Association Archives

Agricultural Publishers Association Archives

Agricultural Relations Council Archives

Farm-City Council Archives

National Association of Farm Broadcasting Archives

Turf and Ornamental Communicators Association Archives

Individual Archives

James F. Evans Papers

Claude W. Gifford Papers

Dix Harper Papers

Clement F. Marley Photographs

John L. Strom Papers

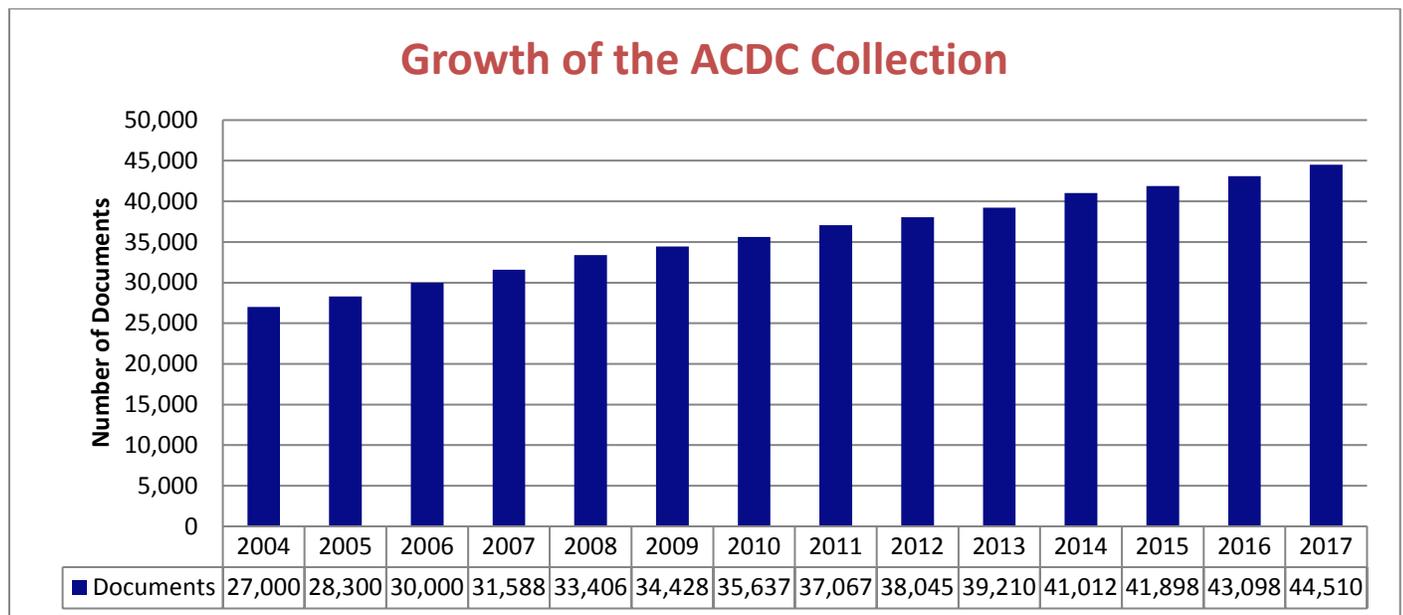
Graduate Assistant Ray updated the ACDC Manual. She also headed a project to make the Francis Byrnes and Kerry Byrnes Collections more accessible and searchable within BibLeaves and the ACDC finding aid.

Graduate Assistants Shaw and Ray updated the ACDC finding aid regularly. It identifies the location of all documents within boxes in the ACDC storage area.

During November, staff members added to the website a resource entitled, "Tips for searching the ACDC collection from BibLeaves."

Content, Programming, and Services**Document Collection**

The ACDC Collection consisted of 44, 510 documents at the end of 2017. More than fourteen hundred documents were added to the BibLeaves database during 2017. This surpassed the intended average of 100 documents added per month.



Overview of contributed materials: During the year, Shaw, Evans, and Ray substantially expanded the Contributed Collections section of the ACDC website. It now features the contributed collections of 42 scholars, professionals, and other individuals. They are recognized with brief biographies and individual photos, along with descriptions of their materials.

Processing new contributions:

Processing was completed on one contributed collection during 2017: The John L. Woods Collection is a globe-spanning collection, ranging across 40 years (1965-2005). It features communications related to agricultural/rural development and environmental quality. Books, handbooks, guides, project reports, presentations, and other materials address strategic communications planning and management, teaching and training methods, cinematography, and other topics.

Two new collections were contributed during late 2017 and will be processed during 2018. The NCR-90 Collection, contributed by Dr. Eric Abbott, features communications research materials, minutes, and reports between 1984 and 1995. NCR-90 was the Communications Committee of Agricultural Experiment Stations in the 12-state North Central Region (NCR). The Gene Kroupa Collection includes a doctoral dissertation and other materials from a four-decade career related to agricultural communications.

Staff members reviewed, sorted, and organized the substantial Francis C. Byrnes Collection. They also added research and program material that involved international activities of the UI Office of Agricultural Communications from the 1930s to the 1990s.

Serving Users

ACDC News: Twelve issues of the e-newsletter were posted on the website during 2017 and announced via two distribution lists. By highlighting some of the literature being added to the collection, on a monthly basis it alerted more than 1,000 readers to agricultural communications research, methods, events, and issues throughout the world.

Sample topics featured in ACDC News during the year included:

- Nothing new about fake news
- How weather broadcasters feel about climate change
- Fake news in the context of meatpacking and immigration
- 25 case studies of using ICTs to advance food security and nutrition
- Livestock disease – a sensitive subject for producers
- How global open data can benefit agriculture and nutrition
- “Spillover” effects of ICT – agriculture lagging?
- 2017 Pulitzer Prize to a rural community journalist
- Warning signals to journalists about “balanced coverage” of environmental issues
- Wow - 175 years of farm publishing
- What drives consumer purchase of green products
- Do food firms advertise and price to maximize profits?

Social Media

ACDC continued an active presence on social media. As of yearend, the center's Twitter account (@ACDCUIUC) had more than 140 followers with more than 320 tweets. Tweets include original tweets of articles and events within the agricultural communications profession, retweets of others in the field, photos of Volume1Number1 items, newsletter alerts, and interaction with other University of Illinois library units.

Other outreach activities:

Partnership with IFAJ. Collaboration with the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists (IFAJ) continued during the year. This long-time relationship has changed in nature, but remains strong. Past IFAJ Discussions also included efforts to collect and feature some 50 ACDC-coordinated articles on the IFAJ website.

Digital Exhibit series: student assistant Caeli Cleary continued the "Digital Exhibit" series on the ACDC website with this new exhibit:

"Oldest Magazine in America: Celebrating 175 years of the *Prairie Farmer*"

SlideShare (the site used to upload the exhibit to share to the website) analytics show that the exhibit attracted more than 200 views with a majority in the United States and some international views.

During March, the American Agricultural Editors' Association featured a newsletter article written by ACDC student assistant Cleary. Her topic was "Creating my first digital exhibit."

Special Searches, Requests, and Contacts:

ACDC personnel provided individual services in response to a broad range of questions and requests from dozens of persons throughout the world. Following are some of the topics involved in those requests during 2017:

- How best to search documents and/or books on ACDC's BibLeaves
- Multiple retrievals and reviewing of documents, including scanning and sending the documents to the patrons
- Availability of back issues of the *Journal of Applied Communications*
- Resource material on how to write a good briefing note
- Tracking down a missing AAACE article
- Pronunciation Guide – Illinois cities, villages and public parks
- Information about local direct marketing of beef
- Volumes of dairy, hog, and other farm magazines for contribution to the University of Illinois Library
- Influence of visual designs of beef advertising on reader trust and source credibility
- Use of social media in communicating about agriculture
- Opportunity to study agricultural communications at the University of Illinois
- University of Illinois involvement in establishing agricultural universities in India
- Resources for reporting about rural development
- Access to digital information in ACDC

- Interest in possible communications information - from a professional agricultural communicator
- How big data are being used in swine disease management
- Helping strengthen the capacity of farmers in India and elsewhere to face the complexity of climate change and sustainability
- Use of farm radio in Africa
- Recent developments in rural-urban communications
- Fate of the *Orange Judd Farmer* periodical
- Graduate student inviting advice and thoughts about good research topics
- Possible home for archives of the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists
- Help in analyzing results of a member survey by the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists
- Identifying teaching resources for AGCM 430, "Communications in Environmental Social Movements"
- Identifying teaching resources for AGCM 320, "Public Information Campaigns"
- Historic photo from the University Archives regarding founding of the national Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow student organization
- Invited perspectives of "truth" for a communications student, University of Alabama
- Access to past issues of the *ACE Quarterly* and *Journal of Applied Communications* journals
- Access to the articles of incorporation for the Association for Communication Excellence in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Life and Human Sciences

A researcher from the University of California – San Francisco visited the Center during November. She has research interest in public relations and communications within the food industry. Conversation centered on relevant materials in the ACDC collection and potentials for collaboration.

Partnership with AgNIC: The University of Illinois continued to serve as national "Center of Excellence" in agricultural communications as a partner in the Agriculture Network Information Center (AgNIC) of the National Agricultural Library. ACDC serves as the portal for information about agricultural communications within this worldwide online agricultural information system.

Other Outreach Efforts: Professor Evans provided agricultural communications students with career development information in the field of agricultural communications, including referrals to ACDC.

Research and Other Scholarly Contributions

Evans and an associate at the National Farm Medicine Center in Wisconsin used ACDC resources in support of a peer-reviewed research article published during 2017:

Scott Heiberger and James F. Evans (December 2017) New Extension approaches to serving agricultural media in advancing farm-life safety communications. *Journal of Extension*. 55(6): 6RIB3

Encouragement from Users and Reviewers

Following are samples of feedback from users during 2017. They reflect responses to individual search and advisory services, issues of *ACDC News*, and various features of the ACDC website:

- “Wow! That is excellent information! I really love your ideas and enthusiasm for this topic.” – Colorado
- “I appreciate the link to the Agricultural Communications Documentation Center. I have been using the library since I found the Agricultural Communications program. It has an incredible collection and it is also very intuitive to use.” – Brazil
- “I always appreciate receiving the ACDC newsletter. It’s an outstanding curated resource for ag communications researchers and practitioners.” – Idaho
- “These are wonderful resources” – Illinois
- “I very much enjoyed my trip down to ACDC and found much of what I gathered there useful in the research I continue to do.” – Minnesota
- “Many thanks for your prompt response.” – Bangladesh
- “Thank you for all the work you put into the citations.” – Wisconsin
- “It is wonderful to have such a center to hold these materials.” – Wisconsin
- “Thank you again for helping me complete this assignment.” – Alabama
- “Thank you so much for all of this information and for the photo. This will be a great addition to my project. I appreciate your help!” – Missouri
- “I couldn’t thank you enough for the list of possible research ideas in agcomm/rural communication.” – Philippines
- “Thank you for the feedback and all the helpful information.” – Switzerland
- “Thanks so much for these resources! This is very helpful to me!” – Illinois
- “Thank you very much for sending these two. Much appreciated.” - Pennsylvania
- “I have retired. I’ve enjoyed reading it (*ACDC News*) and keeping up with y’all during the past 15 years. Thanks, and best wishes.” – Kentucky
- “Much appreciated on the updates.” – Indiana
- “Thank you for forwarding these gems to us!” - Illinois
- “I enjoy receiving the monthly ACDC news.” – Philippines
- “Thanks so much for your detailed instructions and advice! I’m sure your database will be a great resource for this project.” – Editor, *Science Communication* journal
- “Many thanks for your greetings. They are much appreciated.” – Israel
- “Thanks for the info and links. I will definitely dig deeper, just looked briefly, lots to digest.” – Indiana