

University High School Library Annual Report 2012-13/FY2013

I. Unit Narrative

1. Major activities and accomplishments

Teaching

Instruction and collaboration with teachers is a major component of library services at Uni High. The librarian meets with teachers to discuss learning goals of assignments and, when appropriate, to help design research-based units that embed information discovery, synthesis, and evaluation skill-building activities. Library staff met with a total of 97 classes outside of the computer literacy course sequence. Class project LibGuides (<http://www.uni.illinois.edu/library/classprojects/index.php>) were developed or revised for a number of assignments, most notably: Subfreshman Algebra, Sophomore English project using infographics, historical utopian experiments, “my story in the world” assignment, the New Deal, climate change, and an Agora Days class taught by the librarian called “Beyond Facebook: Social Media FTW.” New guides were created using LibGuides and a few old ones were converted from web pages and wikis to LibGuides. With a new permanent subfreshman science teacher on board, the librarian introduced a free reading assignment. Students selected any science book in the library’s collection to skim or read and responded to a brief series of writing prompts designed to promote critical thinking skills (e.g., “How might the world change if everyone on the planet read this book?”). The project concluded with a “book dating” activity in which students had three minutes to convince a partner of their book’s merit before moving on to a new partner.

The librarian created a homework wiki for the Subfreshman core teachers (Math, Science, Social Studies, English), and other interested Subfreshman level teachers (e.g., foreign languages). As the official tool of communication about classroom activities, it was heavily used all year by teachers, students, and parents.

The librarian accompanied the sophomore class (63 students) on their visit to the Rare Book and Manuscript Library and took the students on tours of the stacks.

The computer literacy class count for the year was 172 sessions. The Computer Literacy 1 and 2 curricula undergo frequent revision, particularly for the librarian-led units on web searching, website evaluation, social information and communication tools, and ethics. Both classes include a heavy emphasis on “managing your digital footprint.” As a school without filtering software, Uni is in the unique position of engaging in direct discussion with students about managing their privacy and personal online interactions. Several of the librarian’s assignments for Computer Literacy 1 can be found at <http://www.uni.illinois.edu/library/computerlit/index.php>.

The Computer Literacy 2 teaching team continuously refines the requirements for the 10-week independent group projects. Students groups design, research, and execute a project, culminating in an end-of-semester presentation to the class and invited guests. They use the computer software and skills covered in Computer Literacy 1 and 2 and must also learn a new piece of

software or a technique that was not taught in class. Evaluation of student work is based heavily on how the groups organize their work, conduct and document their research, cooperate with others in the group, and how members teach and learn from one another. Each teacher supervises and grades a share of the student groups, using forum software to read and comment on required weekly progress reports. A course overview can be found at <http://www.uni.illinois.edu/library/computerlit/description2.php>. This year the librarian directly supervised projects involving fictional election campaigns for the Pillsbury Doughboy and characters from the Lion King (products included press releases, television and radio spots, t-shirt and bumper sticker designs); a video that captured Uni's daily "soundtrack," a music video using multiple sound tracks and multiple video frames on the screen, an animation about a walrus's journey during Hurricane Sandy, and a mashup video guide to surviving the zombie apocalypse using clips from Dr. Who episodes.

Technology

The library continues to be a major hub in the school for the circulation and basic management of a variety of mobile devices and other technology. Circulation of our 8 loanable laptops averaged 14.7 transactions per day. Library staff manages reservations for the high-demand laptop cart, an iPod cart and the two computer labs. Senior Library Specialist Paul Kotheimer handles all reservations using Outlook calendars and the librarian serves on the school's Technology Committee. In general, library staff act as go-to people for help with laptop questions, particularly when the shared services IT support staff member is not available. The library continued to maintain, upgrade, and circulate its video cameras and digital audio recording devices. Circulation statistics are listed in the statistics section below.

Other activities of note:

- Many thanks to the Digital Content Creation unit for digitizing the Uni High yearbooks (1921-present), making an otherwise hidden collection visible. Availability of this collection makes it easier for scholars to study the school that is the home of the "new math" movement and other educational innovations.
- For this year's Barnes and Noble Books by the Bushel event, sponsored by the Champaign-Urbana Junior League, the library again selected e-book titles to load on the library's four Nook Tablets. The Nooks are loaded with public domain titles, a range of popular current fiction titles, and a few titles on teen health and sexuality (the Nooks afford a level of privacy that print titles cannot). The tablets and the current books were purchased using gift and school monies. As tablets, they add to the library's ability to offer Internet-capable mobile devices to students.
- The collection was weeded in Dewey Decimal ranges 700 – 900, Fiction, Biography, and Reference sections.
- The Senior Library Specialist created GA training materials on manual circulation, loanable technology, and other circulation operations that are unique to the Uni High environment (e.g., colored pencils, a volleyball, etc.).
- The Senior Library Specialist spent much of Summer 2012 clearing out now-obsolete equipment - slide projectors, overhead projectors, and so on.

- Pieces of equipment added to the collection included two new hand held audio recorders, a Canon FS400 video recorder, and a Logitech S-00116 2.0 Bluetooth boombox.

2. Major challenges faced

Physical facility

Space constraints (as well as pedagogical demands) require an ongoing weeding effort in the reference and book stacks area of the library. With the success of the subfreshman laptop program and the anticipated inclusion of freshmen in the program next year, we were able to start downsizing the print collection and relieve some of our space constraints. Three shelving units were removed after a concerted effort to cancel periodical titles (19 titles last year and 7 this year, leaving approximately 25 titles primarily used for recreational reading) and retaining only one year of the print issues of the remaining titles.

At the close of the school year, a number of welcome improvements to the physical facility were scheduled. In the main reading room, the circulation desk and periodical area will be moved after the floor is stripped and waxed. New shades will make it possible to install a flat screen monitor, making the library much more suitable as instruction and collaboration space. We are grateful for the support of Jeff Schrader and his staff, as well as Library IT personnel.

Information technology

The lack of any progress on migrating the Uni Library website to the University Library CMS was frustrating. After being trained to use OpenCMS, our Graduate Assistant was at least able to create the content pages. But the CSS for the site wasn't actually completed in draft form until June. It is hoped that the site will be able to go live in time for fall semester.

Two issues raised in last year's report remain active concerns. They are as follows:

1. The lack of good discovery tools for reference titles that come with online counterparts is problematic, particularly if the title is not licensed for use by the whole University community. In general, access to digital content is far less than ideal. Using LibGuides and other in-house finding aids is only a partial solution. Primo certainly helps with resources that are licensed campus-wide, but Uni High-restricted content remains hidden.
2. Exemplary school library programs now routinely loan loaded e-readers to their students. Due to licensing requirements, accessibility concerns, and a host of technical issues related to the use of consumer devices, the University places many restrictions on their use. Yet e-readers have a lot to offer current and future generations of students. This unit recently initiated a very small-scale experiment with four e-readers. As is the case with many instances of technological innovation, legal and logistical factors impede the progress of implementation.

3. Significant changes to unit operations, personnel, service profile, or program

Except for the annual arrival of a new Graduate Assistant, staffing has remained stable. The most significant change to the program this year has been the library's response to the 1-1 laptop initiative and to an environment that increasingly emphasizes digital over print information and collaborative learning over individual work. This was also the second year of higher student admission numbers, a factor that is having an impact school-wide.

4. Contributions to Library-wide programs and public engagement

- As noted above, the complete run of Uni High yearbooks was digitized (<http://hdl.handle.net/10111/UIUCUY:Serial/1893382>) and made available through Illinois Harvest.
- The library continued with its participation in the Preservation Office's Integrated Pest Management program. Biology teacher Dave Stone contributes his expertise and labor in helping library staff identify specimens.
- The Uni High Library hosted a number of current and potential GSLIS students who came to observe various facets of school library operations and interview the librarian. This year, three students from the Collection Development class spent a morning practicing their newly acquired weeding skills, under supervision by the librarian. The librarian gave guest lectures in several GSLIS courses.
- The Uni High Library participated in Library Snapshot Day.
- The librarian routinely responds to e-mail questions from other school librarians and school technology personnel requesting permission to use or adapt elements of the website, particularly from the Computer Literacy instructional material, the library's policy documents, and the library's use of Web 2.0 tools and social media. The librarian is also often called upon to share information about library services conducted in a school that provides open (i.e., unfiltered) access to the web.

5. Progress on last year's goals:

- The library program will be heavily involved in the Subfreshman 1-1 laptop initiative. This program is a unique opportunity to integrate information literacy skills throughout the curriculum of a single grade level. Our goal is to work with the subfreshman teaching team to implement and then assess the success of this endeavor.

Accomplished with moderate success. The Computer Literacy teaching team assisted with deployment of the laptops during English classes at the beginning of the year. In addition to setting up the Subfreshman Homework wiki, the librarian worked with each of the core subject teachers on various research projects.

- Along with the Computer Literacy teaching team, reevaluate the Computer Literacy 1 curriculum in light of the impact of the 1-1 laptop initiative. It is anticipated that the course, currently taught to half of the grade level each semester, will need to be restructured to fit more tightly into the year-long flow of the core courses that depend on use of the laptops.

Accomplished with moderate success. For Spring Semester, the librarian was able to teach all her classes in a regular classroom rather than the computer lab. She participated in the year-long Computer Science department self-study, which recommended that all subfreshman students take Computer Literacy in the fall and that many of the skill-based units be integrated with projects taught by core course teachers.

- Proceed with digitization of the school yearbooks, in concert with the Digital Content Management unit. Publicize the collection to students, staff, parents, alumni, and other stakeholders.

Accomplished with great success. Most alumni and library users have been delighted. The parents of one current student did object to having their child's photograph made available in this way, so all yearbooks in which this student appears (2011 and 2012) were removed from the archive. It was decided to embargo digitization of future yearbooks until current students have graduated.

6. Unit annual goals for FY13

- This past year, the Uni High Computer Science Department underwent the school's first departmental self-study using gift money designated for this purpose. As a member of the department, the librarian (and therefore the library) will be heavily involved in the implementation of the study recommendations and the future trajectory of the Computer Literacy course sequence.
- The librarian will retire at the end of the 2013-2014 academic year. Every effort will be made to document processes and leave the library in good shape for her successor.
- During the summer and fall of 2013, improvements to the physical plant will be completed and the library's website fully launched on the University Library's OpenCMS platform. Library users will experience a "new" library – both physical and virtual!

7. Number of GAs

One .33 FTE graduate assistant

8. Funding source for GAs

State funds

9. Major responsibilities of the GA and an overview of contributions made

The Uni High Library graduate assistant essentially acts as assistant librarian. A unique requirement of this particular library is that it cannot be staffed by undergraduate students because the supervision of minor children is involved. Students form strong personal bonds with the graduate assistant, who serves as a role model and mentor.

The major responsibilities and contributions made by GA Kerry Devitt were as follows:

1. Weeded 700-990 Dewey ranges, Fiction, and Biography
2. Website Conversion – Converted all of the content from the old website into OpenCMS
3. Updated obsolete links on website
4. Created seven LibGuides for class projects
5. Maintained the Uni High Reads Blog (<http://unihighreads.blogspot.com/>)
6. Maintained LibraryThing graphic novel catalog (<http://www.librarything.com/home/unihighlibrary>)
7. Created a proposed new physical layout design for the Library using Urban Barn’s “The Make Room” (<http://urbanbarn.icovia.com/icovia.aspx>)
8. Created Bulletin Boards and Book Displays to promote the library and reading (see <http://flic.kr/s/aHsjEXHV1w>)
9. Designed “New Volumes!” and “New Series!” labels for graphic novel shelves
10. Recommended purchases in selected areas (fiction, graphic novels, biography, nonfiction holes from weeding)
11. Created a survey to solicit student input for collection development
12. Provided reader’s advisory and references services to students and teachers
13. Pulled materials for class projects for student use in the library
14. Entered teaching statistics
15. Graded selected Computer Literacy assignments

II. Statistical Profile

1. Facilities

Total user seating:

37 at tables

4 at carrels

6 at public workstation or index tables

8 informal

Number of hours open to the public per week:

Summer II 2012: 0

Fall 2012: 42.5

Spring 2013: 42.5

Summer I 2013: 42.5, first 2 weeks, 20 hours second week, 0 hours thereafter

Note that the Uni calendar does not correspond exactly to the University calendar.

Uni is still in full session (42.5 hours per week) during part of Summer I.

2. Personnel

Frances Harris (Faculty) (September 1987 – present)

Paul Kotheimer (Senior Library Specialist) (February 22, 2010 – present)

Kerry Devitt (Graduate Assistant) (33%) (August 16, 2012-May 31, 2013)

3. User Services

Gate count (as reported during FY13 Sweeps Week)

Fall 2012: 459

Spring 2013: 580

Circulation (from Voyager circulation reports)

Charges: 3,629

Renewals: 3,579

Discharges: 3,580

Manual: 183 (33 faculty, 109 students, 1 nonprint, 40 reserve)

Circulation of electronic equipment

Laptops 2649

Voice recorders 115

Still cameras 29

Full-feature video camcorders 42

Because our equipment circulation is largely self-service, these numbers should be regarded as being on the low end. Also, the numbers do not reflect the many times that accessory items are circulated (e.g., external microphone, adapter cords, video signal connectors for external VGA monitors, audio output connectors for computer audio, etc.).

Reference interactions (from DeskTracker)

Total: 65

 Email: 1 (5m-15m)

 In person: 64

 12 (5m-15m)

 52 (< 5m)

Directional: 9 (that can't be right!)

Presentations

Number of presentations to groups: 269 (including Computer Literacy 1 and 2)

Number of participants in group presentations: 6,056 (including Computer Literacy 1 and 2)

4. Other statistics

Cataloging (i.e., new acquisitions)

Total new titles: 451

Total new items: 722

By sublocation:

Voyager Location and Format	Total New Titles	Total New Items
Uni High	226	310

-- Monographs	160	235
-- Serials	63	72
-- Projected Medium	3	3
Uni High Fiction	62	140
-- Monographs	62	140
Uni High Graphic Novels	47	123
-- Monographs	47	123
Uni High Ref [noncirc]	114	146
-- Archival Collection	4	4
-- Monographs	6	18
-- Serials	92	106
-- Projected Medium	12	18
Uni High Resrv [noncirc]	2	3
-- Projected Medium	2	3