

# **SOCIAL SCIENCES, HEALTH, AND EDUCATION LIBRARY**

## **ANNUAL REPORT, July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014**

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### **I. Highlights of the year**

Blending of services and staff were the highlights of the year, with an emphasis on outreach to library users (and non-users!). Detailed statistical data is provided in the attached spreadsheets for collections, services, and personnel.

### **Major Accomplishments**

- Celebrated the Grand Opening of SSHEL on October 24, 2013
- Provided services to the departments, programs, and schools affiliated with SSHEL (350 tenure system faculty, 2,266 graduate students, and 5,823 undergraduate students), as well as to library users interested in any of the subject areas covered in SSHEL
- Moved to online reservation system for SSHEL collaboration/group study rooms
- Used SSHEL endowment and gift funds to hire former SSHEL graduate assistant to catalog part of Curriculum Collection backlog
- Supported 637 students in Education, LIS, and Social Work who exclusively take distance education classes. This accounts for 48.5% of extramural students at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- Acquired and processed the Erlewine collection of more than 16,000 items of astrology material. Collection Management Services provided processing in consultation with SSHEL's librarian who manages the occult sciences material.

### **Contributions to Library-wide Programs**

All SSHEL librarians and one Library Operations Associate contributed to the central Reference Hub services for virtual and on-site reference assistance. Under the direction of the Gender and Multicultural Services Librarian, instructional support and assessment for library instruction for graduate level English as a Second Language classes was provided. In addition, she participated in the Taste of Nevada event, where most of the multicultural houses and ethnic/women's studies departments are located; Latino/a Family Day; and Library Orientation at La Casa. Our Biomedical Sciences Librarian planned, promoted and hosted two classes for area health sciences librarians in July 2013. SSHEL has offered increased outreach and training opportunities to the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, the University Library, and the University more broadly through the effort of the Library and Information Science and Research Support Services Librarian. Events include the LIS Research Methods Roundtables series, which brings together panels of local experts on a particular method in LIS research to discuss strategies and pitfalls; the Library Research Showcase, which promotes library faculty and AP research to the local community; and in-library training and programming on topics related to scholarly communications, statistics, and research methods.

## Services and Access

*Staffing:* After a year in SSHEL, Library Operations Associate (LOA) Helen Sullivan transferred to a position in the University Archives. We were fortunate to have LOA Genny Varvel accept a position as SSHEL office manager. In fall 2013 Beth Sheehan was appointed to a tenure track position as Social Sciences Research Services Librarian. LOA Sandy Wolf was a finalist for the 2014 Chancellor's Distinguished Staff Award. Five new graduate assistants were hired in FY14 as well as one graduate hourly. The hourly position is responsible for late night closing in SSHEL South, as well as general information services. We were also fortunate to have a volunteer graduate student, Heidi Johnson, tackle the searching of the Applied Health Sciences vertical file.

*Reference activity:* In FY14 the Social Sciences, Health, and Education Library answered 7,122 total reference questions. An additional 170 questions were recorded as part of the LIS reference services. The vast majority (94%) of the SSHEL questions were answered in-person at our reference desk. Telephone was the second most popular method with three percent of questions answered. SSHEL recorded a total of 220,923 visits this year. In a typical week, SSHEL had 4,249 visitors and answered 146 reference questions. The significant increase from last year in number of visits is attributed not only to the opening of both sides of SSHEL, which was highly publicized to students, faculty, and library staff, but also the location of SSHEL in the Marshall Gallery, which led to increased traffic from patrons looking for study space and also confusing SSHEL for the "Main Library" location, or first point of contact for directional questions.

*Course Related and Other Instruction:* Visiting scholars from Indonesia, Macau, and China were given library orientation through several affiliated programs. Formal library presentations were made to 175 groups, with a total of 3,792 participants. Of the participants, 66% were graduate students, 28% were undergraduate students, and 6% were others. 176 individual research consultations were held with students and other researchers.

### Website Activity:

The SSHEL website continued to be a popular resource for library patrons. According to SSHEL's Google Analytics account, there were over 224,000 page views of the SSHEL website and over 158,000 unique page views. The homepage received over 104,000 hits. After the SSHEL homepage, the most popular pages were College & University Rankings, Databases by Subject, Resources in Education, Education Standards, Folklore, Resources in Psychology, and the SSHEL About Us page. The most popular SSHEL LibGuide was the Social Work 593 class guide. Please note: Google Analytics did not include data from the School (S-) Collection, S-Collection Blog, Labor & Employment Relations, and Library & Information Sciences website as these are either saved on a different server or in a different OpenCMS folder. To better support data and statistical services and resources, which have grown in the past few years, SSHEL redeveloped the one page statistics guide into a five page data and statistical sources guide which emphasized data collections, management, and repositories. Other pages created in SSHEL were a LibGuide for Gray Literature in the Health Sciences, and Resources in

American Indian Studies and Selected American Indian Studies websites. In addition, the labor & employment relations LibGuides were transferred to OpenCMS and the entire Illinois School Reform site was transferred from Cooper to OpenCMS. Additionally, the SSHEL graduate assistants reviewed all of SSHEL's webpages to find and correct broken links and incorrect information.

In FY 2014, SSHEL conducted a survey and usability studies to determine the usability of the SSHEL website. Though turnout was low, comments and suggestions helped SSHEL identify parts of the website which were not functioning as they should be. Throughout summer 2014, SSHEL, with assistance from Library IT, updated the SSHEL homepage with more visible headings, an Easy Search box, a photograph, and better navigation.

*Circulation:* SSHEL ranks third in circulation among the UIUC libraries for FY14 (after Main Stacks and the Undergraduate Library). The multidisciplinary nature of the merged collections is popular with library users, as seen by both on-site use and call slip requests.

### **Collections**

Librarians accepted and processed several gift collections during the year. These include child psychology and education books; French language children's books; educational philosophy books; and ongoing donation of sports and fitness books from Human Kinetics publishers. The Michael Erlewine Astrology Collection was acquired after a site visit to the collection in Michigan in 2013.

Two cohorts of GSLIS LEEP students provided valuable onsite assistance in identifying books for transfer out of SSHEL and Main Stacks under the guidance of SSHEL librarians as a project for a collection development class.

### **Support/Ancillary Activities**

*Cataloging:* A total of 1,725 titles were cataloged, representing 1,787 items. Original cataloging was done for 48 titles and copy cataloging for the remaining 1,677 titles. Twenty-three items were reclassified due to record errors, and 48 added volumes were processed for existing records. Gennye Varvel has taken over cataloging of recently acquired material from the Center for Children's Books, and a graduate assistant continues to catalog recent Curriculum Collection items. Jessica Ziemann, former graduate assistant, was hired on endowment and gift funds to catalog 742 titles and 2,026 items from the Curriculum Collection backlog. Much of her cataloging is still under review and not yet added to the online catalog records. Jessica's work appeared in the Fall 2013 issue of *Friendscript*, p. 7

<http://www.library.illinois.edu/friends/pdf/FriendscriptV35N1.pdf>

Sixteen new tests were added to the test collection, 17 test records were revised, and 231 additional components processed for existing tests.

## **Training and Staff Development Activities**

An intensive training program, grounded in general library procedures and policies and specific aspects of resources and services, was provided to all new employees, with selective retraining for continuing personnel. Ongoing training is provided throughout the year via meetings and special workshops.

## **Innovative Ideas, New Initiatives**

After reviewing various systems, SSHEL moved to an online reservation system for its collaboration rooms. This library-wide system for group study space resulted in an increased use of SSHEL spaces. Using the paper-based system in fall 2013 SSHEL had 200 reservations (371 hours), however in the spring and summer of 2014 use increased to 332 reservations (570 hours).

## **Measurement, Evaluation, and Assessment Activities**

We track hourly and seasonal patterns of use to help make strategic decisions about library services and staff deployment. For example, the busiest time of day at the SSHEL reference desk was 3-4pm, so double-staffing is provided then. Subject-specific questions accounted for 1,007 reference queries. Children's literature (16%) and education (23%) questions were asked most frequently, followed by psychology (7%) and health/medical (6%), while anthropology and sociology were next highest at 4% each. SSHEL also conducted a survey and usability studies about the SSHEL website, resulting in modifications.

## **Public Relations and Promotional Activities**

Marketing and outreach is a major component of the LIS, Biomedical, and Gender and Multicultural Services librarians. New exhibit cases in SSHEL are used to highlight segments of the collections. The annual Poster and Book Jacket event celebrating children's and young adult books was held in November.

## **Additional Topics**

- Volunteer Heidi Johnson and GA Julia Reynolds searched the AHS vertical file for possible additions to the collections.
- CMS continues to address the Curriculum Collection backlog material (26,347 items).

## **Major Challenges**

During FY14 the major challenge was training undergraduate student workers to take more responsibility for basic information services. While willing, their varied class schedules made training sessions difficult to set up, and required extensive time by staff to hold multiple sessions and reinforce the new practices and procedures.

Some Facilities issues continue past renovation, such as unpainted baseboard, the disruption of window installation in the north light court and temperature fluctuations.

The loss of two librarians, Mary Beth Allen due to retirement, and Kelly McCusker due to relocation after her recent marriage, is a major gap in expertise in SSHEL. Fortunately approval to fill both positions will help to rebuild strengths in the applied health and behavioral sciences areas.

## **Goals and planning**

### **Last Year's (FY14) Plans and Goals**

Services and access have always been at the forefront of the Library's goals. Those goals that were accomplished include:

- Continued high quality services during transitions in staffing, facilities, and services
- Finalized Teaching Assistant LibGuide for campus users
- Further developed and updated the SSHEL Web site, including class guides

### **II. Next Year's (FY15) Plans and Goals**

Plans and goals for next year include the following:

- Continue high quality services during transitions in staffing
- Pursue internal options to expedite processing of uncataloged children's books that were identified for comparison or cataloging (from Center for Research Libraries collection)
- Finalize selection of artwork for SSHEL
- Plan for assessment of merger now that implementation is complete

### **III. Graduate Assistants**

#### **Number and funding source of Graduate Assistants**

There were five graduate assistant positions in SSHEL during FY14:

Five 35% graduate assistants (1.75 FTE), state funded

One 50% graduate hourly, state funded, was hired for late night supervision in SSHEL South

Since graduate assistantships are nine month positions, graduate students were hired on an hourly basis during the summer months because of the high level of activity in SSHEL.

#### **Major responsibilities**

Under the direction of the Reference Coordinator, assist in providing information services in the areas of American Indian Studies, anthropology, applied health sciences, Asian American studies, biomedical sciences, economics, education, gender and women's

studies, geography & geographic sciences, labor and employment relations, library and information science, political science, psychology, social work, and sociology, as well as in the special collections of children's books, curriculum materials, test instruments, the occult sciences, and the Human Relations Area Files. These services are provided to faculty, graduate students, undergraduate students, and community members. Participate in the development and implementation of new and innovative services. Other duties include instruction, database searching, development of user aids, and special projects. Specific technology duties include maintaining, editing, and revising the 480 SSHEL web pages, as well as other technology-related projects and duties. Specific duties under the direction of the Education Librarian include book selection for the curriculum collection, development of user aids, collection maintenance, and cataloging; also under the direction of the Education Librarian another designated assistantship undertakes book selection for the children's and young adult literature collection, development of user aids, and collection maintenance. Duties are performed during daytime, night, and weekend hours.

### **GA projects completed in FY14**

#### **Projects Completed:**

##### **S-Collection Projects**

- Compared copies of donated books to currently held copies in SSHEL and made preservation and collection recommendations
- Compiled complete bibliographies of 22 authors for the 2014 Youth Literature Festival
- Checked citations, recommended additions, and made edits for over 20 bibliographies from the S-Collection
- Performed site discovery and link maintenance as well as checked the contents of the pages of the S-Collection website
- Created and posted flyer for the S-Collection book jacket and poster giveaway
- Sorted through hundreds of book jackets and posters to determine what to discard and what to keep for future display use
- Checked the physical location of the items on the S-Collection guide to discover missing and mis-shelved items
- Searched reviewed titles against the catalog and recommended purchases from reviews in a variety of children's literature and educational journals
- Moved and organized oversized books in new location in Rm 112
- Revised S-Collection GA Task Instructions to reflect new procedures and layout of library
- Created unique Blog Posts
- Boxed and shipped books from the CCB to SSHEL on a monthly basis
- Searched titles against the catalog, and the CCB Gift Books list and made collection addition recommendations

- Coordinated work flow for boxing, shipping, and searching 1500 books from the CCB before their annual book sale
- Boxed 1500 for return to the CCB or moved to storage until cataloged
- Shelf-read S-Collection reference section regularly and recommended outdated titles for transfer and purchase of new reference works
- Recommended several bibliographies for transfer from SSHEL Stacks to S-Collection Reference
- Wrote annotations for new reference books
- Provided reference assistance to students, faculty, and community members in-person, on the phone, and through chat
- Searched the catalog for library holdings of reviewed books for subject librarians
- Provided supervision for undergraduate students during evening and weekend hours
- Entered statistics and reference encounters into Desk Tracker

#### GA2:

- Management and supervision of reference statistics: created forms for daily room counts, collaboration room reservations (Fall 2013) and student assistant interactions (at the circ. desk); entered student assistant/office staff interactions into Desk Tracker; used Desk Tracker and Microsoft Excel to create reports for sweeps weeks and annual report, as needed. Trained staff and GAs on various functions of Desk Tracker and helped enforce policy regarding documentation of interactions with student assistants.
- Assisted staff and GAs in adoption of new software for collaboration rooms. Created report for librarians of Fall 2013 use statistics of collaboration room, for use in determining adoption of new software. Instructed student assistants in new policies regarding collaboration rooms.
- Instructed, as needed, student assistants in policies and procedures regarding shelving, circulation, and Library of Congress call numbers.
- Managed/supervised RefWorks account and creation of annotations for new reference materials: entered backlog of annotations from previous year into RefWorks; kept tabs on new reference sources to be added to Ref Works;
- Performed link checking and correction for: Asian American Studies, Biomedical Sciences, Disability Resources, Health Information Portal, Psychology, Social Work, Speech and Hearing Science, Kinesiology.
- Assisted in pre-acquisition searching of new titles from catalogs and publisher information, under the direction of subject librarians.
- Shelved reference collection and shelf-read assigned sections in reference and reference circulating collections.

- Managed kiosks for print subject guides, and notified librarians for ordering more copies. Reorganized kiosks and created labels for subject guides. Created packets of handouts and guides for all instruction sessions done by SSHEL librarians/staff.
- Assisted in weeding of Vertical File from Applied Health Sciences Library, under the direction of Mary Beth Allen. Searched WorldCat, I-Share, and U. of I. catalog, and made recommendations for retaining items, as appropriate. Worked with GSLIS volunteer during Spring 2014 in continuation of this project.
- Assisted in searching children's materials from the CCB for potential addition to our collection.
- Re-organized and weeded archives of reference statistics documentation from the 1990s and early 2000s. Entered all archived statistics into Microsoft Excel to maintain digital records for historical comparison.
- Assisted in weeding of reference collection, under the supervision of subject librarians and Beth Sheehan. Made recommendations for removal, replacement, or re-shelving of items based on weeding criteria, according to SSHEL policy.
- As "RefWorks GA," created subject bibliographies in RefWorks for all new print materials, and provided assistance to other GAs as needed in subject guide revision project.
- Provided revision suggestions, under supervision of subject librarians, for subject guides. Searched catalog for new reference e-books, created annotations when appropriate, and edited subject guides for upcoming year.
- Provided reference, instruction, and research assistance at the information desk, in person, by phone, and virtually through chat and email. Supervised student assistants during nights and weekends.
- Created themed book display in SSHEL South, from craft materials, books, dust jackets, and other library materials.
- Presented (during final GA meeting) on best practices and procedures for creating a pre-school storytime program within a public library, including a sample storytime outline and materials.

#### GA Perception Quotes:

##### GA1:

"The experience of being a graduate assistant in the Social, Sciences, Health, and Education Library has been very important to my educational growth in the library science field. More than any other position that I have held, paid or volunteer, my assistantship with SSHEL gave me the opportunity to put the principles and skills that I learned in the classroom directly into practice. The opportunity to apply so directly and immediately the things that I was learning in my classes in a practical setting not only gave me valuable experience, but also cemented the concepts and skills discussed in my classes by attaching them to a concrete experience. Having the ability to move directly

from an instruction course and then the next day put into practice the ideas and techniques discussed about one-on-one instruction in a reference encounter with a student helped me both to remember and to understand those ideas in a way that pure classroom work could not.

In addition to serving as an immediate practice arena for classroom theories, this assistantship also helped to round out my education by giving me intimate knowledge of how professional librarians actually spend their time and energy. Library science is a difficult field to study because neither purely professional, practical work, nor just academic study will allow you to understand both the values and practices of librarianship and the day-to-day workings of what it means to actually be a librarian. Although I learned a huge amount from my classroom work about the history, theories, goals, values, and practices of librarianship, it was in my position as a graduate assistant that I was able to fully integrate those ideas into the practical tasks of working as a librarian. The support of all the librarians and staff at SSHEL and their encouragement to ask questions and explore librarianship through this position gave me the experience and knowledge that I needed to form my ideas of what librarianship can and should look like in practice.

Library science has a cerebral and academic foundation that it has been my joy and privilege to learn about and discover through my class work at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science. However, it is also a deeply practical discipline in which practitioners are constantly working on tangible tasks and helping patrons in real and meaningful interactions. My time as a graduate assistant at SSHEL helped me both to investigate the academic ideals of library science in a practical setting and to give me the confidence and experience that I needed to begin to create my identity as a practicing librarian. It has been an essential and invaluable part of my educational experience.”

GA2:

“I feel that the pre-professional experience of this graduate assistantship has proved invaluable both during my time here at GSLIS and for my skills/experience to be applied in the future. While my professional interests are not in academic libraries, I do feel that many/most of the skills I have learned and developed during my time at SSHEL are transferable to my future career in public libraries.

First, the opportunity to practice reference services on a daily basis stands out at the most significant benefit of this assistantship. I had previously taken a course in reference services at GSLIS before this appointment, and the summer before I began at SSHEL, I also did a reference-focused practicum in the children’s department of a local public library. The opportunity to build on those skills and experiences here at SSHEL was highly valuable. I feel that during my year with SSHEL, I have developed a more mature understanding of reference and user services. I have gained an appreciation for the differences between reference in a public vs. academic library. I have worked very hard to develop my skills and comfort working in a truly collaborative setting, asking for consultations and assistance, and referring patrons whenever appropriate. The opportunity to provide reference (in-person, over the phone, through chat or email, and at different times throughout the day, week, and semester) has really helped develop my comfort and ease with reference services.

Second, working on collaborative projects with GAs and staff has helped me develop experience in a wide range of areas while focusing on building my team-oriented skills. During my time at SSHEL, I have weeded a wide variety of materials, developed instructional guides for classes, consulted librarians on collection development, created displays, and had input on the implementation of new policies and technologies. I feel that this experience helped anchor my in-class discussions of these kinds of activities, and give me real world experience doing these tasks in a real library environment.

Third, my special assignment as the reference statistics GA has helped me develop an even stronger awareness of the significance of accurate statistics, reporting, and evaluation of services. Whether I performed the “back-end” side of statistics, creating forms, paperwork, double-checking data entry, and creating reports for use and traffic; or the “front-end,” entering statistics, maintaining accurate record keeping of services like collaboration room reservations, or training student assistants on the importance of proper documentation, my time managing statistics for SSHEL has really impacted my professional values in regards to both keeping statistics and using them for documentation or justification of administrative decisions or changes, whether to staffing, open hours, collections, space utilization, or services.

Finally, the opportunity to work in a space that serves the campus community and the public, and houses childrens’ materials, has proven highly valuable to me. I have been able to gain a wider knowledge of adult services beyond personal readers’ advisory, especially in regards to research assistance, database searching, and supporting the academic environment. These skills, I feel, will be transferrable to the public library “world,” whether it is advising teachers and students on current homework projects, assisting members of the public with research projects they may be performing, advocating for electronic resources and partnerships with the larger library community for access to scholarly materials, or simply understanding the value of digital preservation or maintaining a physical collection with more of an emphasis on long-term use and preservation than a public library might allow. I feel that in the future, I will feel more comfortable reaching outside of the public library “world” (when appropriate) when seeking partners for collaboration or communication. Additionally, my time with the S-Collection has helped support my on-going studies and professional development regarding knowledge of materials for children and teachers. Reference questions from education students have helped me gain broader knowledge of topics in children’s literature and available reference sources for various subjects. I feel that of all the campus libraries, SSHEL was the best choice for me to continue to develop my skills and knowledge, and I know I will use my experiences here in the future.”