

**University High School Library Annual Report  
2014-2015/FY2015  
Prepared by Amy Atkinson**

**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. This year, library staff met with a total of 74 classes outside of the computer literacy course sequence. Class project LibGuides (<http://www.library.illinois.edu/uni/classprojects/index.html>) were developed or revised, most notably: Freshman history My Americas project, Freshman history Popular Culture project, Subfreshman history The Roosevelts project, Freshman English Huckeberry Finn controversy project, Sophomore English infographic project, Native American and Chicano Literature project, The Hero's Journey English project, and Algebra 1 reasearch project.

The computer literacy class count for the year was 108 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.library.illinois.edu/uni/computerlit/description2.html>. This year the librarian directly supervised projects involving sound recording and editing, filming and editing of original dance choreography, creation of a short film spoofing gaming videos, and several board games.

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### *Programming*

#### *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. We continued to loan laptops, voice recorders, video and photo cameras, headphones, art supplies, and various A/V production and display accessories: VGA adaptors for various output configurations; SD cards and/or a USB card reader; audio connectors and cables; a tripod or desktop microphone stand. We also continued overseeing the loan of various "guest equipment": iPads (for faculty only), and iPod touches (for students or faculty), on behalf of Uni High Technology Committee; two cameras and two voice recorders on behalf of the Journalism Department; and a collection of high quality headphones on behalf of the Social Studies Department. The Journalism Department added five loanable SD cards to its collection.

However, the school's one-to-one laptop program and the prevalence of personal portable digital devices has impacted the circulation of our loanable laptops. On the other hand, the demand for loanable headphones has increased. Students very frequently need to be prompted via locker note to return headphones and other A/V accessories.

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. A variety of classes made use of the Silhouette Cameo electronic cutting machine: the subfreshman continued to use it to personalize their school-issued laptops with vinyl stickers, a Computer Literacy 2 group used it for creation of their game board, and various art classes employed it in multimedia projects. It is expected that the library will increase its engagement in creation or "maker" activities such as this one.

*Other activities of note:* Please see *Physical Facility* in Section 2, below.

## **2. Major challenges faced**

### *Budget*

Uni High's considerable financial constraints have drastically reduced its monetary support of the library, the greatest impact of which has been felt in its support of library student workers. Traditionally, our unit has hired two Uni students to assist with clerical operations; their salaries have been paid by Uni High. Though their work has greatly benefitted the library, budget cuts mandated that we reduce to one paid student worker for FY16 (at \$650 for the year) and then use volunteers thereafter. This was manageable for FY16 due to Uni's .50 GA allocation, and now, thanks to the support of the University

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Library, we can hire and pay two student workers for the 2016-17 school year.

Uni's budgetary challenges also mean that monetary support for library events is not feasible. Thanks to support from AUL JoAnn Jacoby, the library was able to host two key events in April: a sonnet competition/birthday party in honor of William Shakespeare and an evening open mic for National Poetry Month.

### *Physical facility*

Space constraints (as well as pedagogical demands) require ongoing assessment of the library space and collections in light of patron needs. Such considerations led to the major cosmetic alterations of Summer 2015, changes the students have embraced and enjoyed, particularly the glass marker boards added to the main room and the delineation of zones within the library to accommodate different users' needs. Further changes to the space occurred in February 2016, with the addition of furniture formally housed in the Communications Library. While the round tables (along with brightly colored chairs) added visually interest, they served the greater function of facilitating collaboration among students—a goal of the revitalized main room of the library and the school's broader push for active learning.

Despite these positive changes and the consistent use of the library by students, Uni's space constraints, coupled with the director's vision for the school, challenges our space allocation within the building. In light of the recent monetary gift received by Uni, we may need to consider how to negotiate demands on and for the space, particularly through the addition of an AV lab—a change desired by the director that aligns with the know-how and interests of our Senior Library Specialist.

### *Information technology*

The library's loanable laptops are aging and replacement options should be explored. In light of the school's 1:1 laptop program, a full fleet of eight is not necessary, but four or five new machines should be considered. The new librarian should bring this to the Technology Committee.

Although Uni High's relative recent migration to CMS has afforded much appreciated increased stability, we look forward to learning more about the upcoming switch to Wordpress.

Two issues raised in the last three years' reports remain active concerns. They are as follows:

- 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.

- 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 is in a fourth year of 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. It could be that the next wave of tablets and library vendor agreements and programs will bring new options to this status quo.

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

This year saw the arrival of a new graduate student. Erin O'Neall quickly became a go-to resource for Reader's Advisory issues and gained recognition for her creative talents in the areas of bulletin boards, displays, and leading of crafting sessions.

In February, the Uni High furniture was swapped out for that from the Communications Library. The round tables in the main room (Rm 201) not only added visual interest, but also facilitated collaboration among students-- a goal of the space redesign in Summer 2015 in tandem with Uni's wider push for active learning environments.

The library team must anticipate (and anticipate negotiating) further potential changes to the space due to Uni's space and financial constraints, as well as the vision of the school's director. The student population continues to creep higher, a factor that is having an impact school-wide and will likely become more pressing in light of Uni's financial struggles.

### **4. Contributions to Library-wide programs and public engagement**

- 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.
- Throughout FY16, the librarian participated in a taskforce that assessed and made recommendations for the Help/LEARN pages of the University Library website.
- The librarian helped found and launch L-CAP (the Library Committee for Academic Professionals) and then was elected to a term on the committee.
- The librarian joined the University Library Social Committee, assisting with library-wide events such as the annual holiday party and service recognition breakfast.
- The librarian also served on the nascent Kanopy Task Force.
- The library shared a table with the UGL at a Friends donor event in November. The

librarian and GA together selected items from the collection and other materials highlighting Uni's academic rigor and unique spirit.

- 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:**

- With the nonfiction collection reduced by at least a quarter, if not a third, it is strongly recommended that the shelves be checked against Voyager records. Summer is the perfect time to clean up the database and ensure it accurately reflects holdings.

Unattempted. Due to the timeframe in which the cosmetic refreshing of the library had to occur (summer of '15 rather than of '16), this goal was set aside in favor of making the desired changes to the library environment.

- It is strongly recommended that the library staff begin recording use statistics beyond those of Sweeps Week. In addition to hourly headcounts, recording of the types of activities occurring, as well as processing and repair stats, will more fully reflect the quantity and scope of the library's endeavors. These numbers may prove particularly meaningful as the school's need for additional space increases and the library's physical footprint potentially comes under scrutiny.

Somewhat successful. While there was additional recording of use statistics, it was neither as regular nor as well-categorized (e.g., activity type) as would be most useful. The current librarian will leave recommendations for the Senior Library Specialist and GA for the 2016-17 school year, though this process should be addressed by the new librarian in conjunction with Jen-chien Yu.

- With Jeff Schrader's help, the traffic flow in the library office needs to be addressed. As more equipment is circulated, passing periods have become logjams. Redesign of the space should be a high priority.

Largely unsuccessful. Though a consultation with Jeff took place in September 2014, no formal changes were proposed or executed. As broader concerns about space took hold of Uni, including the library, during FY16, this again fell by the wayside and should be readdressed in FY17. Due to the school-wide implementation of the 1:1 laptop program, our laptop circulation decreased, and future configurations of the furniture could be developed around that changing need.

## **6. Unit annual goals for FY17**

The Uni High Librarian advises the following for 2016-2017.

- Building on last year's goal, it is strongly recommended that the library staff increase and routinize the recording of use statistics beyond those of Sweeps Week. In addition to hourly headcounts, recording of the types of activities occurring, as well as processing and repair stats, will more fully reflect the quantity and scope of the library's endeavors. These numbers may prove particularly meaningful as the school's need for additional space increases and the library's physical footprint receives additional scrutiny, particularly in light of the school's receipt of a major gift that will enable construction of an AV lab and other changes to the facility. The current librarian will leave recommendations for the Senior Library Specialist and GA for the 2016-17 school year, though this process should be addressed by the new librarian in conjunction with Jen-chien Yu.
- Also continued from last year, the librarian should conduct a review of the Uni High library website in preparation for the University Library's upcoming migration to Wordpress. Soliciting student feedback is highly encouraged, as is liaising with the new User Experience Librarian so as to incorporate his/her expertise.
- Continuing the suggestion of the past two years (unaddressed in 2015 due to the cosmetic refresh of the library space and then in 2016 due to the librarian's impending departure), it is strongly recommended that the shelves be checked against Voyager records. Summer is the perfect time to clean up the database and ensure it accurately reflects holdings.
- With Jeff Schrader's help, the traffic flow in the library office should be addressed. As more equipment is circulated, passing periods have become logjams. Redesign of the space could prove quite valuable, with consideration of the changing needs of the students regarding loanable laptops due to the full implementation of the school's 1:1 laptop program. (Continued from FY15 and FY16.)

**7. Number of GAs:** One .50 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 undergraduate students cannot staff the position 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 Erin O'Neall were as follows:

### **Events & Programming**

Game Days; Relaxation Station—puzzles, quiet games, and coloring for final exam week; Slay the Dragon—posted daily trivia questions ; Learn Amigurumi—multiple sessions on this Japanese crocheting style; Dressed to Thrill—students learned to make costumes from their own closet; Make your own Mask—workshop on mask-making for Halloween; April Fool's Day—Harry Potter themed fake book cover

### **Interactive Bulletin Boards & Displays**

Ask the Dragon!—August 2015-May 2016; Advice to my Subbie Self—seniors offered messages for their subbie selves; Black History Month—students guessed the names of black athletes, writers, artists, etc based off their photos and accomplishments; Blind Date with a Book—books are wrapped in a brown paper with hints to their contents on the cover; Bookmarks – recommended novels by genre on one side of bookmark, stress relief coloring page on other side.

### **Non-Interactive Bulletin Boards, Displays, & Promotions**

- Promotions/Campaigns
  - Assisted with signage for Agora Unleashed events (throughout year)
  - Created display for Library donor event to showcase Uni collection
- Bulletin boards
  - Brave New World; Your Back to School Playlist; Fight Censorship; Baby, it's cold as Hoth Outside—Star Wars themed snowflakes; Scarier than the Math Test You Forgot to Study For—one sentence horror stories; November is...—list of national days in November; New Year, New Books! What's your resolution?; Live Like a Girl—National Women's History Month; National Poetry Month—blackout poetry
- Displays
  - New Books Wall—updated all year around; Graphic Novels!; YesVember—positivity themed books; A Gift from Us to You—favorite books of the Uni Library Staff at Christmas; Wait, there's a Book That Goes With That Movie? —books with movie adaptations; Let the Wheel Decide!—wheel with genre and book suggestions; Poetry—books in Verse; In a Galaxy Far Far Away—Sci-fi themed books; T.B.T Turn Back Time—historical fiction; Back to School—school themed books; Get a Clue, Read a Mystery; If You Liked This... try these! —Genre recommendations off popular titles; League of Extraordinary Women—books with women in the main role; March Madness—books about basketball; Roadmap to You—books about self-help; Genre-fy Your Reading—new books

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sorted into funny genres; I am SherLocked—Sherlock Holmes themed books;  
Steampunk Literature

### **Library Administration**

Assisted with collection development (weeding—fiction & non-fiction) and researched and recommended new acquisitions; maintained uni high reads blog; updated librarything graphic novels catalog; tracked books checked out from displays; created excel files for books to be purchased; maintained lists of books being phased out of the new books section

### **Instruction and Instruction Support**

- Class projects: created LibGuides for Subfreshmen poetry project\* (located relevant, appropriate sources; helped design/refine assignments when needed; led instruction sessions on using the guide and its resources); pulled relevant materials from collection; labeled relevant books for class projects with green sleeves/markers to be easily accessible to students; Boneyard Creek Project—assisted students with the creation of sustainable clothing, giving pattern, cloth, and construction advice as well as referrals to suitable tutorials and sewing resources
- Computer Literacy: assisted with grading of assignments; Entered teaching statistics
- Reference services to faculty/staff and students: Reader's Advisory; Scholarly materials—searching and retrieval (books and articles)
- Steampunk Design: Co-taught Agora Days class with Subfreshman science teacher on creating Steampunk dragonfly contraption with strings, pulleys, and 3D printers

\*LibGuide: <http://guides.library.illinois.edu/poetry>

## Statistical Profile

- **Facilities**

Total user seating:

4 rectangular tables that accommodate 4 people each

2 rectangular tables that accommodate 5 people each

1 rectangular table that accommodates 8 people

1 square table that accommodates 8 people

4 study carrels that accommodate 1 person each

1 individual desk that accommodates 1 person

4 public workstation or index tables that accommodate 1 person each

10 informal, individual chairs

Number of hours open to the public per week:

Summer II 2015: 0

Fall 2015: 42.5

Spring 2016: 42.5

Summer I 2016: 42.5, first 2 weeks, 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/week) during part of Summer I.

- **Personnel**

Amy Atkinson (Academic Professional) (August 2014 – present) 1.0 FTE

Paul Kotheimer (Senior Library Specialist) (February 22, 2010 – present) 1.0 FTE

Erin O'Neall (Graduate Assistant) (50%) (August 17, 2015-May 23, 2016)

## User Services

- **Gate count** (extrapolated from FY15 Sweeps Week DeskTracker report for Uni's 18-week semesters)

Fall 2015: 11,538 (up from 7794 in FY15)

Spring 2016: 8,784 (up from 6099 in FY15)

- **Circulation (from Voyager circulation reports)**

Charges: 3667 (up from 3136 in FY15)

Renewals: 3356

Discharges: 3658 (up from 3151 in FY15)

- **Circulation of electronic equipment**

We continued to loan laptops, voice recorders, video and still cameras,

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headphones, art supplies, and various A/V production and display accessories: VGA adaptors for various output configurations; SD cards and/or a USB card reader; audio connectors and cables; a tripod or desktop microphone stand.

We also continued overseeing the loan of various "guest equipment": iPads (for faculty only), and iPod touches (for students or faculty), on behalf of Uni High Technology Committee; two cameras and two voice recorders on behalf of the Journalism Department; and a collection of high quality headphones on behalf of the Social Studies Department. The Journalism Department added five loanable SD cards to its collection.

In a busy and dynamic environment like ours, some portion of these transactions will always be impossible to tally. 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.).

### Equipment checkout

Laptops	388
Digital voice recorders	38
Digital still cameras	10
Digital video camcorders	70
Audio accessories (handheld mic, portable boombox)	38
Flipcameras	0
iPads (faculty use only)	7
iPod Touch	0
Journalism class equipment	246
Social Studies class equipment	91
Art supplies	90
Headphones	1188

- **Presentations**

Number of presentations to groups: 169 (including Computer Literacy 1 and 2)

Number of participants in group presentations: 4,113 (including Computer Literacy 1 and 2)

- **Collection Management Statistics (i.e., new acquisitions)**

New titles:       680 (monographs) (fiction, graphic novels, nonfiction)  
                      56 (serials)  
                      7 (other)

Total new items: 743

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