

Wyndham Robertson Library

2013-14 Annual Report

Mission Statement

The Wyndham Robertson Library fosters student success at Hollins University by teaching students to critically engage in the discovery and use of information; by connecting faculty and students with resources that advance scholarship and creative work; by strengthening the intellectual community; and by preserving and sharing Hollins' legacy.

Executive Summary

The 2013-14 academic year showcased the resilience, strength and value of the Wyndham Robertson Library's staff to Hollins, as the library persevered during a challenging year.

Faced with an administrative decision to freeze one of the library's 10 full-time positions, the library underwent a difficult reorganization process in which we closely examined what we do and how we do it. Three staff members – one full-time and two part-time – had their job responsibilities completely change. The technical services department revamped its workflow. The public services unit picked up additional responsibilities and began to prepare our student assistants to work late night hours alone. With the changes now in place, we will closely monitor the outcomes in the coming months to assess whether additional adjustments are necessary.

Despite the challenges, we delivered the same level of high-quality service that the Hollins community has come to expect. Our student satisfaction rating in spring 2014 was 4.42 on a 5-point scale, the highest ranking of any department on campus for the fourth consecutive time. We furthered the education of the Hollins student body by closely collaborating with faculty on 93 instruction sessions; our community downloaded nearly 60,000 online articles, books, and videos from our subscription resources, and checked out more than 14,000 books and films. Maintaining this level of service would have been enough to call the year a success.

Yet we also did much more. Some items are in the short bullet list below; others are in the more detailed summary on the following pages and/or in individual annual reports.

- We integrated two terrific new staff members, outreach and liaison librarian Rebecca Seipp and circulation coordinator Karen Ryan, into our library and community.
- We launched the Hollins Digital Commons, an online repository to showcase and preserve the scholarship, creative works, and historical record of Hollins University.
- We re-envisioned and renovated our Reading Room as an informal intellectual hub for the campus community, and began hosting new events (e.g., the poemathon) in which students actively participate.
- We rewrote our mission statement to focus on the four areas (education; resource provision; community building; university legacy) where we can have the most impact on the success of Hollins and the fulfilling of its mission.
- We continued to surprise our community with initiatives such as “Blind Date with a Book” that showcase new visions of what the library can do to make the Hollins community a better and more welcoming place to work, study and research.

I. We taught students to critically engage in the discovery and use of information

We taught 93 classes for 958 students, including sessions for all 14 first-year seminars (in 9 of those seminars, we provided two or more sessions), that spanned a wide variety of resources and skills. In partnership with the teaching faculty, we helped students understand and gain the skills needed to:

- Use the wide gamut of library-provided resources, including EBSCO, JSTOR, LexisNexis, the library catalog, and dozens of other resources
- Evaluate and select the most authoritative and appropriate sources for their research
- Understand and apply scholarly journal articles to their academic work
- Use primary sources from special collections, including the clothing collection, medieval manuscripts with music notation, photographs and scrapbooks from the university archives
- Use educational technology tools, including Mahara, Qualtrics, and Zotero

We surveyed students in the fall immediately following library instruction sessions on the following four criteria. More than 95% of responding students agreed or strongly agreed with each of the criteria:

- the objectives of the library session were clear to you
- this session will be useful to your work in this class
- the librarian was easy to understand
- you would be willing to contact the librarian for assistance, if you need research help

We developed a plagiarism tutorial module, in partnership with Brent Stevens and the Writing Center, for use within Moodle, which will be shared with faculty for use in classes in 2014-15.

We obtained a seat for our instruction coordinator (Maryke) at the monthly meetings of first-year seminar faculty, allowing us to more closely align our information literacy efforts to the goals of the FYS program.

We answered more than 1,500 questions from the Hollins community, including more than 1,000 reference questions.

My thanks to you for taking the time to meet with me regarding my thesis lit review. You were incredibly helpful and encouraging. I truly appreciate all of your help.
Alumna Lisa McDilda

II. We connected faculty and students with resources that advance scholarship and creative work

We conducted a major periodicals deselection project, based on usage data and significant faculty input, which resulted in significant savings. We re-invested these dollars in a variety of new resources, including the following:

- Subscription to complete collection of Springer journals (approximately 1,700 titles)
- Subscription to LGBT Life with Full Text database
- Access to American Chemical Society journal publications on a pay-per-article basis

We deselected significant numbers of outdated and unused books from the reference collection, and from the sciences and history sections in the general collection.

- Shift of folios to first floor space (made available by the reference deselection) has enabled us to provide much-needed breathing room to our literature collection on the 2nd floor
- Shifts on the third floor, enabled by deselection in the F call numbers, have provided space for fast-growing areas, including dance, environmental studies, and gender and women's studies.
- Moved approximately 60% of the books behind the circulation desk (for which there was previously no room on the shelves) to their proper locations, improving access to those titles.

We checked out 14,908 items (including reserves) to the Hollins community; this number, not surprisingly, has been in a steady decline correlated to the drop in our student headcounts since 2011.

- Student headcounts have dropped 27% (from 1,024 to 750), while checkouts have dropped 31% (from 21,738 items to 14,908 items)

Our Interlibrary Loan borrowing numbers saw a significant decrease for the first time last year, dropping 31% from 2,134 to 1,483 fulfilled requests (requests had stayed fairly level the last few years). We expect part of it may have been our spring semester restrictions on ILL usage, but we will track this closely in the coming year(s).

We saw an unexpected spike in online usage this past year. We recorded 41,596 visits to the library's website, up 30% from the 31,618 site visits last year. Our community downloaded 58,324 items (e.g., articles, books, videos) from our various subscription databases.

The more I poke around at other University/College library websites the more I appreciate the Hollins Library system. You had a wide variety of books available. I was always able to find what I needed. You have a very easy to use website.
Alumna Naomi Thompson

Connecting our lifelong students to new resources

To better serve Hollins' mission to prepare our students for life-long learning, we launched an initiative in partnership with Alumnae Relations to provide access to selected scholarly resources (JSTOR and Project MUSE) for our alumnae. 37 alumnae signed up for access, downloading 33 full-text documents from JSTOR over the last three months of 2013-14 (separate alumnae use numbers are not available for Project Muse).

III. We strengthened the intellectual community

We conducted a major redesign and refurbishment of the first-floor Lewis Reading Room

- Consulted with Kerry Edmonds and interior designer Teresa Ko, with additional feedback from visiting consultant, North Carolina State library staff architect Patrick Deaton
- Removed all periodicals shelving, to create a more open, flexible space (shifted all remaining print periodicals to the built-in shelves as part of the process)
- Added new furnishings to the room, including tablet armchairs, ottomans, floor lamps, and a centerpiece sectional

We built more interactivity and student engagement into the annual Beanstalks Readings, co-sponsored with the Jackson Center for Creative Writing.

- Poemathon event drew more than 30 attendees, who created their own poetry (with guidance of our Beanstalks readers) through a variety of exercises
- Gave to students 50 books from each of our Beanstalk readers, to build interest and excitement
- Attendance at each Beanstalks reading was about 70, double the traditional attendance from years past

We offered a structured setting for students to write by holding write-ins for NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month) in November and for honor's thesis writers in the January short-term. 35 students participated across five write-ins.

Engaged campus staff with our library through the Valentine's Day event, Blind Date with a Book or Movie, in which we sent 55 participants a book and/or film on the holiday

We celebrated the library's 15th birthday with events for both faculty and students

- Faculty reception (which doubled as the launch for the Hollins Digital Commons) drew 26 attendees
- Student-focused spring festival drew 25 attendees (on a rainy day!) for events such as mini-golf and a book-fashion contest

“Not only did I love, love, love my [Blind Date] picks, all of the women in my office did it and we were enchanted. This is the best initiative Hollins has done that directly speaks to employees in terms of going the extra mile to value us I have experienced in my decade here.”

Abrina Schnurman-Crook

We initiated checkout of laptop power cords and device chargers from the library's circulation desk, enabling students to work uninterrupted for longer periods of time

- Recorded 84 checkouts of the device chargers and 19 checkouts of the power cords in their first seven months of availability.

Library staff participated in the larger campus community in a number of ways, including participation on campus-wide committees and event attendance.

- Examples of informal participation: Rebecca and James starred in the new faculty skit; Rebecca hosted multiple “Say Whaaaaat?” segments on HUTV; Lilla and Rebecca spearheaded a library team, which also included library work-study students, at the SHARE Olympiad.
- Examples of formal participation: Maryke served on the Harassment Grievance Board; Luke and Maryke each participated on faculty search committees (in sociology and Spanish).

IV. We preserved and shared Hollins' legacy

We purchased, developed, and introduced a new access point, the Hollins Digital Commons, for the scholarship, creative works, and historical record of Hollins. In less than a year, we have added nearly 200 items to the site, and have begun discussions across campus with a wide variety of content creators about how they might take advantage of the site's capabilities.

- Deposited the winning papers and finalists from every year of the Library's Undergraduate Research Awards; these have proven to be the most popular items on the site.
- Offered a pilot program for MALS final essay writers to deposit their essay digitally along with, or instead of, a print submission. Six students took this option.
- Offered the option of digital deposit to a select few undergraduate honor's thesis writers. Four students took this option.
- Engaged in ongoing discussions about potential deposit of materials with such departments as the Eleanor Wilson Museum of Art and the Theatre, and with undergraduate research sponsors such as the Student Conference and the Science Seminar
- Deposited a small sampling of special collections materials, from a presidential gallery to selected old Hollins publications
- Posted a book gallery featuring faculty works; also obtained permission and posted papers and articles from a handful of faculty across campus

Usage reports of the Hollins Digital Commons show that visitors downloaded 1,596 items from the site between January and June 2014, with the most downloaded item being Abby Sease's research award-winning paper "Anxiety of the Unknown in Art: Xu Bing's A Book from the Sky" (85 downloads).

- Just outside of the 2013-14 year, but worth noting, is the fact that Sease's work was recognized as the most popular work on the entire Digital Commons Network within the Asian Art & Architecture sub-category for the month of July 2014.

Beth created multiple exhibits at the request of Hollins administration to commemorate particular occasions, including Alvord Minor Beardslee's memorial and Founder's Day.

We began posting an increased number of Hollins history tidbits through Twitter, Facebook, and the blog, which could be then shared through social media by other campus departments.

Thanks again for your help with the Rubin event – compiling photos, books, music, etc. The book display was a big hit, as were the CD sized table tents that Laura created from the album cover you provided.

Brook Dickson

WRL Staff Publications/Presentations

- Beth co-created and co-presented a session, “Potential for Collaboration: Donated Records Partnership Project,” at the spring 2014 meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference.
- Luke wrote an article, “Personalizing Instruction and Reference: A Personal Attempt to Close the Public Service Gap,” in *College & Undergraduate Libraries*, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10691316.2014.877734>.
- James wrote an article, "Targeting Point of Need to Increase Traffic to Library Resources," in *Georgia Library Quarterly*, <http://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/glq/vol51/iss1/9/>.
- Maryke presented "The Dramaturgy Challenge" for the Association of College & Research Libraries' Arts Section at the 2014 ALA Annual Conference.
- Susan presented “It’s Not Just About Budget Cuts: A Serials Cancellation Project at a Small, Academic Library,” at the 2014 North Carolina Serials Conference.

WRL Staff Professional Service

- The Roanoke Valley Library Association elected Rebecca to its board for 2014-16.
- Beth served on the Virginia Heritage Task Force Publicity Committee.
- Maryke and Rebecca served on The Innovative Library Classroom’s planning committee for its debut conference in 2014.
- Luke served on the John Cotton Dana Public Relations Award judging committee and the poster session committee for the American Library Association.