

Library Annual Report for 2022/23

For a library that prides itself on bringing the Hollins community together, and lifting up that community, 2022/23 posed a particular challenge.

Instead of bringing people together, disagreements about the future role of the library building pushed some community members apart. Instead of focusing attention on resources we provide to lift the scholarship and creative work of our students and faculty, the attention instead turned to concern about what might be removed from our collections.

We deselected materials; we had hard conversations about what was needed in the library; we did manual labor (the shifting, the boxing, the recycling) to remove withdrawn books. All this was necessary work. It was also thankless work, particularly in a community where some were skeptical that the changes to the library building would be positive.

Thus, the past year was defined, in large part, by what we would no longer have, and by what we did not have time to do. The process of preparing the library for the summer 2023 renovations was a gargantuan, complex task. This report honors that work.

All of the work in the list below was completed in the span of a single year, and could not have been done without the sacrifice of every library staff member (all of whom were asked to prioritize this work over other initiatives). The library:

- Withdrew from the Federal Depository Library Program, a multi-step process that involved consultations with our regional FDLP coordinator and national Government Printing Office staff members; an inventory of our collection; offering all our physical government documents to other libraries via a regional disposition database and then the national FDLP Xchange; and shipping materials to other libraries.
- Emptied three large storage closets and a large study room filled with Special Collections materials and library files collected over decades; consolidated materials waiting for processing/cataloging attention onto fewer shelves; and re-organized Outreach supplies and shifted them to a new space.
- Integrated Children's Alcove materials into the general collection, a multi-step process involving system and physical relocation; deselection across other subject areas and a library-wide shifting of the general collection to make room; removal of previous colored spine labels and application of new spine labels; and communication of the shifting process to those seeking these materials.
- Withdrew more than 90% of our print periodicals. Liaisons shared lists of journals and date ranges with faculty, and responded to questions about titles. Librarians pulled some journal runs to move to the general collection (requiring accompanying work such as processing and binding); several art titles are in the process of moving next to the art books on the third floor, in a new Art Periodicals location. The English & Creative Writing department asked for several titles to be moved to Swannanoa; Rebecca worked with the department and facilities to also move shelving, and provide periodical boxes and bookends. Facilities staff helped library staff in a week-long project to empty the Bound Periodical shelves, filling three large recycling dumpsters in the process.
- Deselected portions of the Reference and Folio collections. Liaisons consulted with faculty to determine materials that needed to be kept; for example, Art faculty made multiple visits to

review Folio titles identified by Maryke; Classics faculty met with Rebecca to review Reference materials. Librarians fulfilled faculty requests for deselected titles to be moved to offices and/or personal collections.

- Deselected targeted areas of the general collection, including theatre, the sciences, communication studies, and psychology. In addition to careful librarian review, and occasional faculty review, of potential titles for deselection, the withdrawal process also included removal of the title from our integrated library system and from our holdings in a global library catalog. Materials must also be marked as deselected, and if being donated (our goal for as many withdrawn books as possible), materials are also boxed and made available for pickup.
- Because of time limitations, it's also important to note that not all our plans succeeded; we did not offer our microfilm cabinets or shelving to other libraries; we trashed (instead of donating or recycling) reference books and many folios; we didn't share full lists of deselected journals with all faculty.

While recognizing that ongoing deselection is necessary for every library collection, none of our staff entered the library profession with the hopes of removing more than ten thousand volumes from a collection in a single year. This was draining, difficult work, as necessary as it was. And though it wasn't how we would have chosen to spend our 2022-23 year, we recognized the importance of not just preparing for the building renovation, but also preparing well. We invested the time to carefully and collaboratively manage these processes, to work with colleagues inside and outside the library community. We maintained trust and faith in our work at WRL.

If 2022-23 was about what we would no longer have, we want to make 2023-24 about what we do have:

- An excellent library staff dedicated to the success of our students and faculty, through the provision of library-based services and resources, and in creation of new and ongoing collaborations with colleagues, particularly those moving into WRL.
- A newly renovated building that incorporates features requested by our students in focus groups and in surveys: more study rooms; more easily accessible power outlets; seating options for humans of all sizes; a wider variety of study spaces; the retention of wingback chairs; the addition of more coffee shop hours.
- Digital and physical resources that meet curricular and research needs. We replaced several key print/microfilm resources with more accessible digital options; we continue to value the printed book while providing options for faster fulfillment of books through e-book requests; and we continue to spread our message of the value of zero-cost course materials to our faculty.
- And for the first time, we have an academic program co-led by the library: the GLAM Studies certificate program, which has completed its journey from an Imagination Campaign proposal in January 2021 to inclusion in the Hollins 2023-24 academic catalog. The first "official" GLAM courses, including Shaping Memory (the certificate's "core" class) and Cultural Heritage in a Digital World, will be offered in fall 2023. This follows the successful soft launch of a GLAM course, Behind the Scenes at the Library, in spring 2023, with an enrollment of 23 students.

The Wyndham Robertson Library is an amazing place to be – to study, to research (online or in person), to partner, to simply be – and we intend to remind all members of the Hollins community of this in 2023-24. Even better, the reach of our library's model -- of a place to build community and extend learning beyond the classroom – has expanded with the addition of new building partners and spaces to

draw even more students into the space, making sure all students (those who identify as first-generation, as a member of an under-represented population, as neuro-divergent, etc.) feel they belong. The additional staff and supports in the building will help connect all students to what they need; and the co-located services and departments will create a space for staff to develop new ways to collaborate and uplift our community.

The sections below, focused on the work we did in support of the four key aspects of our mission statement, are shorter this year than they often are. With 2022-23's focus on renovation prep, plus the time required to onboard three new full-time staff members (librarians Sara Sprague and Isabel Folck, and circulation coordinator Jessi Hood, all of whom have been wonderful additions to the library) and to cover for Rebecca Seipp's maternity leave, we devoted our remaining time to sustaining our previously established core, rather than developing the type of new initiatives that are often highlighted here.

We share below impactful examples of work in support of our mission.

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

Librarians did not seek instruction opportunities within Hollins courses as proactively in 2022-23. We offered 92 course sessions for 1,063 students, the first time below 100 course sessions since 2014-15. Our total number of presentations – 107, for 1,262 attendees – also dropped by about 15%. Rebecca's maternity leave in the fall semester meant our three veteran librarians had to cover Division 1 instruction in addition to their regular academic departments.

Though we did not teach as much, our teaching quality remained excellent, as seen in this faculty compliment of Rebecca: "You are great. Maybe think about switching to our team and teach full time..."

For many years now, librarians have been a vital component of the education Hollins provides to students, and Maryke and James laid the foundation in 22-23 to ensure that information literacy would be embedded into the new core curriculum beginning in 23-24. Through their participation in the task forces developing the student learning outcomes and expectations for First-Year Foundations and Inquiry & Communications courses, Maryke and James worked closely with faculty colleagues to reach consensus around information literacy goals.

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

I share a sampling of the praise our librarians received from our community in 2022-23:

- From a student whom James helped locate statistical info needed for an internship, and for whom James created a video showing how to use the statistical resource: "Thank you for taking the time to record the video to show me how to use the website. It made finding the information I need easier. Your expertise and guidance made a significant impact, and I am truly thankful for your dedicated support."
- From a student who received access to a needed book in minutes, through the library's purchase of an e-book, instead of having to wait days to receive the book through Interlibrary Loan: "Thank you so much! It's perfect; I really appreciate it."
- From a student seeking the names of the authors of a paper, which weren't listed in the reference she had found: "Thank you so much! [The professor] and I couldn't find it, so I appreciate your help a lot!"

- From a psychology faculty member in appreciation of a new video database: “This is so great! We have already used it in class! I'm so glad to have video resources!”
- From an alumna, who called to express her gratitude for her access to certain library databases (JSTOR, Project MUSE, SAGE), which helped her research and write a book, *Phillis*, published by the University of Calgary Press. She said it wouldn't have been possible without the access she had to these resources. The databases her public library provides weren't nearly as useful for her research, and it was tremendously helpful to be able to access articles about Phillis Wheatley in preparation for her writing. She wanted to thank “whoever decided that graduates should have lifetime access” (the library and the Office of Alumnae Relations).

Whether by assisting students one-on-one with research needs; by acquiring needed materials faster than ever; by working with faculty to identify new resources to support our academic curriculum; or by keeping our alums connected with valuable academic resources: In all these ways and so many more, we connect our community with resources that advance their work.

We were also excited to offer an internal grant, for the first time, to faculty members to convert courses to the use of zero-cost materials. With financial support from the Provost's office and with the support of James' expertise in open educational resources, two Communication Studies faculty, Heather Derrick and Vladimir Bratic, each converted two courses to materials that would be free to students. Every student who takes these courses in future years will now have equitable 24/7 access to the required materials, giving them the best opportunity to succeed in the courses.

Our commitment to access and equity also drove the decisions we made in late spring 2023 to:

- Eliminate fines for reserve items (including both course reserves and permanent reserves, such as laptops, chargers, and umbrellas). We're now a 100% fine-free library, following in the footsteps of ending fines for general collection materials nearly a decade ago. Lost item charges remain, but those only apply if items are never returned.
- Allow all Hollins students to request physical materials from our collection through OneSearch. We will pull requested materials for all students, rather than requiring students to either pull materials themselves or to self-identify as having a disability to access this service.

Rebecca and circulation coordinator Jessi Hood worked together to make the necessary system and procedural changes for these policy updates, which will take effect for undergraduates in 23-24.

III. We strengthened the intellectual community.

Rebecca and Jessi also partnered with the Information Technologies department to provide students more access to technology through a pilot program. IT provided three long-term lending laptops to supplement short-term Chromebooks. We heard from students they sometimes needed a laptop for more than single-day, in-library use; the long-term loaners check out for a week and are renewable if nobody else needs one. At least seven students (we know that is an undercount) checked out the new laptops 24 times in the spring semester, and renewed them many additional times. There were multiple spans during the semester when all three were checked out, so IT is preparing additional laptops for this program in 23-24.

Our library staff are always learning, in search of new approaches and committed to improving their knowledge and skills, on behalf of the Hollins community. The following two examples are highlights from 22-23:

- James virtually attended the Design4Digital conference, inspiring him to improve the layout of our Course Guides, implement new Google Analytics tools to measure our website usage, and to create a webpage showcasing the user experience work of library interns – the webpage could now be part of a portfolio that former interns share with potential future employers.
- Sara, informed by a workshop she attended at the Association of College & Research Libraries conference, met with a Communication Studies class to advise on accessibility and student needs in relation to Moodle and other instructional technologies, resulting in the students' creation of learning objects that Sara is helping to implement, host, and maintain.

Library staff stretch themselves beyond the library to elevate our students and their work.

In another example, Coleman Holth served as a staff advisor for SAGA (Hollins' Sexuality and Gender Alliance), helping guide the student group through a transition period in membership and leadership.

Higher education research has shown the importance of high-impact practices such as internships to student persistence and success; the library's involvement in this co-curricular activity has grown in the past five years, and new librarians Sara and Isabel immediately contributed. Isabel hosted a senior for an archival internship in her final semester. This student now attends a graduate program in library and information science, with an archival focus. Sara stepped forward to offer a J-term internship so the library could host two student first-year interns in 2023.

Sara also forged a new path for the library, in the newly created position of Digital Pedagogy and Scholarship Librarian, serving as the campus lead for instructional technologies. Sara answered more than 100 questions from faculty about instructional technologies, including work that required hours/days of collaboration between Sara and the instructor. The library's focus on accessibility and responsiveness, combined with Sara's interest and growing knowledge in digital pedagogy, is preparing our faculty to teach in a rapidly changing educational environment, and will help move the campus toward more strategic planning for digital pedagogy and digital liberal arts.

IV. We preserved and shared Hollins' legacy.

New special collections librarian and archivist Isabel Folck began work at Hollins in December 2022, ending a 2-plus year stretch without an archivist. Her impact has been felt immediately in the re-opening of the collection for access, for the HU community and for outside researchers. Isabel has established relationships with two would-be book authors researching Margaret Wise Brown. And in answering questions from students, staff, and faculty about the Hollins archive, Isabel has quickly expanded her knowledge of the collection, as seen in her development of a session for Reunion about the stories of "little" items in the archives.

A significant improvement from the renovation is a near-doubling of our archival collection capacity, through the creation of an archives storage space on the ground floor. The concurrent repurposing of a large ground floor room as an archival processing space will give Isabel, and future interns and work-study assistants, dedicated space to process materials for the archive.

Library Staff: Selected Campus Service and Participation

Maryke Barber

- Decker Award selection committee
- First-Year Foundations planning task force (part of the Core Curriculum development)
- Chair of search committee for Archivist and Special Collections Librarian

Sara Sprague

- Leading EDJ Day Planning Committee
- Trained as a campus Search Advocate

Coleman Holth

- Staff advisor to SAGA (Hollins student group)

James Miller

- SPARC (Hollins' undergraduate research conference) planning committee
- Inquiry & Communication planning task force (part of the Core Curriculum development)

Luke Vilelle

- Announcer for Internet broadcasts of Hollins basketball games

Library Staff: Professional Service and Publications/Presentations

Maryke Barber

- Campus coordinator for LEO (Libraries Exchange Observation), regional instruction group
- Virginia Library Association Scholarship Committee

Rebecca Seipp

- VIVA Resource Sharing Committee

Sara Sprague

- The Innovative Library Classroom (TILC conference), session proposal peer reviewer
- Selected to attend "Digital Scholarship and the Web: An Introduction to Data Analysis and Instruction" workshop, hosted by The Internet Archive

Luke Vilelle

- ACRL (Association of College & Research Libraries) liaison to the Council of Independent Colleges
- Lever Press Oversight Committee, member
 - o Chair of the Communications & Outreach Advisory Group