LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT
2020 - 2021

University of Ottawa
Library

May 1, 2020 – April 30, 2021

uOttawa
Bibliothèque
Library

Message from the University Librarian and Vice-Provost (Knowledge Systems)

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University Librarian and Vice-Provost
(Knowledge Systems)

This has been a year like no other. A year of uncertainty, adaptation and transformation.

Like everyone, the Library has had to adjust and readjust during these unpredictable times. To support students and faculty at a distance, we strengthened our existing online services and invented new ones. Our extensive digital collections were invaluable, and we moved quickly to build on them.

The pandemic touched all our endeavours this year. Even so, we continued to grow our support for the research lifecycle with education, tools, and infrastructure for research data management. We made further strides in advancing open publishing. We formed partnerships to help ensure the sustainability of our collections into the future. We moved forward together towards creating a safe, accessible, equitable and anti-racist environment.

This report gives us a glimpse at how much we have accomplished in such turbulent times. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the members of our wonderful Library team who worked tirelessly to ensure the continuation of services for all our users. Your commitment to uOttawa students, instructors and researchers is outstanding, and I am so proud.

To the entire uOttawa community: thank you for your support and your patience while we navigated these uncertain times with caution and creativity.

I am confident that the flexibility and responsiveness that has stood us in such good stead over the past year will allow us to continue to evolve, keeping pace with transformations in teaching, learning and research by offering exceptional programs and services.

RESPONDING TO COVID-19:
REINVENT, REFINE AND CARRY ON

When the pandemic was first declared, library buildings closed. Access to books was restricted and in-person services were suspended.

Throughout 2020-2021, services were continuously reinvented and refined to meet the needs of students and faculty. It was a herculean task that relied on the coordinated efforts of employees from across the Library.

Spring 2020

The Library continued the rapid shift to support online and distance learning.

Summer 2020

To provide access to print collections, we introduced contactless pickup and a scan-on-demand service.

Fall 2020

We improved and expanded on the services we had introduced in the spring.

Winter 2021

Professors and students were making good use of our "digital first" service model.

Spring 2021

We looked forward to resuming some of our in-person activities, carefully reopening Library spaces and once again allowing browsing access to our physical collections.

Spring 2020

The Library continued the rapid shift to support online and distance learning. With physical locations closed, our goal was to offer the most extensive access possible to collections and services.

- Librarians met with students and faculty online to consult on their research, teaching and learning needs and worked closely with professors to offer in-class instruction online.

- The "Ask a Librarian" online chat reference service offered extended hours, thanks to the cooperative efforts of university libraries across Ontario. From May 1st to June 15th, our Ask a Librarian team responded to more than three times as many questions as during the same period the previous year.

- To support the global effort to share research findings and data relevant to the pandemic, Felicity Tayler (Research Data Management Librarian) and Chantal Ripp (Research Librarian – Data Services) published FAQ: COVID-19 Rapid Response Data Sharing and Deposit. The first guide of its kind, it served as the model for a national version developed by the Portage COVID-19 Working Group.

Summer 2020

- To provide access to print collections, we introduced contactless pickup and a scan-on-demand service that delivered chapters of print books and journal articles directly to researchers' inboxes. To make this happen, the Systems and Discovery team reconfigured Omni, fast-tracking all the "behind-the-scenes" changes needed to support these new services.

- The Library joined HathiTrust and provided emergency acess to more than 860,000 digital substitutes for print books in our collection. Through this membership, users could also discover and download almost 7 million public domain and Creative Commons-licensed works. From June 2020 to March 2021, more than 8,000 unique titles were accessed through the HathiTrust emergency access service.

- In June, the User Engagement team held a "shelving blitz" to reshelve the thousands of books that had been returned to drop boxes since March.

- biblio.uOttawa.ca was revamped so students and faculty could find the latest information about all library services in one place. During 2020-2021, this information was updated more than 50 times!
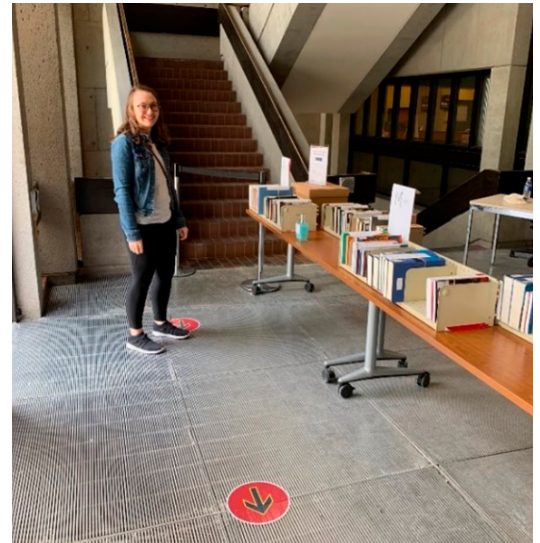
Contactless pickup - our first "customer".

"Very happy with the 'Scan on Demand' service for book chapters and with the general ease in finding scientific articles in the library online database. Looking forward to going to the library in person to study when possible!"

Graduate student (Social Sciences)

"Omni is so easy to use and it's been very helpful to have access to HathiTrust in the absence of readily available printed materials from my home in Vancouver, BC."

1st year undergraduate student (Arts)

Fall 2020

During the fall session we improved and expanded on the services we had introduced in the spring. October brought a new challenge however, with a two-week strike by members of the SSUO-OSSTF union, representing 1,300 support and administrative staff at uOttawa. This required that we scale back and suspend some of our activities until an agreement was reached.

- Thanks to new public health guidance libraries reopened on a limited basis, so students could once again use study spaces and computer workstations. The Library's Information Technology (IT) staff modified the room booking system so students could use it to reserve study spaces, helping to ensure physical distancing.

- Librarians and specialists adapted existing instructional materials and created new videos, tutorials and other resources to support a new semester of online teaching and learning.

- Responding to concerns from students and faculty about the challenges of critically evaluating COVID-19 health information, a team led by Channarong Intahchomphoo (Learning Support Technician) created the COVID-19 Misinformation and Vaccine Hesitancy Toolkit.

- The Content and Access team resumed ordering new books and processing the backlog of all the material that had been received since the spring, all the while ensuring students and researchers had uninterrupted access to essential digital resources.

- Access to new contactless pickup and scan-on-demand services was extended to all students, professors, staff, researchers, and alumni.

- With the support of our colleagues from IT, we introduced StudentLabs, remote desktop access to specialized software, including Bloomberg, Haver Analytics and other standard industry financial software used in our Financial Research and Learning Lab.

Boxes of new books waiting to be processed.

- In November, the University conducted the 'Distance/Online Learning Experience Survey' which included questions about the campus supports available to students. Of all the supports mentioned, **respondents were most aware of library resources and services and identified them as helpful the most often.**

Winter 2021

The winter session offered a welcome period of stability. Professors and students were making good use of our "digital first" service model. The only service interruption was when access to study spaces and computer workstations was suspended from December 23 to February 22 in response to the second wave of COVID-19.

In December, the Government of Ontario announced a $50 million investment to advance virtual learning in post-secondary institutions. uOttawa librarians obtained funding to undertake projects supporting digital and information literacy:

- Mish Boutet (Digital Literacy Librarian) received funding to develop 'Ateliers sur demande | Instant Workshops'. With partners from 5 other Ontario institutions, the team will initially offer a suite of 12 digital literacy microlessons in French and English that can be embedded in courses or completed by individuals at their point of need.

- Research Librarians Jennifer Dekker and Ann Hemingway are working with partners from Carleton University and St-Paul University to develop a bilingual credit-bearing online course to address undergraduate academic skill deficiencies in Ontario students with a focus on developing information literacy skills.

During the winter session, we ran the LibQual+ satisfaction survey. We have more to say about the survey further in this report, but one message we heard repeatedly was that students missed being able to come to the library in person, to study individually or in the company of their peers.

"I love the library and I miss being able to study at it everyday like I did in first year."

2nd year undergraduate student (Health Sciences)

"As a first-year student I was very stressed about having to write a research paper and having no clue how to, the library provided videos on how to easily access information and even taught us how to properly write a research paper, it really helped and removed a lot of my nerves."

1st year undergraduate student (Health Sciences)

Spring 2021

Although spring 2021 brought another Ontario-wide shutdown, the Library's attention was focused on the future and plans for the fall session. We looked forward to resuming some of our in-person activities, carefully reopening Library spaces and once again allowing browsing access to our physical collections.

On Campus Services

Even during provincial lockdowns and stay-at-home orders, there were always members of our team on-site working diligently at service desks and behind the scenes to support our students, faculty, and researchers.

The Library's Physical Resources team was a constant presence, doing everything from emptying drop boxes to managing deliveries and moving study carrels to ensure physical distancing. The Library Annex remained open throughout the pandemic, with employees on-site to ensure continued access to the over one million books housed there. Members of our Archives and Special Collections unit were on campus providing researchers with on-demand digitization of unique research materials and access to archival sources.

The User Engagement staff were in the libraries managing our contactless pick-up, scan-on-demand and digital course reserves services. This team was also there to provide in-person assistance at library service desks.

In recognition of their efforts, members of this team (under the leadership of Nathalie Leclair) were awarded uOttawa's Transition to Online and Distance Learning Award.

"I have always been a fan of the library (or more accurately, of the librarians and other staff!), but I have been particularly impressed by the creativity and over-and-above efforts coming from the library staff during the challenging pandemic period. Thanks for all your hard work!"

Professor (Arts)

"I had the opportunity to use several services during the pandemic and they were great. I reserved study spaces, borrowed books, and had a meeting with the librarian. Thank you very much!"

Doctoral student (Health Sciences)

"I highly recommend the online services of the library. It has been really helpful during virtual classes since the pandemic began. Well done!"

2nd year undergraduate (Education)

Feedback From Library Users

In February, we surveyed the uOttawa community about library service quality using LibQual+ developed by the Association of Research Libraries.

In addition to the survey's core questions, we asked users about their satisfaction with the Library's COVID-19 response and with the usefulness of our online supports.

1,187
responses

The survey was distributed to a sample of undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and researchers. In addition to the quantitative data the survey yielded, nearly half of the respondents took the time to offer individual comments – a selection of these is included throughout this report.

8.7%
**response rate**

What we learned:

- Undergraduates, graduates, and faculty all reported a high level of general satisfaction with the way they are treated at the Library, with the support they receive for their learning, research, and/or teaching needs, and with the overall quality of the service provided.

26.54%
French responses

- All three groups also reported a high level of satisfaction with the Library's COVID-19 response.

- The results for undergraduates indicate that their expectations are being met across the three survey dimensions of library services, collections and spaces.

73.46%
English responses

- The results for graduate students show that we are falling short of their expectations when it comes to the library as place – both quiet study space that inspires learning and research and more collaborative spaces. By contrast, our spaces for group learning and group study actually exceed the expectations of faculty.

- When it comes to library collections and convenient access to our resources, we can see that faculty members have high expectations and that there is room for improvement in meeting them. We will continue to work closely with faculty, including members of the Library Advisory Committee, to explore this gap in more depth and to identify both short-term and long-term improvements.

The full report of the 2021 LibQual+ survey is available for consultation on our website.

Advancing Open Scholarship
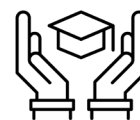
The Library champions and provides campus leadership in open scholarship practices. Throughout the pandemic, we continued to strengthen and develop programs, services, and infrastructure that advance the creation, integration, and application of open scholarship.

Open Access and COVID-19

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, we increased support for work that significantly addresses COVID-19. Specifically, the Library has reimbursed 75% (instead of 50%) of the author fees for researchers who wish to publish their work that deals substantively with COVID-19 in an open access journal.

This initiative has funded 11 open access publications on a topic related to COVID-19 in 2020-2021.


Professor Stefanie Haustein (School of Information Studies), 2020 recipient of the University of Ottawa Library Open Scholarship Award which "recognizes faculty members and instructional staff who are committed to exploring the opportunities afforded by the global shift toward an open ecosystem of scholarly research and teaching."

Open Repositories

Open repositories are an essential interface between knowledge dissemination and open scholarship. To expand and sustain a robust, scholarly communications environment requires collaboration and integration and the Library is active in these efforts at provincial, national and now international levels.

The Library joined the Confederation of Open Access Repositories (COAR), an association that acts as a global voice for research repositories, to build capacity and align policies and practices. Participation in COAR enhances the visibility of the research outputs available in uOttawa's open repository, uOResearch.

Advancing Open Scholarship
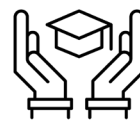
Open Education

With the rapid transition to online learning and reduced access to print resources, supporting the creation and use of open and affordable learning materials became even more vital.

To encourage the creation of open educational resources (OER) at the University of Ottawa, the Library joined the eCampusOntario institutional plan to ensure access to the Pressbooks digital publishing platform for all uOttawa faculty, students and staff. It also offered 40 webinars on OER and Pressbooks and the H5P plug-in for interactive content creation.

The Library awards Open Educational Resources Grants to support the creation and use of OER. Individual grants of up to $5,000 can be used to adapt or translate an existing OER or to create a new resource.

This year's recipients are:

- Elaine Beaulieu (Assistant Professor, Department of Biology) - Partial translation and adaptation of a first-year OER textbook in cell biology: cell reproduction.

- Anne Broadbent (Associate Professor and University Research Chair, Department of Mathematics and Statistics) - Translation of "Vector Spaces First", a free textbook written by three University of Ottawa professors and currently used in a first-year mathematics course.

- Ann Hemingway (Research Librarian) - Adaptation of an APA citation style guide tutorial into French, with content expanded to include MLA and Chicago citation styles.

- Anne Levesque (Assistant Professor, Faculty of Law - Common Law Section) - Creation of a series of podcasts in French to introduce first-year students to legal analysis.

Library Spaces

The Top Shelf Project

The University of Ottawa's 20-year capital plan includes the "Top Shelf" project, a $300 million infrastructure investment with three transformative elements:

- The consolidation of the Faculty of Health Sciences at the Lees Campus;
- The refit and optimization of Roger Guindon Hall for the Faculty of Medicine; and
- The construction of an Advanced Medical Research Centre at the Alta Vista Campus to enhance uOttawa's proven capacity for world-class medical research.

This ambitious set of projects creates opportunities to re-envision library spaces on these campuses and design services with the future in mind.

Lees Campus
Supporting Health Sciences

At the Lees campus, the future home of the Faculty of Health Sciences, the Library will have a new, contemporary space. It will have comfortable seating for 50, with a mixture of individual and group study space. Group study rooms will be fully equipped with technology to support collaboration. Given its proximity to the main campus and the collections of the Morisset Library, the collections will not be relocated. Instead, we will use the opportunity to ramp up self-service options and continue to respond to students' preferences for digital content. Students will be able to request books from any library and have them delivered to an automated holds locker at the Lees campus for contactless pickup. Health Sciences librarians will be on site to support the needs of students, faculty, and researchers.

Main Campus
Getting the band back together

A fortunate outcome of the work taking place at the Lees campus was the decision to relocate the Library's Content and Access team back to its original home on level 0 of Morisset Hall. In 2008, what was then the Collections and Information Resources department moved to leased space on Conroy Road as part of an effort to increase availability of student study space on the main campus. In 2010, they moved again, this time to the Lees campus.

Now we are looking forward to welcoming our colleagues back to the main campus in 2022 and benefiting from the collaboration that comes with closer proximity.

Alta Vista Campus
Reimagining Library Services

The Top Shelf project provides an ideal opportunity to reimagine the Health Sciences Library at the Alta Vista campus, with new, state-of-the-art technology and supporting services. In early 2021, Health Sciences librarians met with members of the Faculty of Medicine to brainstorm ideas about how the Library could best support their future goals and provide new opportunities to explore with curiosity and creativity.

Ideas of particular interest included services and applications incorporating augmented reality/virtual reality, enhanced 3D printing software, data visualization infrastructure and a technology sandbox. While the detailed timeline for the refit of the Roger Guindon building and its library are still being finalized, we are excited about the opportunities it presents.

Collections

Throughout this exceptional period, our Content and Access team continued to expand our rich digital collections and support the move to online learning. Membership in HathiTrust was one such measure. An international community of more than 200 research libraries, HathiTrust preserves, curates and provides access to over 17 million digitized items.

Digital collections of French eBooks and audiobooks were expanded through a subscribtion to PrêtNumérique, a platform developed by a non-profit organization in Quebec that includes titles published in Quebec and French titles published outside of Canada. We also added new film services: Criterion-on-Demand and Audio Cine Films. Both offer unlimited streaming allowing students to watch anytime, anywhere.

Shared Print Programs

Even during the pandemic, it is important to focus on the future. Working together to acquire, store and preserve print collections is a growing priority among academic libraries. The uOttawa Library is a founding member of a Canadian shared print program called Keep@Downsview. In partnership with the University of Toronto, McMaster, Queen's and Western universities, this program preserves the scholarly record in a shared high-density storage and preservation facility located at the University of Toronto's Downsview Campus.

The Keep@Downsview partners have now joined the Partnership for Shared Book Collections, a North American federation of shared print preservation programs and together are pursuing more ambitious, long-term goals focused on strategic digitization and a future of large-scale collaborative, holistic collection development.

"Overall, the library pretty much has all the resources I needed for my research studies."

1st year undergraduate student (Health Sciences)

"As an adjunct professor, I am seldom on campus. I only access the library online. I am very glad to have the library access, helps me to get 90% of the resources I need almost immediately."

Adjunct faculty member (Science)

Collections

Canadian Women's Movement Archives

The Archives and Special Collections (ARCS) team created two online exhibits featuring content from the Canadian Women's Movement Archives (CWMA) collection. We thank the generous donors who are committed to enriching this collection and to sharing the powerful stories it tells.

- Drafting Equality: Women and the Constitution focuses on women and the constitution and features content from the CWMA collection, and from the Nancy Ruth fonds and the Shirley Greenberg fonds.

- Women's Archives: Explore our Collections highlights key events in the Canadian women's movement (from 1960-2000) within three timelines: the Women's Health Movement; Bookstores, Publishing Houses, Periodicals; and Against Violence Against Women.

The CWMA collection was also featured in March 2021 as part of #ArchivesAtoZ, a province-wide social media campaign organized by the Archives of Ontario.

Demonstration. May 10th, 1975. - 10-001-S3-I358.- Canadian Women Archive Movement, University of Ottawa Library.

Connecting With Our Community

Library Advisory Committee

As part of our firm commitment to engage with our community and create opportunities for interaction and exchange, the Library Advisory Committee was established in 2020.

Members of the Library Advisory Committee come from every faculty. They include representatives from student associations and from our partner services on campus. Members serve as advisors, ambassadors, and advocates for the Library's unique and essential role in the institution's academic mission. Together, they help us to maintain a strong connection to the campus community, providing input that informs Library services, and strategic directions.

Library and Archives Canada

The uOttawa Library has a close partnership with Library and Archives Canada and is actively involved in national initiatives that enrich Canada's documentary heritage. The Library participates in the Official Language Minority Communities (OLMC) Library Network, which promotes the documentary heritage of official language minority communities.
We also joined with other memory institutions in a series of think tank sessions focused on reimagining GLAMs (Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums). Those conversations highlighted shared experiences and priorities:

- The new social realities brought to light by the pandemic.

- The role of custodian of collective memory in the face of a context marked by misinformation, fake news, the proliferation of information and the obligation of memory in relation to important social facts. This includes the history and cultural heritage of First Nations, Inuit and Métis, the Black Lives Matter movement and the pandemic itself.

- Prioritizing issues of diversity, inclusion and equity in the sector's practices.

- Enhancing the digital offerings of GLAMs while contributing to the creation of social spaces that nurture social cohesion.

Championing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

It starts with us

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we witnessed how the most vulnerable and underserved communities around the world have suffered the most serious and devastating consequences. The additional pandemic of racism towards Black, Indigenous and Asian communities has been especially heinous within this context. At a local level, we know that the University of Ottawa has been addressing its own issues and challenges in creating a safe, accessible, equitable and anti-racist campus.

To inspire change, work on equity, diversity and inclusion must be meaningful, sustainable, and it must happen at all levels. The Library created the IncluO Community of Practice for its staff members as an avenue to share information, raise awareness and build connections. IncluO serves as forum for colleagues to become more informed of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility topics, to reflect on and react to social justice issues, and to make intentional commitments.

By design, IncluO takes a "grassroots" approach. The conversations that take place complement and inform a more outcomes-based working group that was formed in the Spring of 2021. IDAARE (Inclusion, Diversity, Accessibility, Anti-Racism, Equity) was established to create structural and policy changes and to develop larger scale projects and initiatives. It has a broad mandate to advance this work across all dimensions of the Library – its programs and services, its physical and digital environments and its employment practices.

To support the work of the IDAARE task group and better understand where inequity may have a foothold within our organization, the Library is partnering with an external firm that uses design thinking to approach inclusion and diversity work in organizations.

The results of this work will allow us to rethink existing policies and practices and ultimately better serve our users and our staff.

We recognize that the work to create a more inclusive library for both employees and the users we serve is ongoing; we believe that the steps we have taken create a strong foundation to build on.

Open with Purpose: EDI in scholarly publishing

The 2020 Open Access Week program committee (Jeanette Hatherill, Cecilia Tellis, Megan McMeekin & Chantal Ripp) invited uOttawa to engage with the theme "Open with Purpose: Taking Action to Build Structural Equity and Inclusion". Participants explored principles of bibliodiversity aimed at addressing biases and issues of homogenisation and marginalisation in academic publishing.

A curated collection of videos, readings and podcasts on topics ranging from information privilege to Indigenous data governance provided inspiration to not only watch, listen, and read but to act.

Library by the Numbers

Reference and research

2,795
online chats answered

2,315
individual research consultations

Access to resources

11,600
contactless pickups

1,417
scans-on-demand

9,342
HathiTrust items accessed

126,514
course reserves downloaded

Online visits

1.6 million
unique website visits

463,182
unique visits to Library research guides

Library instruction

505
online sessions held

14,324
participants

Collections

$16.3 million
spent on new acquisitions this year

- **$12.3 million** - journals and databases
- **$4 million** - books and other physical items

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