

### Executive Summary

In a year of unprecedented challenges and events, the DiMenna-Nyselius Library continued to move forward and meet the needs of our University community. When the campus community moved online in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Library staff rose to meet the challenge and continued to provide our collections and services, virtually, to students, faculty and staff. Library Staff have been engaged and active with our professional community to ensure that our workflows are up to date with the latest safety protocols and best practice models to maintain continuity of service in an ever-changing environment. We continue to find ways to partner within the Library, with our Academic Commons partners and with other departments across campus.

The Library opened this past fall to a redesigned main floor welcoming new partners to create an Academic Commons. By housing a variety of student support services in our building, we have made it easier for our students to receive the help they need in one place. It has also afforded us the opportunity to create new collaborations with other University departments for new programming for students, faculty and staff.

Christina McGowan was appointed Dean of the Library and University Librarian on January 1, 2020. A Digital Scholarship Librarian position was created and filled in June 2020 by Nicole Marino. This position will lead the Library's work in digital scholarship initiatives and will be crucial as courses explore multiple modalities and include digital projects. An Assessment Librarian position was created and filled in August 2019 by Barbara Ghilardi. This position oversees all Library assessment activities. These, along with other upcoming staff changes, will allow us to expand our collective knowledge as a staff and continue to align our work with the strategic priorities of the University.

We continue to strengthen our presence in the curriculum through our Faculty Partnership Program. With this program we have made new connections with faculty which have allowed us to collaborate both in the classroom to teach information literacy concepts and outside the classroom through collection development and assignment design. This program will continue to be integral to our success as we begin to develop more research tools and online tutorials as well as make sure our collections support the curricular needs of students and faculty.

We look forward to the year ahead as we begin to develop new strategic priorities for our Library. These priorities will align with the University's Emerging Strategic Priorities. As the

University moves into a flexible and hybrid approach for teaching and learning this fall, the Library is ready to meet the needs of our students, faculty and staff wherever they may be.

### Manage an academic portfolio consistent with University and unit-level strategic priorities

The Library's Faculty Partnership Program (formerly called the Library liaison program) was officially launched in August 2019. It is a program that pairs a Librarian Partner with an academic department. This Librarian Partner serves as the primary point of contact for information about Library services, collections, events and policies. Over the course of the year librarian partners have increased their communication and collaboration with faculty and pursued new instruction opportunities. Librarians have also been more involved in the development of new programs at the University by researching and recommending key resources.

The Institutional Repository (IR) Team continued to offer support of open access via faculty, student, and staff content in DigitalCommons@Fairfield. They worked towards continual growth in collaborative relationships with other departments across campus adding new collections to DigitalCommons@Fairfield such as the Fairfield University Art Museum 2020 exhibitions, and *SANA Self-Achievement through Nursing Art*, a new Egan School of Nursing and Health Studies literary journal. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the IR project team worked with the Associate Vice Provost for Scholarly, Creative, and Community Engagement and others to explore virtually running the Innovative Research Symposium through the IR. Although another platform was ultimately selected, DigitalCommons@Fairfield has provided a place to archive this year and last year's event so they can be viewed for years to come.

A digital tool called ArchivesSpace has enabled Archives and Special Collections to create a database of their holdings and to provide online access to their physical collections. They also digitized seventeen 16mm film reels which includes footage of President William McInnes' Installation in 1964 and the Undersecretary of State Nicholas Katzenbach's visit on campus in 1967/68.

Instruction Librarians partnered with the Core Writing faculty to create a new information literacy class as part of the Magis Core Curriculum shift from EN 11 and EN 12 to ENW 100. In addition to this lesson, students in select ENW 100 courses also took a class geared towards archival research, as part of a project on Fairfield University History.



Future Goals:

- The Research & Instruction department will continue to explore instructional modalities that meet the needs of in-person, online, and hybrid coursework. ENW 100 is transitioning this fall to ENGL 1001 and librarians will be adjusting the library instruction sessions to address changes to the required learning outcomes.
- Archives will be exploring opportunities for migrating the archived digital collections from a non-hosted version of CONTENTdm to a new hosted platform.

**Allocate resources to achieve strategic goals:**

In preparation for the Academic Commons, Library staff helped to relocate furniture and materials throughout the building. A major shift of our print collection was done in order to keep collections together and make the browsing experience as seamless as possible for our users.

When our physical space changed, we felt it best to find out how our community felt about these changes. In Fall 2019, we completed five building usage studies to see how the building was being used as well as hearing from our users how they felt about our space and services. These reports are important as we plan for future furniture purchases and potential updates to our services.

The Library supported the University's pivot to remote learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic by identifying and planning for all essential services to go remote, contributing to the University's Continuity Plan, coordinating and making accessible all vendor resource offers in response to the pandemic, obtaining new e-resources needed by faculty for remote learning and switching the monograph approval plan from print to electronic. Other digital content owned by other libraries needed by faculty and students was obtained and provided by our Interlibrary Loan service. Our technical services department prioritized the import, discovery, and access of e-resources over hard copy materials to support online learning which became critical during the Spring semester and will remain so this fall and as the University expands its online course offerings.

The Library has responded to reductions in our budget in several ways: by evaluating and eliminating any resource duplications; examining and re-allocating spending between endowments and budget; and negotiating rate reductions for all renewals.



Research Librarians moved to an on-call model for research services in the Fall of 2019. This move streamlined public services into one desk for the campus community to visit. When classes moved online in March, librarians were easily able to continue to help students and faculty via the 24/7 chat service, emails and Zoom research appointments.

The Library set up “Documenting the Fairfield University Experience During COVID-19 Project” in April 2020 to document the stories of students, faculty and staff during an unprecedented time as part of the permanent University record. Submissions include written reflections, photos, videos and other digital files. We will continue to collect these artifacts and promote the project to community this fall.

An Antiracist Resource Guide was developed by librarians and continues to be updated with input from our campus community. This guide includes resources that librarians, faculty, staff and students have found to be useful in helping to understand and address systemic racism.

#### Future Goals:

- The Library will be working towards developing strategic priorities to guide Library staff’s work and support the University mission and vision.
- The Online Education Committee, made up of staff from all different departments of the Library, will meet for the first time this fall. The goal of the committee will be to collaboratively explore, identify, adopt, and implement effective online education processes for library operations, collections and services.
- Collection Development librarians will review and revise the Library’s Collection Development policies in tandem with the formation of the new Faculty Partnership Program and recommended outcomes of the Assessment Committee’s work.

#### Engage staff talent to achieve strategic goals:

The Library underwent an External Review by the Association for College and Research Libraries (ACRL) in Fall 2019. ACRL consultants spoke with Library staff, faculty, University Administration, students and other University staff during a one day on-campus visit. The consultants produced a report that provided nine primary recommendations for moving forward. Library staff met to discuss the report and developed priorities to address by department for the coming fiscal year.



Archives & Special Collections engaged students, staff and alumni this year by creating and/or installing exhibits designed to support the University's mission and sense of community. They are actively involved in the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Women at Fairfield University (1970-2020). Research, committee participation and exhibit planning related to this historic milestone began in September 2019 and will continue into the next fiscal year.

The Library started a Summer Reading Challenge in May in partnership with the Fairfield University Bookstore and Health & Wellness Committee for staff, faculty and students to find motivation to read and build a sense of community during the summer of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Library launched a Textbook collection in Fall 2019 made up of donated textbooks by students. This collection will continue to grow and be made available to all students.

Collectively, Library staff served on over 55 committees for the University and wider community, providing leadership on 7 of them. Library staff had 3 presentations or publications during the fiscal year and attended over 60 professional development opportunities.

#### Future Goals:

- All departments will work on identified priorities from the ACRL external review over the course of the fiscal year.
- The Research & Library Services staff will explore expanding the role of student workers in the Library. This opportunity to cross train students can offer more meaningful learning and engagement as well as create a more dynamic and flexible student worker staff.

#### **Influence student enrollment to maximize University potential:**

In support of teaching and learning, and student success and retention, the Library provides access to over one million e-resources and over 300,000 print sources in our collection. We also provided over 3,000 resources to students, faculty and staff through our interlibrary loan service. Library staff answered 2,404 research questions from faculty, students and staff across our various services as well as taught 146 classes and conducted 188 research appointments. As members of the AJCU libraries consortium, our librarians answered 91 virtual reference



questions for students across the 20 participating universities and our students asked via chat 1,223 questions that were answered by other AJCU librarians.

In Fall 2019, the Library welcomed new partners into the building as part of an Academic Commons. An Academic Commons Working group was created where representatives from all partners in the building meet regularly to discuss their work along with current and future collaborations.

The 4<sup>th</sup> annual Human Library took place on November 7<sup>th</sup> with 34 students, faculty, staff, and alumni who shared their personal stories as “human books” to challenge stereotypes and prejudices with over 420 members of the campus community. Departments across campus joined in co-sponsoring the event. Assessment was gathered for all participants and measured against outcomes adapted from the Social Justice signature element learning outcomes of the Magis Core Curriculum.

The Library participated in several student onboarding programs such as orientations for undergraduate and graduate students, administering an Academic Integrity Tutorial taken by all incoming students and a Personal Librarian Program for first year undergraduate and transfer students. Additionally, finals de-stress activities were organized and held in the library, some in partnership with other departments on campus.

The third cohort of the Student Library Advisory Board (SLAB), comprised of 12 students from different majors and backgrounds, convened in order to facilitate communications and the exchange of ideas between the student body and the Library staff. SLAB provided feedback through in person and virtual meetings on a variety of areas including improvements to building signage, library services promotion and healthier food options for the café.

The Library Research Prize was awarded to a graduate and undergraduate student in April 2020 for excellence in research projects that demonstrate extensive use of library services and collections, with significant knowledge in the methods of research and the information gathering process. The award ceremony transitioned to a virtual format and was attended by 56 members of the Fairfield community. A plaque that honors current and past winners was installed in the Library lobby.

#### Future Goals:



- With a flexible hybrid approach to teaching and learning coming this fall, librarians will be implementing virtual programming, displays and spaces to engage students, faculty, and staff.
- Library staff will work to increase communication efforts campus-wide in a variety of ways including email blasts, social media posts and a possible newsletter.
- Librarians will continue to explore expanding partnerships with the Academic Commons partners. This could be through cross training student workers, partnering on programs and initiatives and professional development opportunities.
- The Library will continue to explore new opportunities to balance good financial stewardship of University funds while also supporting teaching and learning.

