

# DiMenna-Nyselius Library Annual Report

## July 2022 through June 2023

### Executive Summary

The Library began its second year of the implementation of our [Strategic Plan, 2022-2026](#), with all staff engaged in multiple working groups and continuing to meet goals, while also setting new priorities for FY24. This work was complimented with two all-staff retreats, facilitated by consultants from Organizational Performance Group (OPG) in July 2022 and January 2023, and the leadership of the Library's four-person implementation team. Plan progress was communicated at staff meetings, and to key stakeholders including the Provost, the Faculty Library Committee, the Student Library Advisory Board, and through presentations by the Dean of the Library to various groups including the Board of Trustees, the University's Development Team, and at the AJCU Library Deans' Conference.

All job descriptions were updated and submitted to the Office of the Provost and the Office of Human Resources with Ann Victor and Lisa Thornell's titles and roles changing to Acquisitions & Cataloging Strategies Librarian and Head of Library Outreach & Communications, respectively. This job description review is now being done on an annual basis, at goal setting time. This past year there were several vacant positions and the two departments, Technical Services and Public Services, managed to continue operations and make significant progress on the Library strategic plan priorities while running multiple searches. Two searches were successful resulting in the hiring of Melissa Clark, Assistant to the Dean, and Kelsey Fuller-Shafer, Access Services Supervisor. The Collection Strategies Librarian and Systems Librarian positions have been vacant since September, and the Library staff is hopeful that with further revisions of the job descriptions, as well as support from the Provost Office, the two positions will be filled in time for the upcoming academic year. A new position, Research & Learning Librarian for the Bellarmine campus, was approved, and is presently undergoing recruitment.

### **Purpose: Articulate a clear purpose to guide the strategic direction of the Library**

The Library's Strategic Plan aligns with the University's mission and strategic priorities as the University grows both in national prominence and reach. [Priorities for FY23](#) and FY24 (appendix) were determined by all Library staff and Library Leadership. Goal leaders convened their teams, utilized Microsoft Teams to communicate, and met with the implementation team to discuss progress on goals and initiatives, with updates given at all-staff meetings.

The Academic Commons Partnership Committee (ACPC), led by the Associate Dean for Public Services, held monthly meetings and created a committee charge and new purpose statement, which is available on the new [Academic Commons webpage](#), via lobby signage, and disseminated through printed materials at various events.



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The Library's DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging) committee developed a committee charge and rules of conduct as they transitioned from a strategic plan working group to a standing library committee.

Following meetings with key personnel from Facilities and the Provost Office about the condition of the University Archives, it was suggested that the Library produce a report on space needs. Based on tours of other University Archives and an analysis of archival best practices, the University Archivist and Associate Dean of Technical Services & the Budget produced a report to address current issues and establish a plan for future growth. This report has been shared with Facilities, the Provost Office, Development, and the Faculty Library Committee, among others. We have continued to provide tours to faculty, staff, and administrators from across the University to advocate for much-needed environmental mitigation, storage space, and other functional areas for these valuable collections. In April, the Faculty Library Committee submitted a letter to the Provost to indicate their support of the Library's University Archives Space Needs Improvement Proposal to enhance and protect library resources and institutional memory. In addition to the space plan, the University Archives and Special Collections also revised their [mission statement](#).

### Future Goals

- Complete the second round of priorities from our Strategic Plan by the end of FY24. (See Appendix)
- Create opportunities for intellectual conversation and ideation. This will include: a series of study skills workshops for students; banned books event with the Politics department; Stags Share Stories event; two author book launch events; reading challenges and related events; several displays highlighting library resources.
- Create, update, and publish collection development and management policies.
- Onboard new librarian for Bellarmine campus and work with them to develop services and an instruction and outreach plan.
- Align our services and communications with Academic Commons partners to meet student needs. This will include: partnering on joint events such as Cram Jam and the Academic Commons Trick or Treat event; integrating the Science Center into existing ACPC initiatives and communications protocols; streamlining communications about hours of operation for each unit; updates to website; outreach to Bellarmine students.
- Ensure that space and staffing for the University Archives are sufficient to support the University's growing national prominence. Work with University partners to realize the Library's strategic plan ambition of strengthening the role of the University Archives as the steward of Fairfield University's institutional memory.



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

The University Archives collection was enhanced with increased access for users by migrating content from the legacy platform, CONTENTdm, to our institutional repository, DigitalCommons@Fairfield (which hosts the scholarly and artistic output of our faculty, students, and staff). Additionally, we have made available the back issues from 2010- 2020 of the Fairfield University Magazine, an important University publication, on DigitalCommons@Fairfield. The usage of DigitalCommons@Fairfield is very strong with 99,793 downloads from 205 countries.

As new graduate programs were created, our research librarians took on additional departments as part of our Faculty Partnership Program (FPP). The Librarian Partner to the School of Nursing traveled to the new Austin campus to provide an orientation to new students and faculty of the second-degree nursing program. This face to face connection was vital to the nursing program and the Library and demonstrates the high touch support we provide. The Librarian will be maintaining regular communication with the students and faculty, and will continue to travel to Austin and personally meet with each new cohort.

The Library had more extensive involvement with graduate programs, with a librarian joining the Graduate Program Directors committee, and more outreach to graduate students through consistent communications sent through the biweekly Graduate Student Chronicles newsletter and webinars offered each semester/summer session. Several outreach events offered virtual options, with online graduate students in mind.

### **Future Goals**

- Onboard new Research & Learning Librarian for Bellarmine and prepare materials to support these students. This includes: assessing the research needs of Bellarmine students and developing services to meet those needs; serving as FPP librarian to Bellarmine faculty and working with them to identify information literacy opportunities; developing programming for Bellarmine students that fosters intellectual stimulation and community building.
- Identify and meet the needs of online graduate students. E.g.: Austin campus.
- Increase use of and engagement with DigitalCommons@Fairfield among faculty and students by hiring a Scholarly Communication Librarian.
- Collaborate with faculty/staff groups and with student affinity groups to increase the Library's role in University-wide diversity and inclusive excellence activities.

### **Resource Allocation: Allocate resources to achieve strategic goals**

Technical Services staff improved discovery and access to resources through workflow efficiencies and other initiatives. The Web Committee successfully conducted an inaugural accessibility audit of the library website, wherein 28 accessibility issues were effectively resolved across a span of 64 pages. These



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issues were identified using SiteImprove, our campus website validation system.

A pilot project, 'BuyOnDemand Thesis', launched in Spring 2023, enabled the library to provide electronic access to hard-to-obtain dissertations and theses from various universities by purchasing them directly from our supplier. This makes it possible for us to fulfill numerous requests that traditionally would have remained unmet.

The technical services department reorganized after the departure of the Collection Strategies Librarian. Acquisition functions, previously under this librarian, now reside alongside Cataloging under the newly-created Acquisitions and Cataloging unit. This merger provides efficiencies in the ordering, payment, and description of library resources.

Following a request from all academic deans, we initiated a trial and subscription to Scopus, an important resource for faculty to track the impact of their scholarship via citation analysis, identify top journals in their field, and allow us to do broad searches about the impact of Fairfield-produced scholarship. In addition, Scopus will integrate with our Research Information Management (RIM) system that will allow faculty to import citations directly into their annual review and integrate with DigitalCommons@Fairfield so we can better discover scholarship produced by our faculty.

Special Collections acquired a two-volume facsimile edition of the Gutenberg Bible per a request from History, English, and Religious Studies faculty. It will be used in several courses and will be displayed on the main level in the fall. Thanks to the funds from the Provost Office, we now own a specialized scanner for digitizing content from physical volumes which will streamline workflows for our Interlibrary Loan services and also ensure high-quality scans for delicate materials housed in our University Archives and Special Collections.

The Head of Library Outreach & Communications worked with the Office of Human Resources to secure Aetna funds for several Library programs, deemed as "wellness" initiatives, such as the Summer and Winter Reading Challenges and two team-building events for staff and faculty. Without this funding these programs would not be possible.

Gift funds are continually utilized to cover the costs of maintaining a collection (e.g., books, databases) that support and advance the academic needs of our students and faculty. In addition, a sample of what we utilized gift funds this year include the following: upgrading technology for the laboratories room, the replacement of 24 soft seating chairs on the upper level, the reupholstering of the display cases in the lobby and upper level, staff gatherings, consultant fees coaching services and strategic planning, and a [museum pass pilot program](#). In consultation with the Dean of the Library, the University Archivist put together a list of items most in need of digitization and due to the generous donations of



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one particular donor, we are moving forward to digitize many essential University publications that are housed in the Archives and Special Collections, and these will be available through DigitalCommons@Fairfield.

### Future Goals

- Expand the library's role in resource sharing and optimize current practices.
- Maintain and update our collection resources to support curricular needs.
- Leverage technology to enhance the discoverability, accessibility, and preservation of University Archives materials.
- Work with vendor to digitize campus newspapers, magazines, and yearbooks, and make available on the DigitalCommons@Fairfield platform.
- Start collecting alumni publications.

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

Each library staff member is engaged with at least one Strategic Plan goal, with the majority of staff on two or more goals. Our staff also participated in 25 different committees both in the Library, on campus, and within the town of Fairfield (One Book One Town, the Fairfield Public Library Board of Trustees). A number of staff gave their time to on-campus events and programs such as Cura Personalis, teaching an FYE section, serving as a student club advisor, and the Company Scholars Program. In addition, staff members participated in groups on campus such as the Racial Justice is Social Justice committee, Anti-Racism professional learning communities, the MLK Convocation committee, and SDMA's DEI Book Club. Library Leadership has asked staff to include one goal for FY24 that addresses University engagement. Staff members also participated in professional development opportunities, with several speaking at regional and national conferences and contributing published scholarship within the Library field. Library staff contributed as writers and editors to our [Beyond the Stacks newsletter](#) which is published twice a year.

A number of collaborative events were held this year. Our Digital Scholarship Librarian led a StoryMaps workshop for faculty with the Innovation Lab, a humanitarian map-a-thon with the Center for Social Impact, and a Douglass Day Transcribe-a-thon for Black History Month, partnering with the Black Student Union and Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies. Our Head of Library Outreach & Communications organized and participated on a panel of faculty from various disciplines discussing Censorship for Banned Books Week and a Writing Through Loss workshop with a Professor of English/Director of the Writing Center which was tied to the One Book One Town event series. Our Senior Research Librarian & Instruction Coordinator participated in several CAE faculty events to promote library instruction and tools like Zotero.

Stags Share Stories: Conversations that Connect Us-- intended to challenge stereotypes and prejudices-- was an important DEIB event offering FYE credit to ensure strong first-year student participation. Undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, staff (including two of our librarians) and alumni shared their



personal experiences as “storytellers” with 125 attendees who participated in one-on-one or small group conversations. Virtual sessions were offered to connect with remote students.

Diversity and inclusive excellence initiatives continued this year. In the second year of our Change the Subject Project, which identifies the Library of Congress call numbers in our collection that still refer to biased or outdated language, we assigned new call numbers and created new spine labels for over 400 texts that referred to the terms ‘Negro’ (now changed to ‘Black’ or ‘African American’) and ‘Oriental’ (updated to ‘Asian,’ or ‘Asian American’).

Research librarians continued to engage with classes and faculty in meaningful ways. Our Senior Research Librarian & Instruction Coordinator and Research & Instruction Librarian audited an ENGL1001 class with the purpose of learning how the Library could be further embedded in that course. We tailored our new Inclusive Research Lesson to various disciplines, and designed new assignments. Two members of our Brand Taskforce partnered with Dolan professor Mary Kelly’s marketing course. For their assignment, the students had to propose a clear brand identity to effectively communicate the Library’s story. The experience was impactful for both the Library and the students, which was referenced by several as being an incredible hands-on experience simulating what they would do in the field.

All research librarians created custom Course Guides, oftentimes presented as part of a class or embedded in Blackboard, which saw an average of 2,256 views per month across 57 guides. Librarians also worked on a project to identify high reach instruction opportunities within the Magis Core and met as a group to discuss a scaffolded approach to instruction within each major.

Our organization and work culture benefited from a pilot mentoring program to help onboard new library hires and provide guidance on professional development and campus culture. A library staff satisfaction survey was developed with the Office of Institutional Research and administered in Fall 2023. Library Leadership reviewed the survey results during a retreat and determined the areas of major focus, with action steps shared at a May staff meeting.

### **Future Goals**

- Prioritize staff engagement with Library, campus, and community events.
- Increase faculty partnership librarians’ knowledge about the disciplines they support.
- Review hiring and onboarding practices for new staff.
- Administer staff satisfaction survey biannually.





## **Student Success: Influence student enrollment & success to maximize University potential**

Librarians spoke on behalf of the Library and the Academic Commons at prospective student events and orientations for new first-year students, graduate students, transfer students, and international students. We hosted or participated in an additional 70 events this year including resource tabling, guided study sessions, therapy dogs, crafts, a scavenger hunt, and much more. These events provided either important information about library resources or a much-needed outlet for de-stress and camaraderie.

The Library hosted Cram Jam on a reading day each finals week in partnership with other Academic Commons partners to offer tutoring, research, and writing help. The Fairfield U Wellness committee, a new Cram Jam partner this year, provided funding and staffed some de-stress events. This was a successful partnership that we would like to see continue.

The Personal Librarian Program, a program that assigns a librarian to each first-year student and transfer student, continues to partner with the First Year Experience (FYE) program. Research librarians updated the “Academic Navigation week” lesson plan, which was taught by all FYE instructors during the second week of the semester (librarians were able to visit many of the sections as well), and ensured that all took the Academic Integrity Tutorial.

The Library Research Prize was awarded to an undergraduate and graduate student in May 2023 for their outstanding work in using library resources and services to complete their research projects. Honorable mentions were awarded to a graduate team and an undergraduate student

In support of teaching and learning, and student success and retention, the Library provides access to over 733,022 e-resources and nearly 330,800 print sources in our collection. We also provided 2022 resources to students, faculty and staff through our interlibrary loan service. Library staff answered over 1,467 research questions across our various services as well as taught 181 classes and conducted 291 research appointments. Our online research tools were used heavily: research tutorials were taken nearly 7,519 times, research and course guides were viewed over 54,961, and citation guides over 52,392 times.

Student feedback continues to be sought and acted upon. Over the year we incorporated input from our Student Library Advisory Board on our research services, citation guides, the new museum pass program, physical library spaces, and more. We also collected assessment data through a two-part survey to learn what students thought was most useful during a library instruction session and what they felt was the most challenging part of their research process. The data will inform the content of future instruction classes and will be useful for faculty to understand where students struggle in the research process. We also conducted two student surveys using our VIP 24-hour study room raffle drawing to capture student feedback. In the fall we asked students how they prefer to receive



research help, and in the spring the DEIB committee asked what the Library could do to make them feel more accepted/included on campus. Data has already been used to inform decisions for FY24 planning, with some suggestions already implemented.

### **Future Goals**

- Enhance promotion of the Library (Personal Librarian Program in particular), and Academic Commons to prospective and current students.
- Create a strategy that distributes learning outcomes from the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy across curricula.
- Create opportunities for intellectual conversation and ideation. (See Purpose section)
- Assess and improve research services.

### **Cross-campus Collaboration: Work collaboratively with colleagues across campus to advance areas of responsibility**

The Dean of the Library presented at a Development Team meeting in early Spring. The Library continues to work with the Development Team to expand our list of potential donors in Raiser's Edge, adding event attendees, reading challengers, past student workers, advisory board members, and research prize winners. For the second year, the Library was one of the giving options on the general University giving page and we were again invited to participate in the University's STAGiving day, winning one of the giving challenges. This is the first year that we sent an end-of-year message to all potential donors, and through this and other efforts, the Library has raised over \$15,500 this year. Towards the end of the fiscal year the Dean of the Library developed a relationship with the new Director of Development for the Library, Edlira Curis, and they now meet on a monthly basis.

We provided communications content to Advancement to engage University donors and parents/guardians. Our curated online list of students, faculty, staff and book recommendations, Stags Read: Book Recommendations, was highlighted in summer 2022 to all STAGiving Day donors. We also created a blog post with numerous resources for the Parent Engagement team, shared during the late spring semester which highlighted services like our 24-hour research help chat service and our Personal Librarian Program for first-years and new transfer students.

The Library has taken a more active role in collaborating with Facilities Management to improve and maintain a functional, welcoming environment. This includes conducting building walk-throughs twice weekly to check for damage, assess cleanliness, and provide for the needs, safety, and comfort of library users. For example, we have advocated for the installation of working menstrual product dispensers in all women's and All-Gender bathrooms, had many areas repainted and wood refinished, and updated our procedures for reporting incidents and responding to emergencies.





The Web & Technology Librarian worked with ITS to migrate ArchivesSpace to a new server, resolved access to resources through the proxy server, and updated encryption protocols for all Library web services and authentication protocols for all authentication-restricted components of the Library's online presence (e.g. Alma, Libguides) to meet current security standards.

The Dean of the Library worked with the Office of Human Resources on a salary review of Library positions. We used data from AJCU/ CCALD peers (non-public universities), data from CUPA (The College and University Professional Association for Human Resources), as well as Payscale data. This data informed the personnel budget requests for FY24.

Several exhibits and resource displays were created for display in the Library in partnership with campus and community partners, with many attracting class visits for academic and social justice discussions. Partners included the Center for Social Impact, Religious Studies, Humanities Institute through the Social Justice in the Humanities Colloquium, Athletics, Fairfield University Art Museum, the Jesuit Community, Fairfield U Wellness, Center for Family Justice, and the Biology Department's RIZE program in collaboration with the Beardsley Zoo.

#### **Future Goals**

- Collaborate with campus partners to support teaching, learning, and research. In addition to the Library's role in University wide diversity and inclusive excellence activities.
- Strategize fundraising and communications with current and prospective donors, working with our new Director of Development.
- Continue to build awareness of the Academic Commons and create community within the committee.
- Partner with the Provost Office and Student Engagement on the coordination of student support services realized following the reorganization of Academic Support & Retention.



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## APPENDIX

### Strategic Plan Priorities - FY24

#### Modern Academic Library

Goal: Reinvent the Library as the intellectual heart of the University, integral to student experience, collaboration, and the scholarly pursuits of our community.

Goal Leads: Curtis Ferree and John Novak

#### Priorities:

- Objective A - Advance a culture of exploration and shared learning through collaboration, programming, collections, and services.
  - Initiative 1 - Create opportunities for intellectual conversation and ideation.
- Objective B - Establish an Academic Commons identity that emphasizes the benefits to our community.
  - Initiative 3 - Align our services with Academic Commons partners to meet student needs.
- Objective D - Ensure the digital environment is as welcoming as the physical environment.
  - Initiative 1 - Identify and meet the needs of online graduate students.
  - Initiative 2 - Enhance user experience and accessibility.
- Objective F - Expand support of the research lifecycle.
  - Initiative 1 - Improve research support.
  - Initiative 2 - Develop publishing support and solutions.
  - Initiative 3 - Provide opportunities and support for faculty and students to promote their scholarly and creative works.

#### Institutional Memory

Goal: Strengthen the role of the University Archives as the steward of Fairfield University's institutional memory.

Goal Lead: Elise Bochinski

#### Priorities:

- Objective A - Establish direction and priorities for University Archives
  - Initiative 1 - Create/revise mission statement, collection policies, and procedures.
- Objective B - Ensure that space and staffing for the University Archives are sufficient to support the University's growing national prominence.
  - Initiative 1 - Determine and plan and budget for space and staffing needs.



- Objective C – Use technology to enhance the discoverability, accessibility, and preservation of University Archives material.
  - Initiative 1 – Migrate digital collections to a more robust and sustainable platform.

### Teaching, Learning, and Research

Goal: Become campus leaders in information literacy and contribute to the University's teaching, learning, and research.

Goal Lead: Matthew Schirano

Priorities:

- Objective A – Establish the Library as an essential faculty resource for the enhancement of teaching and research.
  - Initiative 1 – Create a strategy that distributes learning outcomes from the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education across curricula.
  - Initiative 2 – Advance Library interests and collaborate with campus partners to support teaching, learning, and research.
  - Initiative 3 – Increase Faculty partnership librarians' knowledge about disciplines they support.

### Collections

Goal: Ensure that our collections support University students, faculty, and staff in their learning, teaching, research, and personal exploration.

Goal Leads: Ann Victor and Collection Strategies Librarian

Priorities:

- Objective A – Develop a holistic and sustainable collection development strategy with an eye towards evolving University priorities and Library best practices.
  - Initiative 1 – Create, update, and publish collection development and management policies.
  - Initiative 2 – Expand the Library's role in resource sharing and optimize current practices.
  - Initiative 3 – Maintain and update our collection resources to support curricula needs.
- Objective B – Collect and promote University-produced scholarly and creative works.
  - Initiative 1 – Increase use of and engagement with DigitalCommons@Fairfield among faculty and students.
- Objective C – Improve discovery of and access to content.
  - Initiative 3 – Optimize our current systems.
  - Initiative 4 – Ensure the accuracy of records.



## Diversity and Inclusive Excellence

Goal: Establish the Library as a leader in diversity and inclusive excellence at the University.

Goal Leads: Emily Porter Fyke and Matthew Blaine

Priorities:

- Objective A - Make diversity and inclusive excellence part of the Library's every day work life.
  - Initiative 1 - Create policies and processes to infuse diversity and inclusive excellence into the Library's culture and practices.
- Objective B - Increase engagement between the Library and the broader University community surrounding diversity and inclusive excellence.
  - Initiative 1 - Collaborate with similar faculty/staff groups and with student affinity groups to increase the Library's role in University-wide diversity and inclusive excellence activities.

## Communications

Goal: Increase awareness of the Library's contributions to student and faculty success.

Goal Lead: Lisa Thornell

Priorities:

- Objective A - Develop a communication and public relations strategy.
  - Initiative 1 - Create a marketing and communications plan.
- Objective C - Build the Library's brand.
  - Initiative 1 - Establish a brand task force.

## Funding and Financial Planning

Goal: Ensure that the Library has the appropriate financial resources to support a growing University.

Goal Lead: John Novak

Priorities:

- Objective A - Expand development capacity of the Library.
  - Initiative 1 - Cultivate relationships with campus partners in Development.
  - Initiative 2 - Implement strategies to secure donations.
- Objective C - Develop and strengthen campus support for Library initiatives.
  - Initiative 1 - Align Library initiatives with University strategic growth priorities.



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## Organizational Culture

Goal: Cultivate a positive, healthy, and high performance work environment where all Library staff feel included, valued, and professionally inspired and engaged.

Goal Leads: Nicole Jurgot and Barbara Chilardi

### Priorities:

- Objective A – Engage staff in assessment of workplace culture.
  - Initiative 1 – Establish a biennial staff survey.
  - Initiative 2 – Review hiring and onboarding practices for new staff.
  
- Objective C – Identify areas for improved operational efficiency and quality.
  - Initiative 2 – Review role of student workers and part-time staff.
  - Initiative 3 – Leverage technology to create efficiencies in workflows.

