

# **SIMMONS UNIVERSITY LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020**



# CONTENTS

---

Our Mission and Commitment	3
From the University Librarian	4
Support of Learning and Teaching	5
Inclusivity and Accessibility	7
Sustainability	8
Thought Leadership and Professional Engagement	9

# OUR MISSION AND COMMITMENT

---

## **Our Mission**

The Simmons University Library is an active participant in the student learning experience, an essential component of a Simmons education, and a vital asset to the University, fostering an institution-wide culture of academic inquiry and knowledge cultivation.

## **Our Commitment**

We are committed to the support of teaching and learning; inclusivity and accessibility; sustainability; and thought leadership and professional engagement.

# FROM THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN



**How would you answer the question, “What does the Library do?”** You might say it’s a comfortable study space and has a website with useful resources, but to learn what exactly the Simmons University Library has been doing, I invite you to turn the following pages. Here you will read about the range of activities, accomplishments, and partnerships achieved in the last year. You will see an essential component of the community at work, participating in learning and teaching, and offering inclusive and accessible resources and services.

The Library always strives to meet you at your point of need. In the past year, our librarians visited classes to assist students in their research, and students came to the Library and Archives as an extension of their class learning spaces. When the spring semester made remote teaching and learning the norm, the extensive array of electronic resources, chat reference service, and web-based research consultations with librarians meant you could bring the Library home with you.

During the past year, the Library leveraged many opportunities to exemplify inclusion and equity in our work. We led the way among our peers in adopting critical cataloging practices, offering equitable representation of marginalized individuals and religious belief systems in library catalog descriptions. We worked to support the adoption of open educational resources (OERs) as an alternative to expensive commercial texts. In partnership with the Office of Accessibility Services, we ensured the latest accessibility software was available on all Library computers. Our librarians worked intently to develop the new open source library software FOLIO and VuFind. We were the second library in the U.S. to adopt them, and the work done by our librarians will benefit all other libraries that implement these systems.

While we celebrate the achievements of the past year, we are also looking to the future. We are developing a new iteration of the Library website to optimize the user experience. We are planning for a renovated physical library, which will enhance our community’s learning spaces. We pledge to begin the necessary work of confronting racism in our profession and in its practices. As we begin an academic year unlike any other, we are working to ensure that everything the Library does for you—in support of your learning, your teaching, your research, and your personal growth—we do even better!

Every good wish,

*Vivienne B. Piroli*

Vivienne B. Piroli  
University Librarian



# SUPPORT OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

## Ensuring student success

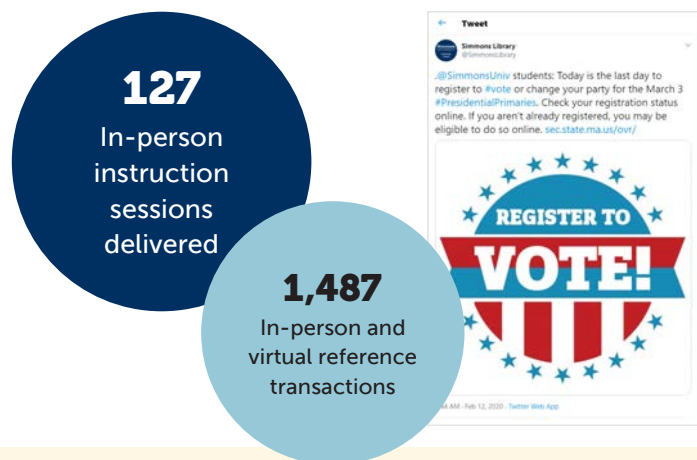
Librarians visited many sections of the Boston Course where they introduced first-year students to essential skills in **finding and evaluating information sources**, ensuring that all students interacted with a librarian in class during their first year. These early introductions to Library services and resources gave students the skills to be successful throughout their Simmons careers. They also encouraged students to consider their own relationships to information and critical thinking.

Librarians partnered with faculty in the nutrition program to develop “flipped” classrooms. The sessions placed **emphasis on a workshop model** and gave librarians more time to focus on students’ research needs. Librarians visited each class for two consecutive weeks, giving students time to dig deeper and formulate stronger, more specialized questions between sessions.

The Library co-sponsored several Wikipedia edit-a-thons, including one, **Digitizing Women’s Suffrage**, which reached a national audience because it was hosted online. Participants used Library resources and effective search strategies to expand the Wikipedia entries about suffragists.

The Library developed a fall semester-long **social media campaign** designed to highlight Library services and resources in the sequence a first-year student might need to access them. Course reserves, databases, interlibrary loan, meeting with a librarian, and guides on writing and citing were featured. The [Library’s Twitter account](#) also featured staff profiles, Library updates, photos from the Archives, and more.

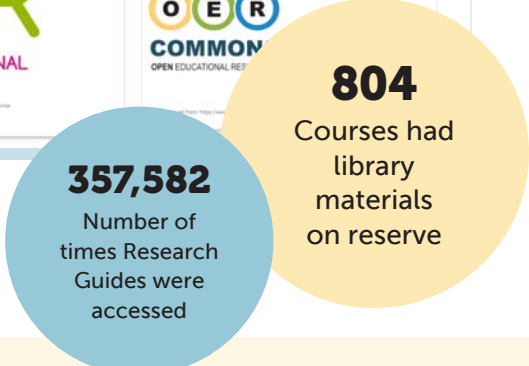
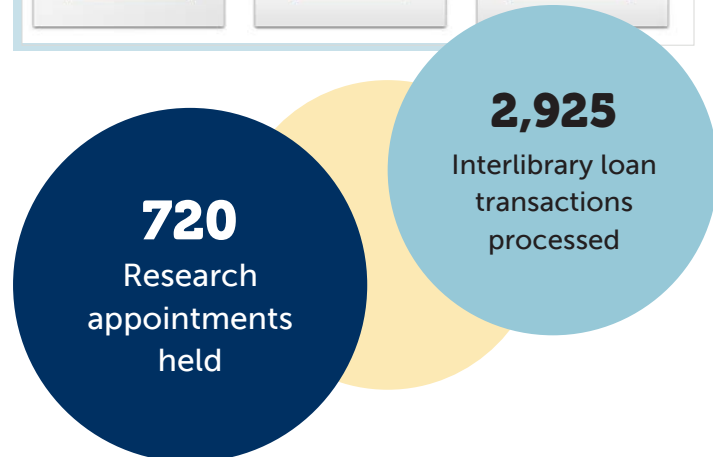
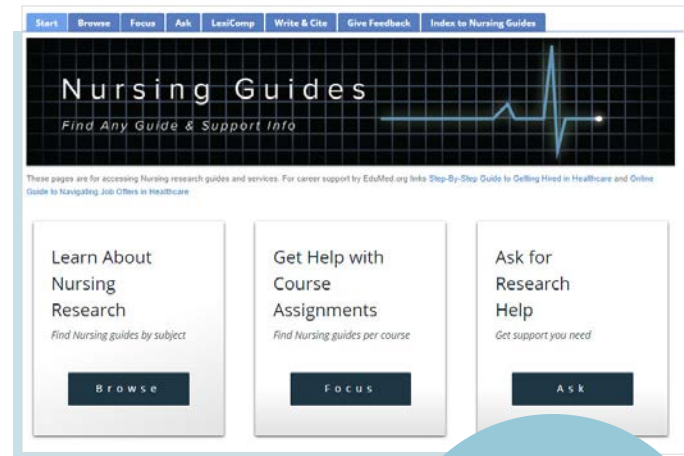
Students in an undergraduate history fieldwork course conducted research in the University Archives as part of a Council of Independent Colleges grant-funded **public humanities project**. The students used the papers of Eva Whiting White, which are held at Simmons, as well as materials from the Boston City Archives and the West End Museum. They created a series of [blog posts](#) and a [digital exhibit](#) highlighting the Elizabeth Peabody House and Boston’s historic West End. An opening for the physical exhibit is planned for fall 2020 at the West End Museum.



# SUPPORT OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

The University Archives hosted over a dozen graduate students from the School of Library and Information Science for the **Archives Field Experiences**. These students worked on a number of collections, most notably a multi-semester project to process the papers of the American Textile History Museum, formerly of Lowell. Once completed, these papers will be transferred to University of Massachusetts Lowell for long-term accessibility.

Librarians redesigned the layout and delivery of many **Nursing research guides** to improve the overall accessibility, look, and feel of the guides by incorporating [new designs](#) and illustrations. The Library's Research Guides offer a great place for students to begin [specialized research into a topical area](#) or to [find materials relevant for a course](#). They are also useful in [supporting career exploration](#) and addressing [other needs in the Simmons Community](#).



The Library worked with School of Library and Information Science Field Experience students and Simmons faculty members to develop a [research guide](#) focused on **open educational resources** (OERs). These resources, available under an open license, support student access to learning materials and help faculty in course design and development. Librarians hosted an informational session on OERs for all faculty through the Center for Excellence in Teaching and are supporting faculty in the humanities and sciences in incorporating OERs into their teaching.

# INCLUSIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

## Providing equitable access and service to the Simmons community

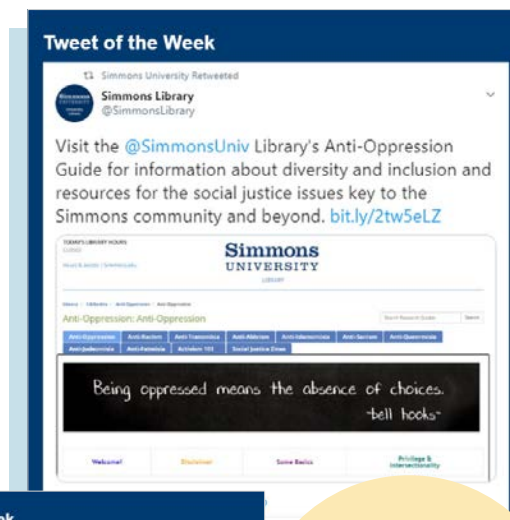
This year, librarians engaged in important work in **critical cataloging**—reassessing the organizational principles which inform how library materials are classified and discovered—with a particular focus on **bringing social justice to librarianship**. Librarians reorganized the religion section of the Children’s Literature Collection. The existing standards emphasized Christianity, and the reorganization provides a more equitable representation of all religions. This work was highlighted in a [blog post](#). The Library also partnered with student groups from the School of Library and Information Science to host a screening of *Change the Subject*, a documentary about changing the Library of Congress subject heading “illegal aliens” to the more inclusive term “undocumented persons”.

The Library partnered with the Office of Accessibility Services to update **accessibility features and software** on library computers.

The Library and Archives featured over 30 **curated exhibits of books and resources** aligned with the needs and interests of the Simmons community. Exhibits celebrating Juneteenth, visiting authors, Black History Month, and Pride Month were also prominently featured on the Library’s social media.

Before the Reclass	
The Bible.....	220
Christianity.....	230
Christian practice & observance.....	240
Christian pastoral practice & religious order.....	250
Christian organization, social work & worship.....	260
History, geographic treatment, biography of Christianity, Church history, Christian Denominations and sects.....	270-280
Other religions.....	290
After the Reclass!	
Religions of East and Southeast Asian origin.....	220-222
Religions of Indic origin.....	223-229
Religions of antiquity.....	231-239.4
Religions originating among Black Africans.....	239.6
Religions of Papuan, Australian, Malayo-Polynesian and related ethnic origins.....	239.9
Bible.....	240
Judaism.....	251
Christianity.....	252-279
Islam.....	281-298
Bahá'í and Bahá'í Faith.....	299.1
Modern spiritual movements.....	299.2-9

**10,089**  
Library group  
study room  
bookings



**43,000**  
Ebooks  
available

**165K**  
physical  
books  
available

The Archives worked with **undergraduate student groups** to collect meeting minutes and records, reflecting the diversity of the Simmons community in the University’s historical record.

**123**  
database  
subscriptions

**126,000+**  
electronic  
journal  
subscriptions

# SUSTAINABILITY

## Strategically investing for the future of the Simmons community

The Library became a full member of the **Fenway Library Organization** (FLO), a consortium of 37 academic and special libraries in Massachusetts. FLO membership provides the Simmons University Library with access to consortial pricing on journals and software and more opportunities to collaborate with other member libraries. The Simmons community gains enhanced access to books and materials from other FLO libraries. The Simmons University Librarian serves on FLO's Board of Directors.

The Library implemented two open-source software products, **FOLIO and VuFind**, in collaboration with FLO and software development company Index Data. VuFind is used for the Library's [new catalog](#) and [course reserves](#) search. It offers a clean, easy-to-use interface with enhanced searching and browsing options for discovering books, ebooks, and videos. FOLIO supports the back-of-house collections management work of Library staff. Simmons is one of the first libraries in the world to use FOLIO and the first to integrate it with VuFind.

The Library's Website Working Group was tasked with **re-designing the Library's website** for the Simmons community. They envisioned a website that would be useful, usable, accessible, and appealing in order to promote and enhance

the discovery of Library services and resources. The group rewrote content, clarified the information architecture, and developed a prototype for a new Library homepage. In collaboration with the Simmons University Web Office, a new Library website will roll out in Fall 2020, improving the user experience.

As part of the University's One Simmons campus-wide renovation plans, the Library is due for a **major renovation**. Library staff have been involved in every step of this redesign. The design will best support users in accessing services and materials, while encouraging the community to discover all that the Library has to offer. Librarians prepared program statements highlighting critical elements of their work and services to aid Library leadership in their consultations with architects. The space is one that we hope will serve the Simmons community of today and the future. Renovations will begin in Fall 2020. More information will follow.

In response to the **COVID-19 pandemic**, all learning, teaching, and working at Simmons University shifted to online, and the Library responded in stride. All Library staff transitioned to remote work and support of teaching and learning, and the Library's web ecosystem fully supported student and faculty success even as the physical space was closed. The COVID-19 Library Services Guide outlined changes, while new services, such as scan-on-demand for print reserves and the mailing of books from the circulating collection, were quickly put in place. Collection development adapted to primarily purchasing ebooks, and librarians made themselves available for research support by Zoom, email, chat, and phone.

**folio** 



**FENWAY LIBRARY  
ORGANIZATION**



# THOUGHT LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT

## Contributing to Simmons and our field in unique ways

Simmons librarians were active participants in the Simmons community and the library profession. Staff members have contributed journal articles and conference presentations, served on local, national, and University-based committees, and mentored the next generation of librarians and archivists. We are proud of their impact and want to acknowledge their contributions.

**Brian Arrigo, Jay Campbell, Andrew Clark, and Gus Consing:** FOLIO Core team members

**Stacy Collins:** [Call and Response: Constructed Identity and Legible Experience in Danticat's Young Adult Novels](#), published in *Research on Diversity in Youth Literature*; Closing keynote "Anti-Oppression, Allyship, and Emotional Labor" for Library Journal Equity in Action webinar; ["Diversity Language" lecture](#) for the Augusta Baker Diversity Lecture Series; [NPR interview "How Libraries Are Supporting the Black Lives Matter Movement"](#)



**34**  
Student workers  
were employed  
by the Library

**12**  
Library Science  
students  
completed field  
experiences at  
the Library

This year the  
Library welcomed  
three new staff  
members:  
Ali Gauss,  
Ken Mathis, and  
Matt Quilitzsch.

**Lauren Loftis:** Closing Doors Opens Others: Identifying Opportunities through Temporary Records Custody, *New England Archivists*, Spring 2020 Meeting (accepted)

**Ken Mathis:** [Reclassifying the 200s at Simmons University](#) in 025.431 The Dewey Blog

**Vivienne Piroli:** Oberlin Group of Libraries, Secretary, Board of Directors; Fenway Library Organization Board of Directors; Simmons School of Library and Information Science adjunct faculty

**Linda Schuller:** Simmons School of Library and Information Science Diversity Committee; Simmons School of Library and Information Science adjunct faculty

**Jess Wallis:** Forthcoming "Feminist Pedagogy" in *Library Pedagogies*, edited by Sam Aston and Andrew Walsh.

**Jason Wood:** Case Studies in the Public Humanities: Implementing CIC's Humanities Research for the Public Good Projects at Three Academic Institutions, *New England Archivists*, Spring 2020 Meeting (accepted); Simmons School of Library and Information Science adjunct faculty





### **Online Hours**

Monday–Thursday 8:30AM–9:00PM

Friday 8:30AM–6:00PM

Saturday–Sunday 11:00AM–8:00PM

[simmons.edu/library](https://simmons.edu/library)

[library@simmons.edu](mailto:library@simmons.edu)

617.521.2780



**@SIMMONSLIBRARY**