# University of Massachusetts Boston

## University Libraries Annual Report for 2014

**Submitted by**

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The University Libraries (UL) deliver resources and services in person and by virtual means to the UMass Boston diaspora of campus-based and extramural students and faculty by providing rich resources for academic coursework and research and by supporting their effective use via an information literacy program and other support services, including a vibrant interlibrary loan program. In 2014 UL collaborated with faculty and Information Technology (IT), and with CAPS to develop pedagogical methodologies for applying mobile and tablet-based personal devices to course learning.

In 2014, the UL continued to emerge as a strong partner in learning outcomes assessment through undergraduate information literacy instruction assessment. In concert with the University's values of assessment and measurement, the UL continues a practice of evaluation based on national and local data gathering that informs resource acquisition, information delivery, and instruction in information literacy, meeting national and local standards embodied by NEASC.

As part of its commitment to support the campus Carnegie community-engaged ranking, the UL preserves and digitizes works to make them freely available to all.  A few years ago, the UL completed and unveiled the Mercedes Agullo' y Cobo Digital Library; a collaborative project with the Latin American and Iberian Studies Department that made available the collection of Spanish historian Mercedes Agullo y Cobo (http://openarchives.umb.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/p15774coll2).

In 2014, a new pilot project with the Royal Academy of Hispanic America in Spain, Cadiz, digitized and made accessible globally a selection of its research collection recognized as valuable to our existing and developing academic programs.  Similar projects with other libraries and individual scholars in Ethiopia, Haiti, and other locations are under negotiation. The University's Office of International and Transnational Affairs is a collaborator and catalyst in fostering international relationships resulting in the preserving and making available rare

resources, along with the Provost Office, and with partners in different colleges such as CLA and CNHS.

University Archives and Special Collection (UASC) has seen a growth in material submissions that is in line with the UL and campus goal of developing deep collections of primary resources reflective of the university's urban mission and its commitment to community service. The collections are focused on records of urban planning, social action, alternative movements, community organizations, and local histories related to neighboring communities. The UL is attuned the importance of acquiring and making available primary source materials for use in instruction and research. The recent Ithaka S+R report on the rising importance of special Collections (http://www.sr.ithaka.org/blog-individual/cant-buy-us-love-rick-anderson-kicks-new-ithaka-sr-issue-briefs-series ) asserts the need for research libraries to make available unique 'non-commodity' documents where use and access is not constrained by costs of access and use rights issues. This year, UASC was pivotal in the development of the Save our History program and events as part of the 50th anniversary celebration to the campus. This effort was a resounding success culminating with thousands of boxes of rescued university archival materials and by the inclusion of one of UASC arms, the Massachusetts Memories Road Show, highlighted by Channel 5's Chronicle on the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the campus and its efforts to give back to the community.

2014 was a year of growth evidenced by the increase use of the IP that UL makes available to all on campus and beyond its walls locally and to its global partners. To succeed UL worked in partnership and collaboration with many on campus to achieve campus goals. Not only partnerships were strengthened in 2014, but new bonds were made to achieve the campus strategic goals. For example, UL facilities are shared with Information Technology Services Division's computing labs, help desks, Instructional Design staff, Graduate Resource Center, Tutoring Center, Office of Faculty Development, and portions of the campus Subject Tutoring Program. Other floors house smaller offices for programs like the Spanish Resource Center, the Center for Portuguese Language—Instituto Camoes, and the Institute for New England Native American Studies. UL is a beehive of many activities in the building as well as statewide, regionally, nationally, and internationally. These shared spaces and goals translated in new and higher metrics. Onsite headcounts onsite users reached close to 500,000 and increase of over 40,000 onsite users over 2014. Usage of archival collections reached close to one million (1M) transactions this year. This data is evidence to how effective the investment the campus makes in its libraries and archives yields a strong return on investment, dollar by dollar, and in marketing and visibility as the campus continues its journey into a research extensive institution.

Along with developing and maintaining the IP that the UL are responsible for the library offer a number of services, programs, including library research instruction, and national and international lending services to fulfill campus, faculty, and student academic goals. All of these programs and activities are aimed at maximizing access, learning, and productivity of those that need IP, and increase the ROI yield. The instructional program offered 367 session this year with 7,276 students benefiting from customized and tailored library research sessions designed by faculty librarians. Other instructional services and assistance is offered with over 12,000 face to face transactions and thousands of uses of library instructional online resources developed by faculty librarians in concert with faculty tailored for undergraduate and graduate students. In 2014, an online graduate student research primer was set course to be unveiled in the fall of 2014 to address the requests of many faculty in intramural and extramural programs.

University Libraries (UL) also took part in and, in many cases, lead in collaborations with campus, regional, and international communities. Faculty librarians continued to pursue relationships and opportunities that integrate useful and appropriate information resources into scholarly and instructional endeavors throughout the greater campus. Significant collaborations continue advancing the UMass Boston mission and its priorities while producing contributions to the UL collection and demonstrating the value of information resources.  This year the library liaison program was reorganized in an attempt to strengthen the new cadre of MLS holders that are new to the library due to retirements, etc.  This working group is charged to be mentors to faculty and staff leading them to hidden services and treasures available in the UL for their success and the success of their students.

Goals for 2015

- Continue identifying and procuring licensed intellectual property and other resources needed for research, teaching, and learning, in particular for newer academic programs
- Continue promoting campus conversations on important issues affecting scholarly production (scholarly communication, copyright retention, and fair use)
- Participate in the NEASC visit and facilitate the UL visit and interpretation of the visiting team of UL success and challenges.
- Assess student and faculty perceptions of the University Libraries and conduct assessments measuring student learning and functional outcomes
- Develop a suite of services and policies designed to facilitate the best use of IP for students enrolled and faculty teaching in on and off campus, including graduate, online, and global students.
- Develop and deploy methods that enhance communication and marketing of UL resources, services, and activities throughout the campus communities
- In collaboration with IT and CAPS develop a state of the art library and IT services (SOALITS) plan that maximize effective and efficient delivery of resources in a 21st century context
- Continue improving facilities and maximizing space deployment to create attractive environments for study and collaboration
- Continue fostering existing and developing new relationships that create local, national, and transnational partnerships that enhance access to specialized and rare collections.
- Promote increased support to UL to develop SOALITS, UASC, and other infrastructure and support services needed to fulfill the strategic goals of the campus and its vision as a research extensive institution.

2015 and Beyond Strategic Challenges for the University Libraries

The campus strategic plan poses foreseeable challenges that enable the library to consider a strategic response to increasing enrollment, expanding academic programs, the emergence of residential student life, and moving towards a research extensive classification.  Specifically, three areas of concern are to be addressed:

- Space shortages and infrastructure issues, especially computer access and support, continue to be major issue in the development of state of the art library and IT services for the campus and beyond its walls. This is one of the most significant strategic campus goals pertaining IT and UL that has yet to be addressed collectively with a plan that recognizes all the areas for improvement needed to support the campus new vision.
- Space for the university's growing archival collections and environmental concerns are the two most critical weaknesses for UASC. On campus storage capacity was exceeded near the end of AY12-13.
- The work of UASC has also been complicated at times due to lack of clarity about the work of archives, and the nature of archival collection-building. Greater visibility brings upon an increasing pressure to accept collections that are out of scope or not archival in nature.
- Another area of concern is the University Libraries' capacity to continue delivering high quality curriculum driven information literacy and research instructional services across the academic enterprise that is growing in academic programs, online delivery, and academic schools in ways that meet the campus global vision and growth at all levels.  Discipline expertise customary in research libraries supporting Doctoral Extensive Research Universities is need on campus.  UL needs to press for funding to higher PhD holding librarians that can integrate into the fabric of the colleges more closely than we have done so far.
- Creating a physical environment that supports teaching, learning, and research:  The UL is in a constant process of rethinking and reconfiguring its facilities conducive to learning and collaboration.  The challenge here is working with a building with limited space, lighting, and technological infrastructure.  Another dimension to the challenge is making the building and its services available to a larger number of users and for longer hours.  Supporting the need for quiet, comfortable study space of the residential student population will mean expanding hours, considering 24 hour access, and additional security and transportation needs that will need to be considered.
- A comparison of peer institutions draws observations regarding levels of support required for the strategic growth called for in *Fulfilling the Promise.*  The Libraries' $4.8 million budget is second lowest against the eight peers and about $4 million from the median.  Examining expenditures against student population shows a resource distribution of $407 per student is $243 below the median $650 expenditures for FTE students for the comparison group.
- The Library Instruction program has two challenges to address: 1.) lack of scalability to reach as many UMass Boston students as possible, and 2.) the need to shift our undergraduate-focus to accommodate a growing population of graduate students and their research needs. A home-grown online curricula information literacy curriculum is in development for graduate students.
- Current library tools do not meet the 21$^{st}$ century experience and expectations of our faculty and students facilitating the finding of information available to them via the campus.  In projecting solutions to our issues related to the find-ability of licensed or needed IP, a discovery tool would resolve key shortcomings in users' abilities to search and retrieve specific titles for which the UL has access.  This is a staff intensive and costly solution that might not be feasible in the near future due to staffing and funding levels.

- The UL seeks to provide state of the art services for the current institution and the institution envisioned by *Fulfilling the Promise*. The UL and Information Technology Units listen to those observations and comments reflecting upon the need for more collaborative service among, not just UL and IT, but other departments throughout the UL along with other campus entities. To accomplish the UL has been in preliminary conversation for a collaborative commons that locates resources for technology, information management, research design, and instructional development. The UL is the likely locus for a collaborative center placing multiple problem solving entities together. A Commons approach for faculty and graduate research services would involve the UL, Information Technology, Office of Instructional Technology, and Office of Faculty Development. Addressing the physical environment for such a facility and expanding hours and services in anticipation of a residential campus. The UL will establish more attractive study spaces with hours conforming to late-hour study.
- Attracting and deploying high performing librarians that can deliver on high quality instruction, customer and technical support, resource and access, and leadership in proportion to the challenges facing the University and the UL.
- Having adequate staffing levels in a complex and quickly changing environment is critical to offering state of the art library and information services.
- Leveraging technologies to provide instruction and library services can to an extent address demands of scale. The UL must support the breadth of expansion planned for the university with competent and continuously developing librarian faculty.

In 2014, University Libraries have undergone transformations that have increased the volume of information resources and services available to student and faculty. The Library's ability to provide information literacy and information management skills is part of student academic success is also growing. The assessments and projections presented address strategic and operational challenges posed by a campus with dynamic student and faculty needs and a growing trans-disciplinary campus. The work done in 2014 is part of the continuum of needed improvements in UL to meet the strategic goals and the challenges posed by the new vision and the growth of the campus to a stellar international research university.