

**Scholarly Commons ANNUAL REPORT,
Fiscal Year 2015: July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015**

Prepared by: Karen Hogenboom, Scholarly Commons Head
and Scholarly Commons Leads

This is the first annual report for the Scholarly Commons, which became a unit on January 1, 2015. Our mission, in partnership with people and organizations outside the unit and outside the Library, is to connect campus researchers with the help they need in order to do technologically advanced research, and to create community on campus around the research tools and methods that relate to our services.

At the beginning of the fiscal year, the Scholarly Commons was a service offered by Reference, Research and Scholarly Services, coordinated by Merinda Hensley and Sarah Shreeves, with five staff and three graduate assistants working in the space. At the end of the fiscal year, Sarah and Carissa Phillips had moved elsewhere, Eleanor Dickson and Rebecca Bryant had joined the staff, and Merinda and Karen Hogenboom were co-leading the unit until a unit head could be appointed.

I. UNIT NARRATIVE

1. Major Activities and Accomplishments

Although this was a tumultuous year for the Scholarly Commons, we continued to offer both services and workshops in the Library and events that raised campus awareness of our services and of the issues that face academic researchers in a rapidly changing scholarly environment.

CONSULTATIONS

The Scholarly Commons offered 1321 consultations during the year, divided among our service areas as follows:

<i>Service</i>	<i>Number</i>
About the Scholarly Commons	81
Author's Rights	13
Copyright	35
Data Management	17
Data Services	113
Digital Humanities	3
IDEALS/Electronic Theses and Dissertations	68
Savvy Researcher	22
Scanner Use	211
Software Assistance	311
Survey Research	24
Usability	11
Unspecified	412
<i>Total</i>	1321

81% of these consultations were in person, 14% by email, and 5% by phone. 37 consultations were longer than 30 minutes and 69 were at READ level 5 or 6, a reflection of the depth of the services we offer.

Many of our consultations involve either referring the user to a specific specialist or to specific services offered in our space. The Scholarly Commons continues to buy out the time of Survey Research Lab consultants so that they can offer no-cost office hours in our space one afternoon per week. During Fall Semester, ATLAS offered consultation hours in the Scholarly Commons, but due to reduced walk-in traffic and increased phone and email referrals we piloted an appointment-based service model for statistical software consultations in the spring and summer. This approach enabled us to offer appointments during longer hours than ATLAS was available to staff in person, and freed up some time for ATLAS graduate assistants to work on content for an in-depth LibGuide about text mining tools and techniques. Specialists in the Library whose consultation statistics are counted by other departments include Dan Tracy (copyright beginning in January), Harriett Green (digital humanities), and Ayla Stein, the IDEALS GA, Bill Ingram and Seth Robbins (IDEALS).

INSTRUCTION

The centerpiece of the Scholarly Commons instruction program is the Savvy Researcher workshop series, which offered 54 different titles and 143 sessions for 1920 attendees in FY2015. The series continues to grow and evolve, including content that is specific to our services as well as more general library content. This year, the Data Services librarian and the Data Services Committee collaborated with the Research Data Service and the Research Data Services Interest Group to offer an intentional series of workshops about data management. In the fall a series of seven narrowly focused workshops was offered twice, and in the spring three broadly focused workshops were offered twice. James Whitacre also offered a new series of GIS workshops that build on one another. Savvy Researcher workshops also continue to be offered in the areas of digital humanities, data use, and scholarly communication.

The Scholarly Commons also sponsored several instructional events and workshops during FY 15 that are beyond the scope of the Savvy Researcher series. A brown bag about machine learning that was facilitated by Andy Pilney from the Communications Department drew 16 graduate students and faculty in October. A brownbag was also held about "alt-academic" careers (Jennifer Guiliano, IUPUI, around 40 attendees). We also sponsored a Digital Humanities Lunch Forum, "Getting Going: DIY GIS Scholarship and the Classroom" with John Randolph, professor in the Department of History at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The Scholarly Commons provided funding and logistical support for the Digital Humanities Symposium, a day and a half long event in February attended by scholars from both on and off campus. The Scholarly Commons was also a major financial and in-kind sponsor of GIS Day in November (over 300 registrations), and sponsored an all-day workshop on managing your scholarly presence..

The course-integrated instruction done through the Scholarly Commons was primarily related to GIS. James Whitacre did seven one-shot sessions and collaborated extensively with a faculty member in the Geography and GIS Department on a web and mobile GIS course in Spring 2015.

SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION

Some of the instructional activities described above also had elements of scholarly communication worked into them, like the “Managing your online scholarly presence” workshop. Several additional events were focused more directly on scholarly communication, however. The Scholarly Commons sponsored two “editions” of the *Image of Research* competition, for graduate students (with the Graduate College) and for undergraduates (with the Office of Undergraduate Research). This competition awards monetary prizes for the best imagery combined with the best explanation of how the image relates to the student’s research. The Scholarly Commons also sponsored a panel event with Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Seth Denbo, and Maria Bonn, “The Future of Scholarly Communication.” All campus-wide events are recorded and archived on the Scholarly Commons website <<http://www.library.illinois.edu/sc/events/speaker.html>> In addition, the Scholarly Commons co-sponsored with GSLIS a talk by Dan Cohen from the Digital Public Library of America, ““What Can You Do with the Digital Public Library of America?”” <<https://www.lis.illinois.edu/events/2015/02/24/dan-cohen-%E2%80%9Cwhat-can-you-do-digital-public-library-america%E2%80%9D>>

The Scholarly Commons also is a key player in supporting IDEALS, which is an important way for campus researchers and departments to make their work openly available, as well as the place where all Illinois dissertations and some theses are published. Sarah Shreeves administered IDEALS until she left in January 2015, and Karen Hogenboom and Merinda Hensley (ETDs) have administered parts of IDEALS since she left, collaborating with programmers in Library IT and MJ Han and Ayla Stein in CAM. Merinda participated in conversations with the Graduate College and the AUL for Collections on transitioning ETD submissions to ProQuest optional and a process was established for approval/denial renewal of restricted access to theses and dissertations. Merinda also completed the ETD survey and Tom purchased the gap of dissertations from 1996-2010 from ProQuest. The IDEALS email address was migrated to an OTRS queue in FY2015, making it easier to manage the continual flow of questions about depositing items and accessing restricted items in IDEALS.

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

The Library’s partnership with the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) is in its second year. Merinda collaborated with OUR to add Savvy Researcher workshops to the Certificate for Undergraduate Research offered by the Office of Undergraduate Research with two workshops offered in the pilot year and two more are currently under development. Merinda also created a new undergraduate research website linked from the unit’s home page that includes a comprehensive guide to setting up an open access journal <<http://www.library.illinois.edu/sc/ugresearch/index.html>>. Merinda was instrumental in setting up a workflow for campus departments to publish undergraduate research journals, of which four published their second issue this year and three more are under development.

2. Major Challenges

DISCONNECT BETWEEN SPACE AND MISSION OF UNIT

Many of the unit’s activities were harder to accomplish than they needed to be, because while our space is configured for in-depth consultations and works well for that purpose, it is not a space that lends itself

to community-building events for campus researchers. Right now we can use Room 308 for small events that lend themselves to sitting around a table, but we could host larger and more diverse events if we had a larger, more flexible space. Currently our larger events like workshops and receptions are being held everywhere from Alice Campbell Alumni Hall to Lincoln Hall to the iHotel. We are at the point where we need the Scholarly Commons to have more of a sense of place in order to create the vibrant community that is a large part of our mission.

BOUNDARIES OF UNIT

The partnerships that are an important strength of the Scholarly Commons are also a major challenge. We are relying on people and units outside the Scholarly Commons and outside the Library to provide some of our core services, so when their priorities change our services are often affected. For example, JoAnn Jacoby did qualitative analysis consultations for several years, until her unit lost several staff members and she was unable to commit time to this task that was not core to her position. One of our partners for usability consultations has refocused his responsibilities and the other left the Library in August 2015 so at this point we are administering the usability lab but unable to help with questions about software or best practices. ATLAS has also gone through changes that are affecting our services: as it transitions from being a unit in the College of LAS to being a unit in CITL, its focus is shifting away from providing consultations for statistics and statistical software. At this point ATLAS is still partnering with the Scholarly Commons to provide these consultations, but should ATLAS's mission shift further away from consulting there is no one in the Library who could step in, and we have not been able to identify another unit on campus that focuses on statistical consultation and training.

As the Office of Research continues to develop, the Scholarly Commons will face more boundary issues because its staff and leads are largely the same people who make up the Office of Research. It will take careful planning and communication to distinguish the missions of these two groups, although both are important for communication and community-building as well as getting work done.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

The Scholarly Commons has never had a civil service staff member to do the routine administrative work of the unit. When we were part of RRSS, Wendy Gregory was able to help us with some things, though the bulk of her duties were elsewhere. Once we became a separate unit, the coordinators and leads had to do everything from ordering food for events and supplies to creating schedules for the Scholarly Commons desk. This led to an atmosphere of crisis management, where the attention of professional staff was pulled away from developing services to handle issues like having no paper for the printer. Events were particularly challenging for this reason. The logistics of speaker transportation and lodging, event space, scheduling, and catering are extremely time consuming and suck attention and energy away from more substantive issues. We are currently partnering with the Research Data Service to hire an academic hourly using gift funds, but we believe that this is a low-impact use of gift funds and it is necessarily a temporary solution. We will train the academic hourly as though he or she were going to stay, but it is unlikely that a person with the skills we are looking for would stay in a position without benefits for very long.

3. Significant Changes in unit operations, personnel, etc.

LEADERSHIP

Sarah Shreeves left the Library in early January, leaving both her co-coordinating role in the Scholarly Commons and her leadership role in IDEALS. Merinda Hensley took on the electronic theses and dissertations with MJ Han, and Karen took on overseeing the balance of IDEALS with Ayla Stein. Bill Ingram and Seth Robbins continue their work as repository programmers. Karen Hogenboom took on Sarah's role as co-coordinator of the Scholarly Commons as well.

OTHER STAFF

Rebecca Bryant joined the Scholarly Commons as Visiting Researcher Information Specialist in December 2014 (annual report filed separately).

Eleanor Dickson joined the department as Digital Humanities and Hathi Trust Research Center Specialist in June, 2015.

Carissa Phillips was on sabbatical from October 2014 to July 2015. When she returned, her office moved to Room 300 and her primary affiliation changed to Research and Information Services.

4. Contribution to Library-wide Programs

INSTRUCTION AND SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION

See Section I.1 above.

STAFF TRAINING

During FY15, Scholarly Commons staff partnered with several people outside the unit to provide training to other library staff in the areas it covers. James Whitacre taught a workshop for library staff on how GIS can benefit their research, and Karen Hogenboom partnered with Dan Tracy, JoAnn Jacoby, and Bob Burger to teach a three-session workshop on statistics aimed at untenured library faculty. Karen Hogenboom worked with Sarah Shreeves and Sarah Williams to provide consistent training on statistics and data for the Main/UGL Hub. The Savvy Researcher is also offered as professional development for library faculty and staff.

CAMPUS OUTREACH

As a result of our service profile, our outreach was directed to campus researchers rather than to the public at large, though we did consult with several community members about their research projects. We have an active blog that highlights our services, events and resources, *Commons Knowledge* [28 posts FY2014-15], and we tweet from @ScholCommons [as of 9/8/2015: 1662 tweets; 739 followers].

5. Progress Made on Unit Annual Goals for FY15

Because we were not an independent unit at the end of FY15, our goals for the year were intertwined with the goals for the rest of RRSS. Some unit goals from these more general goals continued to apply to the Scholarly Commons after RRSS split into two units:

1. Work to implement recommendations for restructuring that will provide a strong foundation for Library-wide reference and research support services

The restructuring of Reference, Research and Scholarly Services into Research Information Services and the Scholarly Commons was completed at the beginning of calendar year 2015. The departments still work together on the continuum of research support services, collaborating on the Savvy Researcher workshop series and training. Continuing to partner with RIS is essential for us to provide robust services that are integrated into the Library's research support services as a whole.

2. Better integrate insights gleaned from our broad and deep level of interactions with our diverse users into IT systems and web development by becoming a trusted advocate for the needs of the scholarly community as a whole.

We have been meeting with Library IT regularly to talk about ways that we can meet the needs of our users. For example, as tools for research proliferate, we are working on establishing a sandbox where researchers can install and "play" with tools to see if they are worth the investment of time and money to install and learn. This is also a way for us to find new tools that we need to support more robustly. Library IT has been responsive in the past year when campus instructors have needed a place for their students to work with particular software packages, installing QGIS in Rooms 314 and 306 for a Russian History course.

3. Continue to focus on developing innovative approaches to reference and research support services that benefit the entire community of scholars who rely on the Library's world class collections and services.

The Scholarly Commons' service model, which relies on a network of partnerships, allows us to extend our reach in many ways. During FY15, for example, Harriett Green and the co-coordinators worked to build a more robust connection with the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities. This partnership will bear visible fruit in FY16, with several digital humanities workshops taught in IPRH's space. Events like the *Image of Research* and the online scholarly presence workshop connect researchers without regard to discipline or department.

6. Unit Annual Goals for FY2016

SPACE: To the extent it is in our control, move forward with planning a move to Main Library 220 after CAM vacates the space toward the end of FY2016

CENTER FOR INNOVATION IN TEACHING AND LEARNING: Complete current planning process for programmatic partnerships with CITL, implement plans, and include space implications of these programmatic partnerships in planning for Main Library 220.

LEADS: Incorporate all Scholarly Commons Leads and related services more robustly into Scholarly Commons planning and services, and develop mutual understanding of what it means for the Scholarly Commons to be the "public-facing" aspect of each service.

ENGAGEMENT: Host one major event with an external speaker; hold an open house during Fall 2015; pursue hosting Year of Cyberinfrastructure website re: campus resources for research.

STABILITY: Hire a permanent civil service staff member; develop and document workflows, review and compile policies and procedures.

7. Graduate Assistants

Graduate assistants provide essential assistance with projects to support a wide range of services in the Scholarly Commons. Each service lead (e.g. Harriett Green for digital humanities) has access to SC GAs to support project work. Examples of GA projects include: creating LibGuides to support software on the SC computers; developing training materials and teaching students how to use Open Journals System, a digital publishing platform; collection development for our reference collection; managing our social media presence; developing and teaching workshops in a variety of areas including Mendeley, GitHub, and grants; and website development.

The Scholarly Commons has consistently tried to expand its hours each semester as demand for our services continue to grow. That has made it increasingly difficult to staff our desk since we rely mainly on graduate assistants with little to no back up. This means that when a GA calls in sick the librarians must re-arrange their schedules to cover the desk in order for the SC to remain open. RIS has provided access [we provide the funds] to graduate assistants to work the desk in a pinch but they are not trained to provide in-depth SC services, their focus is on making correct referrals and staffing the space.

Our request for an increase was approved from 1.0 FTE, two headcount in 2013 to 1.75 FTE, four headcount in 2015. Our GAs for FY15 were:

- Brian Zelip - June 1, 2013-May 15, 2015 [grad hourly during the summer months]: .5FTE paid from Library GA allocation
- Kayla Hays - December 16, 2013-May 15, 2015 [grad hourly during the summer months]: .5 FTE paid from Library GA allocation
- Anna Trammel - August 16-December 1, 2014 [not replaced]: .5 FTE paid from Library GA allocation
- A variety of RIS GAs to help with gap coverage (paid by SC gift funds)

We also have several GAs that work in our space: instruction (FY12-15); research data service (FY14-15); visual resources (FY13-); IDEALS (FY13-14), and Researcher Information Systems (FY15).

II. STATISTICAL PROFILE

a. Facilities (Main Library 306 and 316)

13 seats at tables

12 seats at public workstations (including bookeye scanner)

6 seats across from public workstations for collaborators

7 seats at soft seating

b. Personnel

FACULTY:

- Sarah Shreeves (Co-Coordinator): 1.0 FTE (July 2014 – January 2015)

- Carissa Phillips (Business and Finance Librarian): 1.0 FTE (on sabbatical October 2014 – June 2015)
- Karen Hogenboom (Co-Coordinator and Numeric and Spatial Data Librarian): 1.0 FTE (transferred from RRSS to Scholarly Commons on January 1, 2015)
- Merinda Hensley (Co-Coordinator and Instructional Services Librarian): 1.0 FTE (.25 FTE July – October 2014; .5 FTE October-December 2014; 1.0 FTE January – June 2015)

ACADEMIC PROFESSIONALS:

- James Whitacre (GIS Specialist): 1.0 FTE
- Rebecca Bryant (Visiting Researcher Information System Specialist)(December 2014 – present): 1.0 FTE (supervised by Beth Namichchivaya)
- Eleanor Dickson (Visiting Digital Humanities and Hathi Trust Research Center Specialist) (June 2015 – present): 1.0 FTE (supervised by Harriett Green)

GRADUATE ASSISTANTS:

- Brian Zelip - June 1, 2013-May 15, 2015 [grad hourly during the summer months]
- Kayla Hays - December 16, 2013-May 15, 2015 [grad hourly during the summer months]
- Anna Trammel - August 16-December 1, 2014 [not replaced]
- A variety of RIS GAs to help with gap coverage (paid by SC gift funds)

STUDENT ASSISTANTS: not applicable

c. User Services

Gate Count: 2,112 (extrapolated from Sweeps Week)

Circulation: not applicable

Reference interactions: 1321

1002 READ level 1 and 2

69 READ level 5 and 6

(See Unit Narrative for more details)

Presentations: 149