Research and Information Services (RIS)
ANNUAL REPORT, July 1, 2016–June 30, 2017
Prepared by: Sara Holder, RIS Head
With contributions from RIS librarians and staff

Research and Information Services (RIS) is, as its name indicates, the central gateway to the Library's research and information services, supporting all groups in their work as scholars. RIS is dedicated to increasing the research skills of faculty, staff, and students, and educating the campus regarding the many ways in which the Library supports research and teaching while also assuring that scholars are connected to their subject liaisons and disciplinary libraries. We provide interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary research support services through administration of the Library's central in-person reference point and a virtual reference service; management of core online and print reference collections; instruction (including the Savvy Researcher workshops co-sponsored with the Scholarly Commons); professional development for reference staff; online guides and tools to support independent information discovery; and logistical support and leadership for the shared staffing of references services in the Main/UGL Hub.

I. UNIT NARRATIVE

1. Major Activities and Accomplishments (additional details in other sections below)
In the 2016-17 year, RIS was again the largest single contributor to the coordination and staffing of the Main/UGL Hub and to instruction for the Savvy Researcher workshops as well as English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for graduate students. Additional contributions for the year included:
* Completion of the Reading Room transition from general reference space managed by RIS to the Literature and Languages Library;
* Integration of the Virtual Reference (VR) Desk with the Information Desk;
* Coordination, maintenance, and updates to LibGuides and LibAnswers FAQ's, and for Illini Spaces, all led by Jody Ford;
* Coordination of the Library's social media accounts by the Social Media Working Group advised by Sarah Christensen and led by RIS graduate assistants;
* Involvement in the proposed model for 1st Floor Central Service Point.

2. Challenges
* Staffing and leadership transitions;
* Coverage of Information Desk service hours with reduced budget and staffing.

3. Significant Changes (to unit operations, personnel, service profile, or service programs)
People:
RIS experienced further reductions in staffing both in Summer 2016 and Summer 2017.
* Departures: Nicole Helregel, RIS academic hourly, left in July 2016. Jessica Moyer, Visiting Research and Instruction Librarian, with responsibility for GA supervision and instructional programs left in June 2017.
* New hires: Jody Ford joined RIS as an academic hourly in early August 2016 to manage the RIS website and LibGuides, offer staffing support for the Info Desk, and projects/mentoring for the GAs. Sara Holder (librarian) joined RIS as its new head in September 2016. David Morris (librarian) joined RIS half-time as the Classics and Research and Information Services Librarian, also in September 2016.
* Status change: Carissa Phillips (librarian) served as Head of the unit from July 1 to September 15, 2016 and as of January 2017, her title changed to Data Discovery and Business Librarian, with a shared appointment between RIS and the Scholarly Commons.
* Continuing: Sarah Christensen (academic professional) and Wendy Gregory (Library Operation Associate).

- <u>Pending</u>: Piper Martin (librarian) was the successful candidate in the RIS search for a tenure-track Research and Instruction Librarian, with responsibility for GA supervision and instructional programs (start date July 2017). Jody Ford will be leaving the University in August 2017.

<u>Space</u>:
In July and August of 2016, RIS staff and graduate students contributed to the completion of the Reading Room transition from a general reference space into the Literatures and Languages Library. Much of the work during this period involved finalizing decisions about the relocation of reference texts, updating RIS wiki entries to reflect new activities and policies resulting from the transition, and communicating with patrons.

In August 2016, the Information Desk was reconfigured to integrate the VR Desk that formerly occupied a separate, partitioned space adjacent to the Information Desk. This move was completed due to a combination of factors, primarily the slowing of traffic on VR and a reduction in staffing contributions to the Main/UGL Hub such that VR Desk shifts formerly staffed by two individuals were switched to single staffing. In order to maintain a robust mentoring model that included the individual staffing the VR Desk, a workspace was created within the Information Desk area.

In April 2017, the card catalogs containing serials records were moved from Room 204 to the basement of the Main Stacks. This move, in combination with the relocation of the VR Desk, created additional space in the room for patron use. Facilities continues to work on sourcing furniture for the space.

<u>4. Contributions to Library-wide Programs</u>

Reference, Research Consultations and Other Information Services
As a partner in the Main/UGL Hub, in FY17 RIS contributed 48% of the overall staffing of the Information Desk and VR Desk in Fall 2016 and Spring 2017, comparable to the 46% contribution in FY16. During Interim, Winter, Summer I and Summer II, RIS continued to have primary responsibility for staffing the Information Desk and logging into VR (the VR Desk does not operate separately during those periods), with contributions from UGL GAs. In FY17, the Main/UGL Hub recorded 20,071 interactions at the Information Desk and Virtual Reference Desk combined, with 57.2% of those questions coming through the Information Desk and 42.8% coming through the VR Desk. In addition, RIS faculty and staff continued to have either primary or sole responsibility for determining staffing levels for each semester, securing time commitments from Hub contributors, scheduling the shifts at both desks, training workers at the Information Desk, managing service, technology and facility issues, and assessing the Main/UGL Hub operations and services.

Instructional Services
In FY17, RIS librarians, staff, and GAs led a total of 152 group presentations. The majority of these sessions were part of the Savvy Researcher series (80) and the English as a Second Language program (56). The total number of attendees was 1,378.

Collection Management
As discussed earlier in Section I.3 Significant Changes, RIS librarians, staff, and GAs contributed a substantial amount of time to the transfer of the general reference collection out of the Reading Room. The majority of the holdings are now in Stacks Reference; however, as with any large moving project, there were items that did not end up where they were meant to go. In the Fall of 2016, RIS GAs began an inventory project of the Stacks Reference collection with the goal of identifying missing and mis-shelved items. This project is ongoing.

Staff Training and Development
In FY17, RIS continued its role in supporting the Reference Training sessions throughout the Fall and Spring semesters. Carissa Phillips and Jessica Moyer contributed to Reference Training in Fall and

Spring, leading or co-leading three workshops. In addition, RIS GAs supported the Reference Training program by assisting the instructors with room preparation and attendance in the Fall and ensuring that resources and handouts were available online after the session for both Fall and Spring sessions.

Wendy Gregory continued to have sole responsibility for training all students, staff, and faculty who contribute to the Main/UGL Hub services at the Information Desk to ensure that they understand the established service protocols for responding to questions in-person, through email, through phone, or through text. Training also includes troubleshooting technical problems (printers and copiers) as well as responding to emergency situations should any arise.

Public Engagement
Within RIS, public engagement is largely directed by Sarah Christensen, with support from RIS GAs.
- RIS conducted 20 tours in FY17, led either by Sarah or by RIS GAs.
- In 2016-17, Sarah continued to manage the Edible Books Festival and to coordinate library tables at events such as Quad Day and the All-Employee Expo.
- Sarah coordinated and hosted three Human Library events in collaboration with several local groups, including the Champaign Public Library.
- In April 2017, Sarah organized and hosted a HackCulture hack-a-thon for humanities students.
- In Spring 2017, Sarah organized the Image of Research competition in coordination with staff from the Scholarly Commons.
- The @IllinoisLibrary Twitter account continues to be managed by two RIS GAs, who are responsible for content and for maintaining the best practices guide they created with advice from Sarah. From July 2016 through April 2017 the account logged 448 tweets and currently has 758 followers.
- The Social Media Working Group continues to be co-chaired by two RIS GAs who manage the Twitter account, to bring together social media managers from all over the Library to coordinate and collaborate on content for their social media accounts.
- Sarah continues to co-chair the Public Engagement Working Group, which delivered a report in Spring 2017 based on the results of an analysis of the library's public engagement and outreach activities.
- Explore CU continues to be managed and updated with assistance from RIS GAs. One new tour was added in FY17.

Web content redesign and re-branding
RIS contributed in multiple ways to the library-wide effort to convert existing web pages from OpenCMS to WordPress. Jody Ford redesigned and assisted with the conversion of the RIS unit web pages as well as helping to oversee and troubleshoot the GA group that worked on other unit and general pages. Additionally, Jody worked with Dan Tracy and Susan Avery as part of the Core Content Group, working to update and transition shared web pages, and spent a significant portion of her time working with other units to guide them in adding to the LibAnswers FAQ database and to overseeing the RIS GAs in creating and updating LibGuides.

5. Progress Made on Unit Annual Goals for FY17
- *Integrate new RIS members, realigning core unit operations as needed, while recruiting permanent members for all temporary or open positions.* New RIS members David Morris and Sara Holder have been fully integrated into the work of the unit and the open position for a Research & Instruction Librarian with GA supervision duties was filled.
- *Evaluate RIS's service portfolio in conjunction with the arrival of new RIS members and concurrent discussions about a first-floor reference service point in the Main Library.* This work is ongoing in conjunction with the continuing development and planning for the first floor service point and will continue to be a goal for FY18.
- *Analyze the Stacks Reference holdings to identify more appropriate holding locations for materials, as applicable, and pursue redesign of the area near Stacks Reference to accommodate usage of the reference collection.* The initial phase of this work (inventory of the Stacks Reference collection) was partially completed in FY17 and will continue in FY18.

6. Unit Annual Goals for FY18
- Evaluate RIS's service portfolio in conjunction with the arrival of new RIS members and concurrent discussions about a first-floor reference service point in the Main Library [Framework direction 3].
- Analyze the Stacks Reference holdings to identify more appropriate holding locations for materials, as applicable, and pursue redesign of the area near Stacks Reference to accommodate usage of the reference collection [Framework direction 2].
- Together with Merinda Hensley, undertake an analysis of the workshops offered by RIS through the Savvy Researcher series with the aim of retiring sessions that are no longer relevant, developing new sessions, and using instructional methods that better meet the needs of graduate students [Framework direction 2].

7. The Number of GAs (FTE and Head Count) Employed during FY17
RIS was approved for 3.625 GA FTEs in FY17 and employed 11 GAs as follows:

Rebecca Arriola	.325 FTE	August 2016-May 2017 + summer hourly
Alyssa Denneler	.325 FTE	August 2016-May 2017 + summer hourly
Maisie Iven	.325 FTE	August 2016-May 2017 + summer hourly
Naomi Prager	.25 FTE	August 2016-May 2017 + summer hourly
Monique Lassere	.5 FTE	August 2016-May 2017 + summer hourly
Sara Quashnie	.325 FTE	August 2016-May 2017
KayLee (Scott) Strahan	.325 FTE	August 2016-May 2017 + summer hourly
Delaney Bullinger	.25 FTE (paired with UGL)	August 2016-May 2017
Jessica Colbert	.25 FTE (paired with IL)	August 2016-May 2017 + summer hourly
Leah Dudak	.25 FTE (paired with MPAL)	August 2016-May 2017 + summer hourly
Jaena Manson	.5 FTE	August 2016-May 2017 + summer hourly

8. The Funding Source(s) for the RIS GAs
All of the RIS pre-professional graduate students are funded with State of Illinois funds.

9. Major Responsibilities Assigned to the RIS GAs
The major responsibilities assigned to GAs in RIS are support for the Main/UGL Reference Hub throughout the year; instruction in Savvy Researcher workshops and graduate-level ESL classes; development and maintenance of training manuals and the Compass training site for Reference Training sessions; projects in support of Library collections and outreach; and development and maintenance of LibGuides and Library webpages.

RIS GAs spend up to 40% of their time on projects and their contributions are essential for supporting several key service areas. A few of the major initiatives are outlined below:

Category	*Examples of Specific Projects*
ESL	Teaching ESL classes and other workshops as requested for related groups and topics. Updating workshop scripts, designing online materials for instruction including LibGuides, writing and updating lesson plans.
Savvy Research	Teaching Savvy Researcher workshops and other workshops as requested for related groups and topics. Updating workshop scripts, designing online materials for instruction including LibGuides; writing and updating lesson plans.
Tours	Leading general tours of the Library and special tours on request.
Staff training	Compass training modules; assisting with Reference Training sessions.

Collection development	Inventory of Stacks Reference collection.
Web work	Updating existing and creating new LibGuides.
Other projects	Administration of GA meetings, LibAnswers FAQ updating; maintenance/updating of Illini Spaces, social media and other outreach (e.g., Explore CU); support for library-wide activities.

II. STATISTICAL PROFILE

1. Facilities
User seating counts:
- At tables: 32
  - At long tables: 2 tables x 8 seats each = 16
  - At round tables: 4 tables x 4 seats each = 16
- At public workstations (including scanning and print release stations): 21
- Informal/other (soft seating): 6

Number of hours open to the public per week (RIS is represented as "Main Library" in Library hours lists)
- Summer II 2016: total 55.5 (47.5 on weekdays, 8 on weekends)
- Summer Intersession: total 42.5 (all on weekdays)
- Fall 2016: total 76.5 (63.5 on weekdays, 13 on weekends)
- Winter Break: total 42.5 (all on weekdays)
- Spring 2017: total 76.5 (63.5 on weekdays, 13 on weekends)
- Summer I 2017: total 55.5 (47.5 on weekdays, 8 on weekends)
- Summer II 2017: total 55.5 (47.5 on weekdays, 8 on weekends)

2. Personnel
Staff:

Name (listed by tenure with RIS)	Position	FTE
Wendy Gregory	Staff	1
Sarah Christensen	Academic Professional	1
Jessica Moyer	Visiting Faculty (left RIS June 15, 2017)	1
Carissa Phillips	Faculty (Interim Head, RIS through Sept. 15, 2016); half time with Scholarly Commons as of Jan. 2017	1
Jody Ford	Academic Hourly (left RIS Aug. 4, 2016.)	1
Sara Holder	Faculty (Head, RIS as of Sept. 16, 2016)	1
David Morris	Faculty (joined RIS half-time as of Sept. 16, 2016)	.5

Graduate Assistants:
Listed above in Section I.7.

FY17 Student Assistant wage budget and Student Assistant FTE:
RIS was allocated $5,221 in FY17 for student assistant (SA) wages, which RIS expected to apply to two student assistant positions for a total of 12-16 hours per week (.30-.40 FTE). Though the intent was to hire two SAs, only one was successfully hired. RIS began the Fall 2016 semester with one SA, who tendered her resignation only a few weeks into the semester. Another round of hiring also resulted in only one candidate who was a good fit for the position. The new SA was hired in January and continued working through the end of the Spring 2017 semester.

3. User Services
Gate Count: In room 204, gate count is measured by usage of the room in four categories: public

computers, printers/scanners, laptops/tablets, etc., and other with a headcount taken each hour. For FY17, the totals are as follows:
Public Computers: 8469
Printers/Scanners/Copiers: 655
Laptops/Tablets, etc.: 13605
Other: 5234

Reference Interactions:
In FY17, 20,071 reference interactions were recorded for the Main/UGL Hub, representing a 10.5% decline versus FY16. Fall was the busiest semester as in the past, with Fall 2016 representing 48% of the questions received in the entire fiscal year. Our largest user population remains undergraduate students, representing 31.4% of all interactions in FY17; graduate students, at 22.5%, are the second-largest group. A slightly higher number chat interactions were recorded in FY 17 than in-person interactions, representing 42.8% and 40.2% of all interactions received, respectively. Questions resolved in under 5 minutes continue to represent our largest interaction duration, at 56.5% of all questions received. The types of questions received saw declines in areas where such declines are welcome: there were 618 (13.5%) fewer directional/hours questions and 315 (25.8%) fewer questions about technical issues in FY17 than in FY16.

Presentations:
- Number of presentations to groups: 152
- Number of participants in group presentations: 1,378