

**Unit Annual Report**  
**Literatures and Languages Library**  
**Submitted by Paula Carns**  
**August 31, 2020**

**I Unit Narrative**

---

The Literatures and Languages Library's (LLL) mission is to provide library materials and services to the UIUC campus for research and study of the literature and languages North and South America, Western Europe, and Francophone and English-speaking countries as well as cinema studies, translation studies and linguistics. The unit serves as the primary library for the Department of English, the School of Literatures, Cultures and Linguistics, and Cinema Studies. The acquisition of print and online materials (books, journals, magazines, films, reference works and databases), and providing reference, instruction, and outreach to the campus and local community are the unit's main functions. Through its various activities the LLL participates in the Library's strategic mission to the UIUC campus.

**Staffing**

**Professional Staff:**

- Paula Carns, Head, Literatures and Languages Library, subject specialist for Romance and linguistics (100%); from August 15 to November 15, 2020 Paula served as the [unofficial] Head of the Ricker Library for Architecture and Art.
- Marek Sroka, Literatures and Languages Librarian for German and Translation Studies (75%)(25% in International and Area Studies for Polish studies); from February to August 15, 2020 Marek served as the Interim Head of Music and Performing Arts Library.
- Matthew Roberts, English and Drama Librarian (100%); Matt took on Comparative and World Literature on May 1, 2020.
- David Morris, Classics Librarian and Research and Information Services Librarian (50%) (50% for Research and Information Services).
- Robert Cagle, Cinema Studies and Media Services Specialist, also covers Comparative and World Literature (100%), until April 30, 2020.

**Civil Service Staff:**

- Stuart Albert, Senior Library Specialist (100%)
- Karen Huck, Library Specialist (100%)
- Kim Lerch, Senior Library Specialist (25%)

**Students**

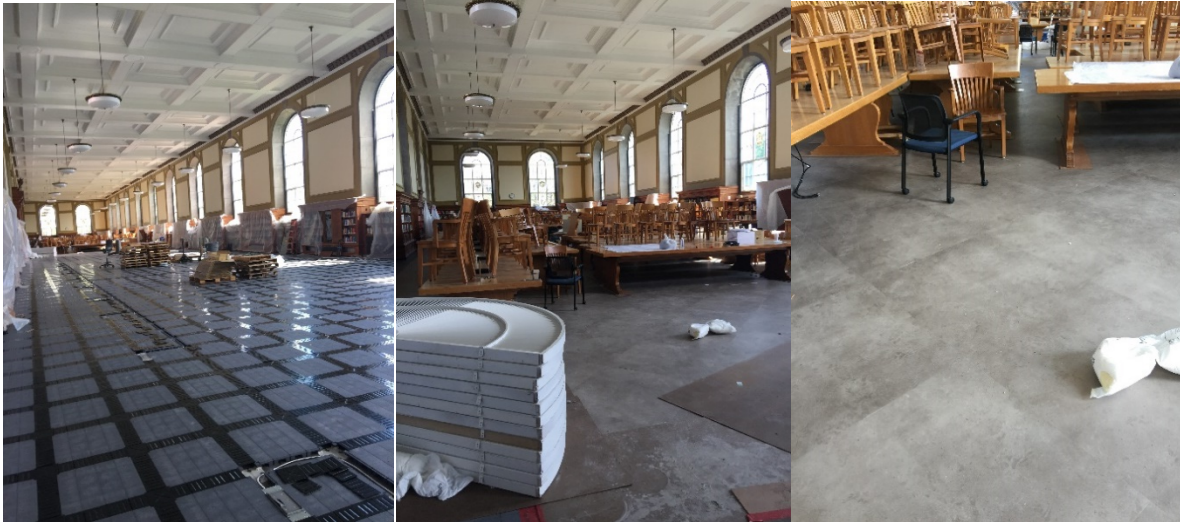
- Graduate Assistants on State Funds: Zoe Stein (0.25FTE)
- 15 Student Assistants who performed the following duties: circulation, greeting patrons

and fielding reference questions, weeding, shifting, shelving, running call slips, collecting room counts, charging and discharging books, and aiding with closing procedures.

### *Challenges*

The Literatures and Languages faced many challenges this past year. The most profound was the Covid-19 pandemic that forced the University Library to move to remote work starting in Mid-March. This was an extraordinarily difficult and uncertain time. We had never faced a collective threat to our health and lives and had no solid road map for moving forward. Nor had we ever had to perform all library functions remotely. Paula Carns and staff scrambled to find appropriate remote work for staff as well as figure out how critical functions could continue. Luckily everyone had a computer at home and Stuart was able to borrow a laptop from IT. Stuart focused on collection management and, with the help of a small group of Student Assistants, did virtual shelf-reading and kept the collection in order. Stuart also did records management. Karen focused attention on social media and, along with Zoe Stein, did a fantastic job of keeping up our virtual presence via Twitter, Instagram and Word Press blog. In addition, Karen improved her French via Rosetta Stone, participated in several webinars hosted locally and nationally on library topics, and was involved the Organization Development & Training Committee and Library Staff Steering Committee. Kim helped David on various collection projects (see below). Karen and Kim, ever keen to learn new thing and help our users in any way possible, agreed to learn to create and edit Libguides and have been a great help with updating our guides. All of the staff participated in the many Alma/Primo training sessions to learn about our new catalog and its functionality. Faculty transitioned more easily to working at home and continued to provide reference and instruction virtually through Zoom and place book orders. We kept in touch by meeting weekly via Zoom.

Another challenge was the reflooring of 200. The work was slated to begin in August but didn't start until October. From October until mid-March the north side of 200 was under construction and unavailable to patrons. To fit as many of the tables in the south end, we created two long rows, which means that only a few tables, those over plugs in the floor, has poor. At times the heat was turned off. Nonetheless, we still had a steady stream of patrons using the space.



These pictures were taken in mid-May from the south end when 200 was completely closed and floor had been laid in the north end.

A third challenge was faculty taking on additional duties in other units. Paula Carns served as the unofficial interim head of the Ricker Library for Architecture and Art from August 16-November 16 and spent half time in the unit and a great deal of time preparing the unit for the arrival of the new head. Mark Sroka served as the interim head of the Music and Performing Arts Library from February 16-August 16, also a very busy assignment, especially as it was primarily during the Covid crisis.

### *Outreach and Engagement Events*

Despite room 200 being closed to patrons for most of the year and unit completely closed from Mid-March on in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the unit continued to actively engage in outreach activities.

- The Literatures and Languages Library hosted two events for English Graduate students: one orientation to new students held at the beginning of the Fall semester, and one reception for prospective students in the middle of the Spring Semester, each event attended by some 20-30 students. The Literatures and Languages Library also aided a class of 15 for a film screening in late winter 2020 by providing a space in the Classics Library during closed hours.
- Meet your Librarian: Outreach to students was offered during the first three weeks of the Fall semester by librarians and staff. The primary event took place over two days at the Foreign Languages Building, which aimed to introduce students to the unit's librarians, facilities and collections, while the second event focused on students in the English Building. Anecdotal evidence backed by usage statistics for the Reading Room from both the current fiscal year and the past one prove the benefits of this kind of outreach:

The Reading Room hosted far more students for study purposes much earlier in the year than in previous years.

- Matt Roberts Collaborated with Library Advancement to allocate funds to support graduate students complete summer research. Initiated and will continue to sustain MFA/PHD summer graduate stipends for graduate students utilizing library resources to complete MFA project and doctoral dissertation respectively.
- UGL 50<sup>th</sup> Celebration—Paula and David had a table with new fiction and new books in Classics
- David Morris hosted four group tours of the Classics Library Collection: two visiting classes (CLCV 114 and CLCV 131) in the fall semester of 2019, and two tours for visiting prospective graduate students in February of 2020.
- David Morris hosted the University of Illinois Classics Club in 225 Main Library on November 14, 2019 (seven undergraduates in attendance)
- In December of 2019, David Morris launched the Illinois Classics Forum, a set of communication channels (list serve and social media) linking nearly 400 faculty and graduate students working in Classics and related fields at institutions of higher learning across the state of Illinois. The purpose behind the forum is to facilitate scholarly discourse, especially among scholars and graduate students at smaller institutions across the state, to promote the Classics Library Collection among classicists statewide, and to communicate more effectively with a wide audience in I-Share.

Several events were planned but were cancelled due to the flooring or Covid pandemic.

- Book Plating ceremony—cancelled due to flooring.
- Bronze Tablet ceremony—cancelled due to Covid pandemic
- Mom’s Weekend Printing Event—cancelled due to Covid pandemic
- Poetry event with Res Halls Library—cancelled due to Covid pandemic
- Classics Club meeting planned for April—cancelled due to Covid pandemic
- Greek and Latin poetry reading for National Poetry Month—cancelled due to pandemic
- Eta Sigma Phi Classics Honors Society induction ceremony—cancelled due to pandemic

### *Exhibits*

Before the closure of our library in late March of 2020, the Literatures and Languages Library created 4 exhibits in our two display cases, all thematic and relevant to current literary events. They were: Feast your Eyes: Food Fiction (below), Richard Powers in Translation (below), Toni Morrison, and Gothic Literature.



### *Social Media*

The Literatures and Languages Library embarked on a new Instagram account @litlanglibrary in late October of 2019 with the idea of publicizing new popular yet literary book titles the library was receiving. The account was advertised with flyers placed in the Residence Halls, the Literatures and Languages Library, the Foreign Languages Building, and the English Building as well as on the electronic boards in the Main Library. Using pointed hashtags we garnered some 100 followers before the late March shutdown and have continued to increase our group of followers by 25% since then. Further, we have reached a wide audience of followers in the form of “likes” from foreign language readers to avid readers and other libraries to the Instagram users at the Pulitzer Prize! Most books posted have been checked out at least once, often more than once. Although the focus changed from print materials to mainly digitally available items during the past few months (since the closure of the Library due to Covid-19), the return to the physical library has restored the focus to new print materials arriving at the Literature and Languages Library.



<https://www.instagram.com/p/B8XWrcGJ6Mf/?igshid=1da71kbxunod0>



### *Collection Development and Management*

This past year the LLL focused attention on developing its collection of world fiction, especially in English translation, in addition to acquiring library materials in literary criticism, translation studies, film studies and linguistics to support campus research and teaching. Here are some highlights.

- Matt Roberts continued to develop collection of new fiction and poetry with a particular emphasis on local and Black, Indigenous and People of Color authors to meet growing need on campus for these materials but also in response to larger societal trends.
- Matt Roberts used gift funds to expand Literatures and Languages Libraries streaming media resources and acquired Shakespeare's Globe on Screen 1 and 2. This heavily used resource supports teaching and learning in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and College of Fine and Applied Arts.
- Paula Carns, with the help of Zoe Stein, ordered 75 Italian-language and translated works, specifically award-winning and seminal works of Italian literature.
- Paula Carns and Marek Sroka, with the help of Zoe Stein, continued to purchase all books in the Harry Potter series in translation.
- The Literatures and Languages Library received a generous donation of the local author Richard Powers' works in translation with the help of Dr. Patricia Philips Batoma, from the Center for Translation Studies.
- Paula Carns and Matt Roberts began discussions with David Ward, Head of the Undergraduate Library, about the possibility of LLL taking on the purchase and housing of all literature, including genre literature. At the time this report was written LLL agreed to take on RB Digital, the Library's audio book supplier.
- David Morris used endowment funds, gifts from Library Friends, and additional University Library funds to expand digital access to several major electronic resources. These include reference works (e.g. *The Oxford Dictionary of Late Antiquity*, *The Brill Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*) and databases of essential texts (*Oxford Scholarly Editions Online in Classics*, *Sources Chrétiennes Online* by Brepols). These purchases were arranged prior to the onset of the pandemic, but they have turned out to constitute a boon to research and teaching under the present circumstances.
- David Morris also worked with faculty to identify and acquire important journals and series needed for their research. These included *Classical Receptions* and *Routledge Studies in Ancient History*.

### *Collection Management*

The reflooring of 200 required that we remove all books on the cantilever shelving in the south end to the Main Stacks. We continued to manage these books. David Morris continued his ongoing work of easing space issues in the Classics Library Collection by identifying different journal runs to "flip" to digital subscriptions and relocating back issues to Main Stacks or Oak Street.

### *Faculty Engagement*

Paula Carns and Matt Roberts participated in the Ithaka S+R/ Modern Language Association's Language and Literature Project to assess new and changing trends in research for the purpose of better understanding faculty needs and learning how best we can serve them. Research teams from 11 major research universities around the US participated. As part of this project, Paula and Matt interviewed 15 local faculty. The project continued to September 2019.

### *GA Activities*

As the Graduate Assistant for 2019-2020, I worked on the following projects:

- Ordering ~75 Italian-language and translated works (specifically award-winning and seminal works of Italian literature) for the collection
- Worked on redesigning LibGuides for English with Matt, specifically testing out the suggested format using Jewish Literature and Shakespeare as the two "test" guides
- Maintained social media, ensuring it stayed active as much as possible during Covid-19, including blog posts—many of which provided readers' advisory, emphasizing online resources like eaudiobooks and ebooks, as well as presenting information in a fun and engaging way.
- Wrote blog posts with book reviews, book news, literary award news, and more.
- Maintained Twitter presence, tweeting and retweeting relevant information regarding literatures and languages, as well as things that occur in the University of Illinois Library
- Updated LibGuides, including working on an Ancient Near East guide for Classics, editing a Folk and Fairytales Guide, and others as needed
- Created displays with Karen to highlight certain aspects of our collection, including displays about "Food in Fiction," "Richard Powers," and "Gothic Literature"

### Goals for FY21

- Continue to develop our virtual presence during the pandemic, such as with Zoom library instruction and recordings
- Continue to develop the collections to reflect current and emerging trends..
- Continue to build up and solicit endowments and gifts for the Classics Library Collection.

## **II Statistical Profile**

---

### **1. Facilities**

- User seating counts (if applicable)
  - at tables-225: 6 round tables with 25 chairs; 200: 40 long tables with 320 chairs; 4 comfy chairs
  - at carrels: 2
  - at public workstations: 5
  - at index tables: n/a
  - in group study rooms: n.a
  - informal/other: n/a

- Number of hours open to the public per week (if applicable)  
Summer II 2016: 55.5  
Fall 2019: 76.5  
Spring 2020—until March 13: 76.5

**2. Personnel (see above)**

**3. User Services**

- Gate Count (as reported during FY17 Sweeps Week): fall, 2664; spring, 1582;  
extrapolated total: 55,276
- Circulation: Initial, 6880 and renewal, 11438
- Reference interactions (from Desk Tracker as reported during FY Sweeps Week):  
fall 15; spring 16; yearly total: 496  
Reference stats for librarians:  
  
David (Classics): 525  
Paula 93  
Matt 28M  
Marek 6
- Presentations (from the Instructional Statistics database)  
Matt: 6 presentations to 136 people  
David: 7 presentations to 216 people  
Paula: 3 presentations to 19 people  
Marek: 2 presentation to 25 people