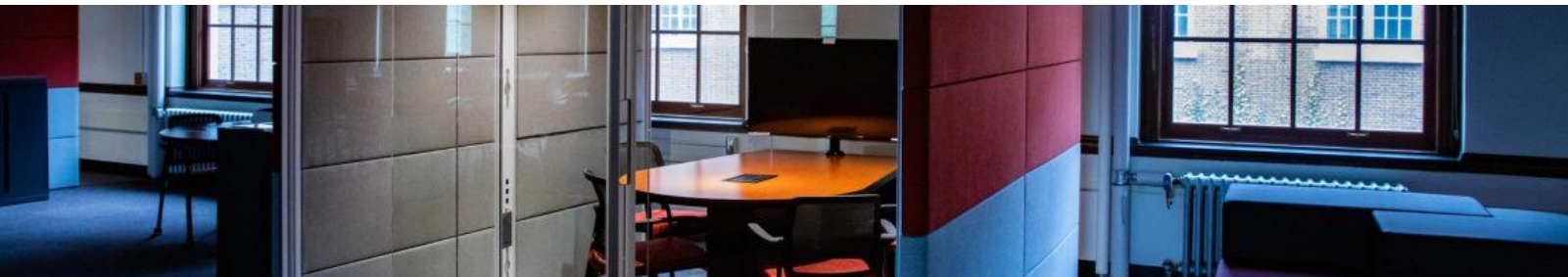


Scholarly Commons Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)



1.1 Executive Summary

The Scholarly Commons connects the Illinois community to a variety of experts and curates a suite of services, spaces, and technology in support of digital media and emerging technology. Our technology-enhanced public spaces in the Main Library include collaboration rooms, an event space, scanning stations, and a computer lab in Room 220, three self-use media studios in 220 and 306, and a high-end video studio in 308. Loanable technology services are housed in Main Library 306. Additionally, we operate a Spatial Computing and Immersive Media Studio (SCIM Studio) in Grainger Library, which focuses on research and education in emerging technologies within human-centered computing.

FY23 marked the completion and wide availability of most major Scholarly Commons spaces and services. Ongoing staffing transitions and space renovations due to the Undergraduate Library closure continued to be a dominant focus of planning and activities. Major activities and accomplishments of the unit are noted below.

1.2 Space and Service Updates

1. **Three Self-Use Media Studios** went online first as a priority for patron reservation. These spaces are an improvement over the media booths originally constructed in the Undergrad Library. The overall focus of the spaces has increased to include video and audio recording as well as remote meeting and instruction streaming.
 - o **762 individual bookings** across 3 studios from Nov 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023
 - o 193 unique users, occupied ~66% of available hours
2. The **Main Library 220 Event Space “The Corner”** became available in the Fall (October) of 2022. A wide variety of events (18 total events) were scheduled and supporting during the FY including: a Storytelling Series, Generative AI talks (4 summer talks), Image of Research (Grad College), Blaxtravaganza, Savvy Researcher and Humanities Research Institute.
3. After the Self-Use Studios were brought online, attention was turned to the **Video Production Studio** in Spring 2023. A truss system was installed, multi-camera video switch infrastructure was developed, software templates for advanced audio mixing and routing capabilities were created and an issue with lighting control system was resolved. In the latter half of the Spring semester, several pilot use cases across different patron categories were carried out. The Video Production Studio will be available for reservation starting September 5, 2023.
4. The **Spatial Computing and Immersive Media Lab (SCIM)** is the final piece of infrastructure to see development. This space is designed as a research and learning laboratory to give access across of the University to a broad spectrum of emerging technologies with specialized, individual project support. Despite initial procurement challenges of specialized technology, as of Summer 2023, purchasing was completed. Installation of equipment was carried out during Summer 2023. During the Immersive

Computing summit in May 2023, information on the facility was shared with interested parties from across campus. The SCIM Lab will be available for “open hours” during the first weeks of Fall 2023.

- SCIM has already seen the following pilot use cases: GSD 390 Human Animation for Virtual Reality, and Graduate student work on Digital Fabric Animation for an educational application being developed by faculty from dance, theatre and computer science.
 - Preliminary contact and marketing have already been established with faculty and students from a diverse range of departments across campus: Education, Physics, Informatics, Astronomy, Computer Science, Dance, Music, Fashion, and several student led initiatives such as the VR club, the Illini eSports club and Physics POINTVR.
5. **Drop-in consultations** continue to be a large part of services offered in Main Library 220. Partners and areas of expertise offered include:
- Expertise from Scholarly Commons and Library Staff and Faculty: GIS, Video and Audio creation and editing, Copyright, and Research Data.
 - Data Analysis and Statistical Research provided by the Center for Innovation in Teaching & Learning. This consultation service is provided through a longstanding partnership between the Library, Technology Services and CITL. The team of 7 Graduate Assistants provided 613 consultations during FY23.
6. The **Loanable Technology Program** expanded its support to cover in-library use items available through the Main Library Orange Room. This additional support model and the consistent inflationary rate increases over the last 5 years pushed for a larger requested amount of Loanable Technology funding, raising it from \$10K to \$14K. In addition, with the relocation of the Loanable Technology program to a new location ~450 – 500 tags needed to be redesigned, printed and attached to items in the collection.
7. Two, USB-C Lenovo docking stations were added to the Main Library 220 space as a pilot to gauge preference between docking stations and a full pc computer lab setup. Usage data will be collected and assessed over the coming year.
8. The Scholarly Commons 220 Group and Collaboration Rooms continued to be extremely popular with:
- **3284 individual bookings** across 3 rooms from Aug 22, 2022 to June 30, 2023
 - 1244 individual users, occupied ~64% of available hours



1.3 Staff Accomplishments

1. 23 new items (79 in total collection) were added the Scholarly Commons physical collection. Topics included: Media Creation, Digital Publishing, Data Management, and Visualization.
2. The unit continued to contribute three desk hours per week to the Main Library’s Information Desk.
3. Assessed and researched ways to combine the various digital tools and communication methods from the two units into a single strategy. The primary focus is now on Microsoft Teams, and Google Drive. The unit is also looking at how best to replace the soon to retire wiki.

4. Marketing projects were completed to promote the SC starting with a major branding redesign to create consistent design elements for all spaces and services. Other projects included: Unit and Library marketing photoshoots, Signage templates for study rooms in Orange Room, UX design and in-space signage for our very popular Self-Use Media Studios, Physical and digital signage for SC spaces and services, and Promotional materials for collaboration with Tech Services to host a Help Desk in 220.
5. A new digital design kit, focused and constructed around an iPad Air and digital pen with drawing and design applications for promotion of creativity and de-stressing, was proposed to the Library Innovation Seed Grant. Funding was awarded and staff began working with Tech Service Endpoint Management to build out support of the Digital Drawing Kit. The digital design kits began a circulation pilot towards the end of the Spring Semester. The four digital design kits which did not go into wide circulation until April, still managed to see 22 circulations before the end of the FY.
6. Worked with Library marketing to create a new library spaces and service map based on CAD drawings. This now serves as the official digital and physical Library map for guidance and signage.
7. SC staff and GAs continued to provide **Savvy Researcher** presentations covering the topics of GIS, Data Analytics, OCR and Using Multimedia in Your Research



1.4 Challenges

The unit has experienced major staffing changes and turnover in recent years, including leadership transitions and interim periods; a reorganization of unit prioritization and areas of expertise, introduction and renovation of media and emerging technology spaces following the Undergraduate Library closure; and loss of the unit’s Geographic Information System (GIS) Specialist, Data and Discovery Business Librarian, Digital Scholarship Liaison and Instruction Librarian and public services student supervisor. These departures and transitions have left the unit understaffed and struggling to find effective avenues to cover patron questions. Looking at how to distribute these requests or rebuild will be a major focus for the unit in the upcoming year.

With each staffing change and transition, especially that of the unit head, comes a change in perspective and prioritization with the overall mission and vision of the unit. This presents a challenge that will hopefully be addressed in the upcoming year as the SC strives to focus on identifying a new strategic direction as well as overall consistency and stability.

In addition to the fulltime staffing reductions the Unit has also seen reductions to the student and grad hourly budget and allotment of Graduate Assistantships. These reductions occurred while the unit has been directed to expand its hours and availability. The staff continue to find suitable ways to maintain effective services under these restrictions. The unit also faces a dwindling gift fund and lack of recurring budget for technology and spaces maintenance. We have been able to secure one-time funding for loanable technology, the lack of a known recurring budget leaves the unit unable to make long-term strategic plans about equipment maintenance and replacement in support of our media and technology spaces and services. Prior to the merger, a recurring budget request was in development. Over the coming year, we look forward to revisiting this endeavor.

1.5 Library Contributions

1. Image of Research graduate and undergraduate competitions continued in partnership with the Graduate College and Office of Undergraduate Research. Finalists from the grad competition were displayed in Room 220, and undergrad entries were showcased at the Undergraduate Research Symposium in the Illini Union Ballroom. We received 96 submissions from grad students and 18 from undergrad students. The team also fielded multiple requests from the university community to display and share student submissions to the competition; selected entries were reprinted and/or are on display at the I Hotel, the Office of Technology Management, and the *Illinois Alumni* magazine. In addition, the Scholarly Commons 220 collaboration and event spaces served as the location for the 10th anniversary Image of Research Celebration.
2. The Media Commons was approached by Technology Services in FY22 to extend the use laptops initially purchased to assist with Covid needs. The team worked with Library IT to relocate 70 laptops to various service points across the University Library. They managed the logistics of moving 20 laptops to Grainger, allocating 25 for instructional use in Main Library 106, and split the remainder between the SC and TLAS to be circulated out of both Room 306 and Room 100. Due to high popularity the laptops (15 in Fall and 25 in Spring) were checked out **428 times**.
 - a. Patrons specifically stated in 240 of the 428 (56%) total laptop bookings that the devices were being used for class work, research, graduate studies or university departmental purposes.
3. Towards the end of Summer 23, SC was approached by the Computer Science department to assist their students with access to laptops as a direct result of a change to their spaces and the removal of most CS Computing Labs. An informal partnership was formed to assess the specific needs of CS students and patrons with a promise of potential resources provided if a large need was identified.
4. SC staff provided support and demonstrations for a variety of courses and topics including: History Harvest in prep for the 50th anniversary of Farm Aid, Class demo for History, tours for Siebel Center for Design and Public Affairs, Presentations on Loanable Tech for Campus Videographers group and Writing Across Media
5. Continued to provide representation at the **International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)** Orientation. In addition to direct staff support, provided a video to promote our services.
6. Patrons listed using our Loanable Technology equipment for at least **89 of the 188 course subjects** available over the 22-23 school year.
7. As part of the Undergrad Library Closure and move, ~\$94k of equipment purchasing was coordinated across ~700 individual items.

1.6 Goals

The key goals enumerated by the unit in the previous FY annual report focused on four major points including:

- 1 Coordination with colleagues from across the Library to articulate, publish, and support policies and procedures for use of collaborative event and consultation spaces in Main Library, Room 220.
- 2 To launch relocated media services across Main Library and in Grainger Engineering Library.
- 3 To develop and implement a new unit identity and visual brand, and to host an open house to showcase unit spaces and services.

While progress was made on all of these items, the continuous transition of SC staff brought about regular change in scope and direction of unit strategy which made marketing, communicating and documenting service and space procedures difficult.

The unit strived to find a balance between creating consistent and enduring communication while also staying nimble in the face of an uncertain future. The primary goal for this upcoming year is to focus on stability, assessment and future strategic direction which will allow for the effective completion of these previously

established goals. This focus will allow us to accomplish previously defined goals of identifying and properly articulating a new mission, which should improve overall strategic direction as a result. The need to reassess the services we provided in the past with our current staffing levels and available expertise will require cooperation, communication, and renewing partnerships with other library units. A clear picture of our unit-specific goals and our place within the Library will be invaluable to our becoming a cohesive, functional and effective asset to the organization. New spaces and deep technical expertise in the unit position us well as an interdisciplinary nexus that fosters opportunities for cross-departmental scholarly research. The University strategic plan articulates four main goals which closely align with the Scholarly Commons's mission and vision, especially Goal 1: Foster Scholarship, Discovery, and Innovation.

Future priorities: A recurring budget request proposal, updating user documentation and educational guides, growing class and RSO partnerships, revising internal communication workflows, adding support for advanced use cases to our spaces.

1.7 Graduate Assistants

The Scholarly Commons employed **8 Graduate Assistants in FY23**. Primary duties include: Staff the Scholarly Commons during open hours and provide consultation services for the Scholarly Commons at a baseline level (may provide deeper consultation services depending on background and expertise); refer more complex questions to appropriate specialists inside and outside the library; In collaboration with the Scholarly Commons staff and partners, develop LibGuides, handouts, training materials, and other instructional material for the Scholarly Commons; and teach workshops on selected tools and digital scholarship topics as appropriate;

Below is a highlighted list of projects the Scholarly Commons Graduate Assistants worked on over the last fiscal year:

1. SC GAs worked on Collection development by surveying the current collection and finding new titles.
2. Over 30 Blog posts were scheduled, written and published in FY23 by SC GAs. Topics ranged from Data Analysis, SQL, creating in Canva, ArcGIS, AI and copyright, Storymapping, Digital Storytelling, Data Visualization, I Love Data Week, Information on Scholarly Commons services and spaces, Illinois Privacy Conference, E-Learning and other information and stories from our staff.
3. 19 new **Libguides** were created as well as cleaning of old and outdated articles. New Libguide titles include: Data Analysis, general information on Scholarly Commons services and spaces.
4. Love Data Week is an annual event set around Valentine's Day (February 13-17th) when Universities, nonprofit organizations, and libraries, across the globe get together to share their appreciation for data. The SC collaborated with Research Data Services to celebrate Love Data Week by hosting data-related workshops and other events. For more information see our website here: <https://www.library.illinois.edu/sc/events/love-data-week-2023/>
5. In FY2023, three SC GAs participated in projects to improve the accessibility of the unit's data collection. These projects included:
 - a. Concluding an inventory and testing of data drives that started in FY 2022. Most of the drives are over a decade old, and needed verification that they still operate and that files can be retrieved;
 - b. Researching four datasets obtained in the earliest years of the Library's Data Purchase Program and proposing metadata so that Library catalog records can be created;
6. Social Media resources were spent on unifying two units' social media accounts into a singular set of tools.
7. GAs worked with SC staff to design and publish the annual newsletter with information about new services and spaces.
 - a. Fall 2022 Newsletter: <https://emails.illinois.edu/newsletter/48/454801948.html>

Promo video for the Scholarly Commons was created with assistance of Scholarly Commons staff.

II. Statistical Profile

1. Facilities

- User Seating Counts (Main Library Room 220)
 - At Event Space Tables: 40
 - At Gallery Tables: 14
 - Soft Seating: 19
 - Docking Stations: 2
 - Computer Lab Stations: 14
 - 4 Collaboration Rooms: 4 each (16 total)
 - 2 Consultation Rooms: 2 each (4 total)

Number of hours spaces open to the public per week.

Room 220	Mon-Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Total Hours/Week
Note: Room 220 reopened on August 9, 2021					
Summer II 2022	10 am - 5 pm	10 am - 5 pm	Closed	Closed	35 hours/week
Fall 2022	8:30 am - 10 pm	8:30 am - 10 pm	1 pm - 5 pm	1 pm - 10 pm	80.5 hours/week
Spring 2023	8:30 am - 10 pm	8:30 am - 10 pm	1 pm - 5 pm	1pm - 10pm	80.5 hours/week
Summer I 2023	10 am - 6 pm	10 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed	40 hours/week

Room 306	Mon-Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Total Hours/Week
Note: Loanable Technology and Self-Use Media Studios - services reopened Fall 2022					
Fall 2022	10:30 am - 7:30 pm	10:30 am - 5:30 pm	Closed	2 pm - 6:30 pm	47.5 hours/week
Spring 2023	10:30 am - 7:30 pm	10:30 am - 5:30 pm	Closed	1 pm - 7:30 pm	49.5 hours/week
Summer I 2023	10:30 am - 4:30 pm	10:30 am - 4:30 pm	Closed	Closed	30 hours/week



Name	Title	Classification	FTE	Status
Tiffany Amolsch	Senior Library Specialist	Civil Service	1.0 FTE	April 2023 – Present
JP Goguen	Unit Spaces and Technology Support Specialist	Civil Service Professional	1.0 FTE	July 2022 – Present
Eric Kurt	Media Commons Coordinator	Academic Professional	1.0 FTE	July 2022 – Present
Jake Metz	Media Commons Technology Support Specialist	Academic Professional	1.0 FTE	July 2022 – Present
Carissa Phillips	Data Discovery and Business Librarian	Associate Professor	.5 FTE	July 2022 - Sept 2022
Stefanie Postula	Senior Library Specialist	Civil Service Staff	1.0 FTE	July 2022 – Present
Michelle Reed	Head	Assistant Professor	1.0 FTE	July 2022 - May 2023
Michelle Self-Ballard	Library Operations Associate	Civil Service Staff	1.0 FTE	July - Dec 2022
Wenjie Wang	Geographic Information Specialist	Academic Professional	1.0 FTE	July 2022 - March, 2023
Libby Cave	Graduate Assistant		.25 FTE	May 2022 – November 2022
Zhaneille Green	Graduate Assistant		.25 FTE	August 2021 – June 2023
Ryan Yoakum	Graduate Assistant		.50 FTE	August 2021 – May 2023
Nora Davies	Graduate Assistant		.25 FTE	August 2022 – August 2023
Apollo Uhlenbruck	Graduate Assistant		.50 FTE	August 2022 – Present
Precious Olalere	Graduate Assistant		.25 FTE	August 2022 – Present
Jason Smith	Graduate Assistant		.25 FTE	August 2022 – Present
Hanna Meyer	Graduate Assistant		.25 FTE	August 2022-Present

2. Personnel During the 2022-23 academic year, the Scholarly Commons employed five graduate assistants (1.75 FTE) from the School of Information Sciences. The graduate assistants provided significant support for the unit’s service desk, offered learning opportunities to patrons, and completed various digital projects, as described in Section 1 of this report. The graduate assistant budget is funded with State of Illinois funds; additionally, the Scholarly Commons was allotted (\$16,000) for graduate hourlies in Summer 2023.

3. Circulation and Gate Count
(see chart on right)

Scholarly Commons Circulation Stats		
Type of Loanble Tech	FY23	FY22
SC Loanable Technology - 10 Day	3588	446
TLAS LT (2 hour) - Supported by Scholarly Commons	2223	248

Scholarly Commons 220 User Count (Sweeps Week)		
Semester	AY 2023 Totals	AY 2022 Totals
Fall 2022	1795	220
Spring 2023	1641	1050

SC Annual User Count Extrapolation	
Year	Count
2023	54976
2022	20,320

III Appendices

Website redesigned by Scholarly Commons Staff

The Scholarly Commons is excited to announce we have merged with the Media Commons. Our units have united to provide equitable access to innovative spaces, digital tools, and expert assistance in digital media creation. Find us on the second and third floors of the Main Library. Can't find what you're looking for on our new website? Contact us at sc@library.illinois.edu and we'd be happy to help.

I Want To...

- Checkout Loanable Technology
- Reserve a Self-Use Booth
- Reserve a Group Room
- Consult an Expert

Scholarly Commons Hours

Tech Desk hours: Main Library 306
 Mon – Thurs: 10:30 AM – 07:30 PM
 Friday: 10:30 AM – 5:30 PM
 Saturday: Closed
 Sunday: 2:30 PM – 7:30 PM

220 Help Desk hours: Main Library 220
 Open during Main Library building hours

Staffed:
 Mon – Thurs: 12:00 PM – 7:30 PM
 Friday: 12:00 PM – 5:30 PM
 Sunday: 2:30 PM – 7:30 PM

For detailed info about our hours, please see this page.

SC SERVICES

- Library 306
 - Loanable Technology
 - Self-Use Media Booth A and B
 - Pro Gear Rental
 - Video Production Studio
- Library 220
 - Self-Use Media Booth C
 - Consultation Rooms
 - Group Rooms
 - Computer Lab
 - Scanning
 - Event Space

306 Main Library | 1408 West Gregory Drive | Urbana IL 61801 | 217-300-1011 | sc@library.illinois.edu

Libguides created in FY23

ID	Name	Type	Owner	Created	Updated	URL
1300967	How to Find Data	General Purpose	Commons, Scholarly	2/10/23	2/10/23	https://guides.library.illinois.edu/finddata
1291902	Basic Data Analysis in Python	Subject Guide	Commons, Scholarly	1/6/23	2/13/23	https://guides.library.illinois.edu/c.php?g=1291902
1286509	Copy of Guide to Zoom for RSOs	General Purpose	Commons, Scholarly	12/1/22	12/1/22	https://guides.library.illinois.edu/c.php?g=1286509
1285747	Getting Started with Data Analysis	General Purpose	Commons, Scholarly	11/29/22	12/5/22	https://guides.library.illinois.edu/c.php?g=1285747
1283303	Geographic Information Systems (GIS) (copy, delete)	General Purpose	Commons, Scholarly	11/13/22	7/26/23	https://guides.library.illinois.edu/c.php?g=1283303
1281804	Finding Text Data Sets	General Purpose	Commons, Scholarly	11/6/22	4/7/23	https://guides.library.illinois.edu/textdata
1280348	Archer and the Global News Index	General Purpose	Commons, Scholarly	10/31/22	1/11/23	https://guides.library.illinois.edu/archer
1280333	Copy of Annual Election Results for APA President, 2006-2009	General Purpose	Commons, Scholarly	10/31/22	12/16/22	https://guides.library.illinois.edu/c.php?g=1280333
1280351	Cross National Time-Series: 2018 Edition	General Purpose	Commons, Scholarly	10/31/22	1/12/23	https://guides.library.illinois.edu/c.php?g=1280351
1280354	Geocoding	General Purpose	Commons, Scholarly	10/31/22	5/30/23	https://guides.library.illinois.edu/c.php?g=1280354
1278595	Text Analysis with Voyant	Subject Guide	Commons, Scholarly	10/24/22	10/24/22	https://guides.library.illinois.edu/c.php?g=1278595
1278400	Copy of American Hospital Association Annual Survey Database (2000, 2005, 2010) (Available through January 2022)	General Purpose	Commons, Scholarly	10/21/22	10/21/22	https://guides.library.illinois.edu/c.php?g=1278400
1276996	Finding Numeric Data	General Purpose	Commons, Scholarly	10/17/22	1/12/23	https://guides.library.illinois.edu/c.php?g=1276996
1270790	Copy of Government Information on COVID-19	General Purpose	Commons, Scholarly	9/22/22	9/22/22	https://guides.library.illinois.edu/c.php?g=1270790

Expanded Loanable Technology Stats

FY23 (Aug'22-June'23)

1435 unique users overall
 397 items out of approx 430 (92% of collection used at least once over the year)
 2,929 unique bookings
 items booked 3,553 times

Patrons listed using our equipment for at least 89 of the 188 course subjects available over the 22-23 school year.

Patrons specified in 114 out of 428 (26%) laptop bookings that they loaned a laptop bec

	open # of days	number of items that month	ave/day
Aug	8	103	12.9
Sept	25	296	11.8
Oct	26	429	16.5
Nov	22	433	19.7
Dec	17	205	12.1
Jan	22	212	9.6
Feb	24	429	17.9
Mar	26	390	15.0
April	25	527	21.1
May	23	329	14.3
June	21	199	9.5

Faculty/Staff	323	9.1%
Grad	1104	31.1%
Undergrad	2069	58.2%
Other	21	0.6%
NA	36	1.0%

Total 239 Days