

Conant Library Annual Report

2017-2018

Submitted
by Jim Douglas, Director



This Annual Report presents the major Library accomplishments and activities for the past academic year.

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MISSION STATEMENT

- To support academic excellence by selecting, acquiring, organizing, preserving, and providing access to a variety of resources to support the College's current and anticipated curriculum and more broadly to enhance learning, teaching, and research.
- To develop information literacy in partnership with faculty, giving users the expertise and critical thinking skills necessary for success at Nichols and beyond.
- To provide a welcoming physical and intellectual environment in which individuals and groups can study and work.

By The Numbers

	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14
Items in the collection (hard copy books, videos, and audiocassettes)	27,627	28,677	29,670	30,392	36,832
Circulation transactions (includes books, media and e-books but not Reserves)	1,148	1,008	1,135	1,246	1, 159
Ebooks in the collection	150,177	144,048	135,329	125,035	113,410
Times ebooks accessed	501	258	293	130	416
Times Hard Copy Reserve items circulated, not including Textbooks	308	359	575	667	454
Times Textbooks on Reserve circulated	3,445	4,983	4,754	5,959	4,898
Classes receiving instruction	35	38	51	47	48
Articles, books, videos borrowed from other libraries	240	360	281	223	308
Articles, books, videos loaned to other libraries	90	111	98	95	114
Times laptops / tablets / projector were loaned	617	483	221/239	270/158/7	387/77/35

EBooks and Student Research

As we consider the use of open education resources and the library expands its collection of ebooks I thought I would share this article by Matt Enis on a recent survey, published in *Library Journal*, March 2018:

College Students Prefer Print for Long-form Reading, Ebooks for Research

Most college students prefer to read print books for pleasure, but when they are conducting research, almost two-thirds now prefer ebooks or express no format preference, according to the *2018 Academic Student Ebook Experience Survey*, conducted by LJ's research department and sponsored by EBSCO. Featuring the opinions of 306 students currently enrolled in four-year colleges and universities (65%), graduate programs (20%), and two-year or community colleges (15%), the survey examines current and emerging trends regarding preferred devices and research sources, changes in ebook usage, important features, preferences by format characteristic such as ease of use, thoughts on download and print restrictions, and more.

When reading for pleasure, almost three-quarters of respondents (74%) said they preferred print books, compared with only 12 percent who prefer ebooks (14 percent expressed no format preference). Similarly, 68 percent said they preferred print for assigned narrative reading, compared with 23 percent who preferred ebooks.

By contrast, 45 percent of respondents prefer ebooks for research, and 20 percent expressed no preference. Further, 52 percent reported that they had used more ebooks for research during the past year, while 35 percent said they had used the same amount as they had in the previous year. Increases were most notable among students in graduate programs and four-year colleges—particularly those in online classes.

When asked why their ebook usage had changed, those who had reported using more ebooks cited convenience, better availability of relevant sources, class requirements, technology improvements, lower prices, and ease of search. Several respondents who reported using fewer ebooks emphasized their preference for print, with a couple noting that the selection of print books at their university library offered them the option.

Students view print books as easier to read and ebooks as easier to obtain. Three-quarters of respondents (75%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I have an easier time reading print books than ebooks,” while two-thirds (66%) agreed or strongly agreed that “ebooks are more convenient to get than print books.” Also, a sizeable majority (81%) agreed or strongly agreed that “if a print book is not available, an ebook is a good alternative.”

In write-in responses, students noted that their professors “want current info, so e-references are easiest,” or “the type of research I have been doing in grad school and the final year of undergrad has been more intense and targeted. I now need a wider variety of sources, and need those sources to be searchable for speed,” or “I have less time to physically go to the library,” and even “it's easier to carry ebooks than printed books.”

But many students dislike the inconveniences imposed by digital rights management (DRM), such as restrictions on printing portions of the content, or on downloading chapters or entire ebooks for offline reading. More than half (56%) of respondents said that they were always (3%), often (19%), or sometimes (34%) frustrated by DRM restrictions. And 57 percent—led by graduate students—described the option to download ebooks as important (33%) or extremely important (24%).

When asked what ebook features are critically important, having page numbers to use in citations topped the list (75%); followed by the ability to resize text to fit a device's screen (67%); readability on a phone or tablet (64%); the ability to bookmark pages, highlight text, or take notes for later reference (60%); downloading the entire ebook (57%); linking to references at the end of a chapter (52%); downloading chapters (50%); and allowing content to be transferred between devices (43%).

Several comments also noted that search bars and other search features would be particularly helpful, while others suggested “the ability to copy and paste,” “extra study tools like practice tests,” and simplified navigation, enabling users to “jump to [specific] pages.”

Laptops and smartphones were, by far, the most popular devices for accessing library ebooks, with an overwhelming majority of students saying that they “always” or “often” use a laptop to access this content (96%), followed by smartphones (48%), desktop computers (22%), or tablets (12%). Tablets do not appear to have taken hold as devices for conducting research: 63% of respondents said they rarely or never use tablets for accessing library ebooks, and almost half (49%) said the same of desktop computers.

Many of these findings roughly correlate with the perceptions of academic librarians surveyed a year and a half ago in LJ's “Ebook Usage in U.S. Academic Libraries 2016” report. In that survey, 60 percent of librarian respondents said their users prefer print to ebooks for long-form content such as monographs, with many noting student frustrations with ebook printing limitations or other DRM restrictions. However, 56 percent of respondents said that students prefer digital reference materials, compared with 16 percent who said they prefer print.

You can download the full 87-page *2018 Academic Student Ebook Experience Survey* report [here](#).

STAFF

Library Director-----Jim Douglas, MLS
Systems and Instruction-----Matthew Haggard, MLIS
Patron Services-----Rosalba Onofrio, MLS
Weekend Supervisor-----Andrea Lee
Student Workers

Jim Douglas served on the Library and Information Resources Committee. He continued to serve on the Executive Board of the Worcester-area Academic and Research Collaborative (ARC). During the year he taught sessions for Project Management, Strategic Management capstone classes, and Entrepreneurship classes. With assistance from the Green Room team he created a number of short videos presenting the history of individuals whose portraits hang in the Library and their contributions to Nichols.

Matthew Haggard contributed to CritWRR development and assessment as part of its committee, attended various ARC Research/Instruction and Educational Technology Special Interest Groups meetings, provided support and administration of the EzProxy server, and began working on connecting library services with College-partnered High Schools. He currently leads the implementation of the new Integrated Library System, OCLC's WMS, which went live this summer. During the course of the year, along with one-on-one research consultations, he taught 32 class sessions (including PDS). Lastly, in cooperation with the staff of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, Matthew reviewed and recommended changes based on the most recent environment monitoring report.

Rosalba Onofrio attended meetings of the Worcester Area Academic and Research Collaborative (ARC) Access Services Interest Group, served on Nichols Reads Committee, instructed 1st Year PDS class Fall 2017 and Spanish II class Spring 2018, attended a Virtual Forum sponsored by the ACRL Access Services Interest Group –“Bringing Circulation Policies into the 21st Century”-Fall 2017, and in the Spring weekly webinars in preparation for our integrated library system transition to OCLC's WorldShare Management system.

Andrea Lee served as the weekend Patron Access Services Assistant.

Pauline Sroczyński, evening supervisor, retired after 31 years of great service to the Library. Pauline has been a great asset to the Library, ensuring our evening student workers were well-trained, the stacks were kept in proper order, and eager to assist in various special projects whenever called upon. It was not unheard of for students to marvel how she worked diligently day and night, not realizing her twin sister was also employed during the day as the Library's acquisitions clerk and Nichols Archives assistant (she retired last year, after 29 years of service!). She will be missed.

This academic year we employed 23 student workers (12 at the Circulation Desk and 11 at the STAR Desk).

THE COLLECTION

- 27,627 items (print books, videos, DVDs)
- 150,177 ebooks through EbookCentral
- 40 subscription-based electronic databases
- 31 current subscriptions to print periodicals (magazines/newspapers)
- Feature movies for classroom and/or individual streaming vis Swank Digital Campus

During the fiscal year 2017-18:

- 268 new book and video titles were added to the collection (not including standing orders/ebooks)
- Textbooks on reserve circulated 3,445 times
- 501 ebooks were accessed
- 647 hard copy books and videos circulated
- Laptops, Surfaces, iPads, or Androids were borrowed 617 times
- Headphones, Mouse, flashdrives, and adaptors were borrowed 239 times
- Hard Drives (IT) were borrowed 242 times
- A total of 5,828 circulation transactions occurred
- 13,614 searches were conducted in our databases



PATRON SERVICES

Prepared by Rosalba Onofrio

Our library's busy circulation desk is staffed to assist patrons during all 102 hours that the library is open. Twelve student workers provide service from Sunday evening through Friday night, working 86 hours weekly, while our weekend access services assistant, Andrea Lee, covers the additional 16 hours on Saturdays and Sundays. Beginning this academic year, three members of the circulation desk student staff agreed to form a "snow team" and come in on snow days so that students could use the library between noon – 6 p.m. The snow team reported between 25-30 students utilized the library on snow days, when classes were cancelled and offices were closed.

Senior student worker Jim Tereau was the circulation desk team leader for the academic year and assisted with interviewing and training new workers, facilitating meetings, and creating the circulation desk work schedule. Three new student workers were hired in the Fall semester and three additional workers were hired at the end of the Spring semester. The following six dedicated circulation desk assistants graduated in May 2018 and will be missed: Jim Tereau, Mollie McDonnell, Erica Sullivan, Fallonne Fanfan, Bethany Charron and Bruce Marchand. They were each invited to select a book to be added to the library's collection and each book was affixed with a plate giving their name and years of service to the library. We also celebrated their accomplishments at an end of the year pizza party.

Senior student worker Bethany Charron dedicated many hours during the fall semester to assist with organizing the college archive's Sports Photo Collection. She thoroughly enjoyed this opportunity to research some of the history of the college, to analyze and date photographs as well as to understand the construction of finding aids.

Our evening circulation desk supervisor, Pauline Sroczynski, retired after 31 years of service to the library. She was very dedicated to helping train and evaluate the circulation desk student workers as well as assisting all of the library's patrons with their questions. The student workers developed a special bond with Pauline and enjoyed conversing with her on many topics. We sincerely thank her for consistently working the night shift and being so personable and helpful to everyone. She will be missed!

Following Pauline's retirement, Rosalba transitioned to a second shift work schedule, and so, she has been able to supervise student workers and assist patrons until 9 p.m. during the week. Morning shift students have been responsible for covering the circulation desk independently and have had the added duty of checking in all magazines and newspapers. Matthew and Jim have also been very helpful in providing support covering the circulation desk morning, afternoon, or evening as needed.

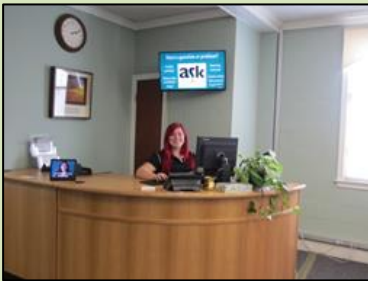


Circulation Activity

The circulation desk staff was busy processing the borrowing and lending of reserve items, print books and media, and laptop and tablet loaners. This academic year the circulation desk checked out textbooks on reserve 3,445 times, print books and DVDs 647 times, laptops and tablets 617 times, and miscellaneous devices 481 times. The circulation desk staff also monitor and post reservations for library space made in Meeting Room Manager. During this academic year there were 139 group study room reservations made for student groups and/or meetings along with 63 reservations for the library's main, upper, or lower floors. The main floor was reserved 15 times for various events including art exhibits, entrepreneur and author speakers, as well as the book swap and other activities as part of the library's celebration of National Library Week.

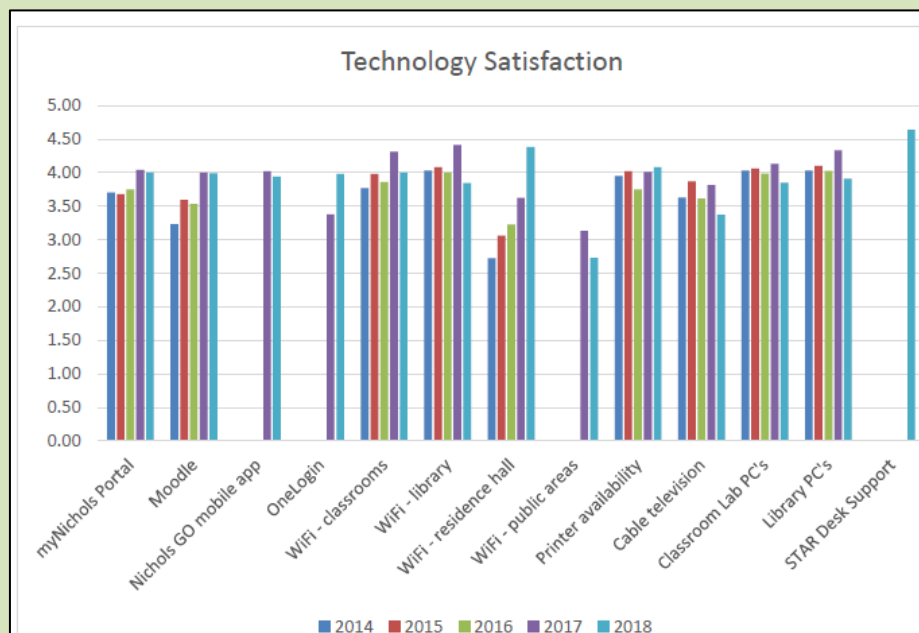
STAR DESK

The Support for Technology and Academic Research (STAR) Desk provides assistance in the library to students with issues with personal devices and library hardware and to evening GPS faculty in Fels classrooms.



Trained jointly by I.T. and Library staff these students were responsible for answering directional reference questions and helping students, staff, and faculty with basic technology-related questions/problems across campus. There were 450+ STAR Desk interactions with 90+% in-house resolve rate during the year, ranging from troubleshooting printer issues and jams, teaching students how to use the library scanners, various issues with Word, Powerpoint, and Excel, and assisting faculty with classroom technology.

For the first time, the *I.T. Student Satisfaction Survey (2017)* asked students to rate their satisfaction with the STARDesk service. It was nice to see it received the highest satisfaction rating for all the technologies and I.T services on campus.



USER EDUCATION

“Thank you for what you do for students on the hill. It only took about 10 years for me to realize it but you (and your team) work to make the library a part of a student’s life at NC and not an afterthought has made me a better learner and researcher 10 years later!” – Joe Ginese ‘05

Information about the Library’s services and resources was distributed to first year students (undergraduate and graduate) through an insert in their orientation packet. Two newsletters are also distributed via e-mail to the campus community and news is also electronically disseminated on an ad hoc basis as appropriate via e-mail or on our website.

The Library’s liaison program with faculty is on-going, with one-on-one meetings to review Library resources and services and solicit suggestions for improvement.

Instruction

The Library’s instruction program is dedicated to improving students’ ability to use information resources effectively. Instruction is offered in support of coursework in academic subjects in the form of formal group instruction, in online guides, point-of-use aids in the library, and informal point-of-need contacts with individual students. Instructional Services updates all resource guides at least once a year and creates new resource guides as needed to assist in student research.

A total of 35 class sessions (including First-Year Library Week sessions) received formal instruction this year. Disciplines included Management, Sport Management, Business Communication, History, English, Human Resource, and ITM. Many requests came from faculty who had previously invited us into their classes. Topics included: introduction to research and library resources, the research process, looking beyond Google for information, advanced database searching, and direct assignment-specific Q&A sessions. Instruction often combines lecture/demonstration with active learning applications. The efficacy of classroom instruction is measured through faculty and student spot surveys and analysis of course assignments/projects, journal logs and other embedded assessments.



LIBRARY WEBSITE



Our patrons' interaction with the Library and its resources is often (and for some, only) through the Web. The Library's website includes:

- Research pages with links to, and information about, our print and electronic resources.
- Resource guides for every major as well as course-specific guides.
- Tutorials on how to find company information, cite sources, avoid plagiarism, locate books and articles, and how to use our electronic databases.
- Information about the Library (hours, staff, the Nichols Archives) and its services (instruction, interlibrary loan, electronic reserve, etc.).
- Access points to our ebook and eReserve collections.
- Access to web-based printing.
- A link to a webpage providing minute-to-minute stats on the number of available Library computers for each floor.
- Links for contacting staff, including IM/chat service.

Every summer Matthew Haggard reviews each subject guide, ensuring links to the listed resources are current.

This past year a significant amount of time was spent preparing for our new integrated library system. We expect to go live July 1, 2018 with a new search interface/system that will allow users to search not only the holdings of Conant Library but those of academic and other libraries worldwide.

THE FACILITY

The Library is safe, comfortable, well-lighted and provides adequate and appropriate study, research, and collaboration space. Throughout the year Facilities Management has been extremely responsive to requests for repair and maintenance.

Usage

The Library continues to offer its resources and space to various groups and sponsors speaker events, including visits by students participating in the Honors Academy Partnership with Bartlett High School, and programs featuring entrepreneur-related guests. This year we had Brian Treitman, owner of B.T.s Smokehouse and David Twiss ('01), Associate VP/Commercial Loan Officer at Enterprise Bank. The Library also began a faculty author series featuring Dr. Arthur McGovern and Dr. Mauri Pelto. We also hosted an evening of poetry organized by Professor Lisa C. Taylor, the English Program, and the Poetry Club to celebrate National Poetry Month. Artwork by Simone Germain of Charlton, MA and David Omar White of Boston, MA was exhibited. We also provided a showcase for student art each semester.



Also, during National Library Week in April we hosted our annual Book Swap.

TECHNOLOGY

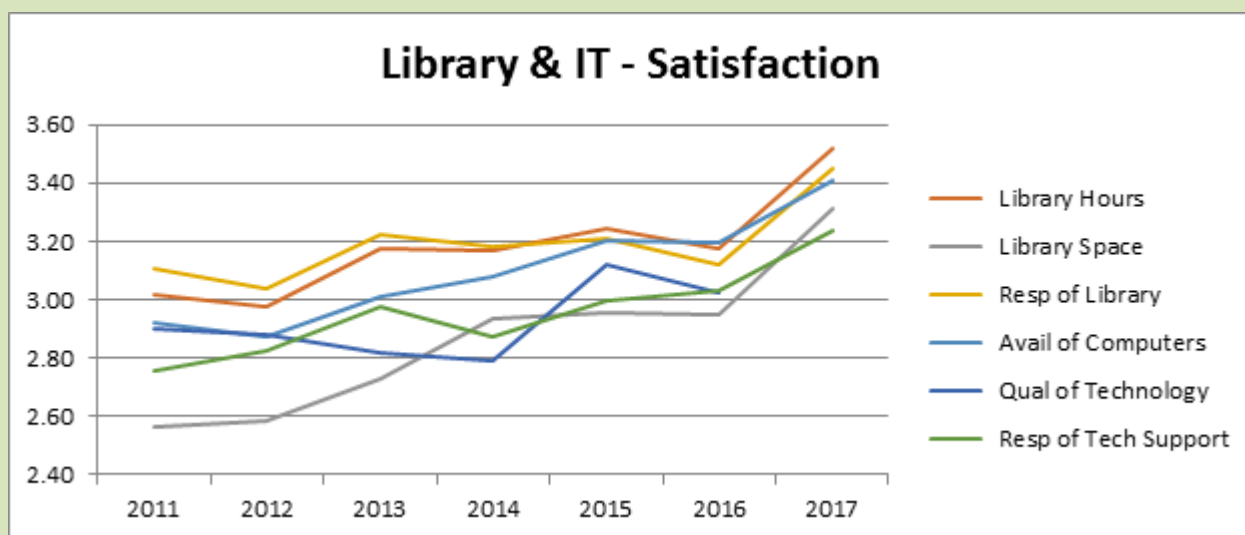
There are currently 43 public computers (including 1 MAC), four laser printers (one color), and three scanners for public use. Each office, the Reference, STAR, and the Circulation Desk is equipped with a PC. During the year all Library PCs were upgraded to Windows 10. This academic year the library made available for borrowing 12 Surfaces, 7 Lenovo Laptops, 4 iPad Airls, 1 iPad Pro, 1 Nexus 9. The Circulation Desk also has 1 Apple adapter kit and 3 HDMI adapter kits for use in the library group study rooms, as well as headphones, mouses, and flashdrives.

Most significantly, OCLC's WorldShare Management System, a new integrated library system for circulation, cataloging, acquisitions, etc. is expected to go live July 1, 2018.

ASSESSMENT

The adequacy and utilization of the Library's information resources is measured, in part, by monitoring the use of books, journals, audio-visual materials, and electronic databases, faculty recommendations for collection development, and comparison of key areas with standard bibliographic guides and selected peer libraries. Student and faculty satisfaction surveys are also very important, as are one-on-one meetings with faculty, and the results are used to help improve our services and resources.

Both the Library and I.T. saw improvements in student satisfaction according to the latest 2017 CLASS survey.



As noted above, The I.T. Department's technology satisfaction survey indicated high satisfaction with our STARDesk service, followed by somewhat less satisfaction with the Library's PCs and WI-FI.

GIFTS

The Library welcomes donations of books and other items. Although we do not accept every item that is donated, many may be appropriate to our collection. A number of alumni and others continued to give generous monetary contributions to the Library this year.

NICHOLS ARCHIVES

The Nichols Archives maintains College-related material of historical importance. Included among the many record series are: material concerning the College's founding (including its predecessors, Nichols Academy, Nichols Junior College, and Nichols College of Business Administration); descriptions of the College and its buildings; photographs; faculty, staff, student, and alumni publications including Senior Theses; campus newspapers and literary publications; student yearbooks; scrapbooks; records of athletic competition, student organizations and activities; administrative reports and general records; papers and correspondence of Presidents, faculty and alumni; and minutes and reports of the Board of Trustees. The Archives also house some 300 books, c. 1809-1920, from Nichols Academy's early library collection, financial records from the H. Conant Real Estate Company, and the Goodell Collection (sermons and published works of Methodist clergyman and author, Charles L. Goodell [1854-1937]).



The Archive was utilized a number of times by administrators, students, and outside researchers. Material from the Archives was used to support and inform the campus community of the college's history by providing images and information for the exhibit cases in Davis Hall, the Library, and NAB. Students from History teacher Emily Thomas' Public History class made use of Archive photographs for course assignments. And Library Director and Archives Curator Jim Douglas, with the assistance of the Green Room media center staff and students, created short videos about each of the portraits hanging in the Library of past presidents, as well as Amasa Nichols, and Hezekiah Conant, which were then linked to QR codes affixed next to each portrait for anyone interested in each figure's connection to the Academy's and College's history.

RESOURCE SHARING/CONSORTIAL AGREEMENTS

Conant Library and its users benefit a great deal from our membership in various library organizations and associations. For example, expensive resources can often be purchased at a much greater discount than would otherwise be possible and staff can attend professional development seminars and workshops for free or at a reduced rate. Currently, the Library is a member of:

- Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), a non-profit library service and research organization that provides a database of bibliographic and library holdings information for more than 25,000 libraries worldwide for interlibrary loan facilitation.
- Massachusetts Library System (MLS), which provides access to state-funded databases, a weekly shuttle service for Interlibrary Loan, and professional development opportunities.
- Academic and Research Collaborative (ARC), which provides cross-borrowing privileges with the Worcester Public Library and many of the Worcester-area college libraries, knowledge sharing, and continuing education opportunities.
- Westchester Academic Library Directors Organization (WALDO) through which we subscribe to several online databases at a reduced rate.

