Simmons
UNIVERSITY

LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT 2024–2025

FROM THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN



Welcome and welcome back to the Simmons University Library as we begin a new academic year infused by the energy and innovation of the past year. The 2024–2025 Annual Report describes how the Library has been deeply involved in creating and maintaining community relationships and expanding access to collections in a variety of formats. As a mission driven organization, the Library emphasizes its commitment to teaching and learning, sustainability, accessibility, and thought leadership in all that it does. I invite you to read about our exciting accomplishments in support of our mission and the Simmons community.

The Library worked to implement its Impact Grant from the Little Free Library organization which included a book box and a selection of books. This grant encourages the placement of book boxes and books in areas that are considered book deserts. Working with the Fenway Community Development Corporation (Fenway Forward) we were able to secure a location for the book box next to the Southwest Corridor in Boston. We have been keeping the book box stocked with materials deselected from the Library's collections. During the spring our librarians and library school graduate students held an event at Fenway Forward's community room which offered local children the chance to do some crafts, attend a story hour, and pick up some new books to read. We look forward to continuing the partnership in the year ahead.

We have continued to make strides with our efforts around information literacy. It has been a cornerstone of our library instruction program for decades. Our involvement with the Mellon Grant funded Simmons Center for Information Literacy (SCIL) has positioned us to think about the role of libraries in supporting people's need to access and engage with trustworthy information. The Library secured a mini-grant to study the needs of librarians in public libraries around supporting information literacy with their patrons.

Building off the success of Celebrating 125 Years of Simmons, the University Archives followed up with the School of Social Work Dean Michael LaSala and Advancement leadership to plan the School's 125th anniversary celebrations. Archives staff conducted extensive archival research on the School and assembled a digital timeline, permanent physical exhibit, and a digital exhibit and highlighted the contributions and history of underrepresented figures from the School. The Archives staff also planned and completed the Gwen Ifill papers digitization project with support from Ifill School Dean Kothari and Trustee Bert Ifill. They are available to access through the Simmons University Digital Archives (SUDA).

Every good wish,

Vivienne B. Piroli

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University Librarian

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The Simmons University Library is an active participant in the student learning experience, an essential component of a Simmons education, and a vital asset to the University, fostering an institution-wide culture of academic inquiry and knowledge cultivation. Here are some of the ways library staff delivered on our mission in the past year.

SUPPORT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Conducted 96 instruction sessions in-person and via Zoom • Provided 547 research consultations to support students and faculty • Fielded 1,594 service inquiries via chat, email, and phone • Managed 23,000 student study room bookings to provide workspace for students • Developed a series of AI Video Tutorials designed to provide an introduction on Generative AI and its basic function, uses, ethical considerations • Expanded and strengthened the Archives' instruction program for undergraduate and graduate students in Introduction to Archives (LIS 438), Introduction to Public History (HST 260), Digital Libraries (LIS 462), and the Simmons Black Oral History Project course (AST 375/575)

INCLUSIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Published new Community Guide for Women's History Month • Contributed to the webinar "Considerations in Recruitment of BIPOC Librarians" as part of the Oberlin Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Antiracism Ad hoc Committee • Collaborated with School of Social Work Dean and Advancement leadership to support development of the School's anniversary celebrations with a digital exhibit • Created and installed the "Queer Pride at Simmons" archives exhibit during Pride Month • Launched a Controlled Digital Lending (CDL) program to ensure distance and online students have equitable and seamless access to the library's physical print collections • Established a partnership with the REEF Student Support Center

SUSTAINABILITY

Migrated archives collection finding aids to the Simmons University Digital Archives, ensuring ease of access • Managed digitization, metadata creation, and migration of its largest historic photograph collection to the Simmons University Digital Archives • Planned, managed, and completed the Gwen Ifill papers digitization project with support from Ifill School Dean Kothari and Trustee Bert Ifill • Published a revised University Records Management Policy according to institutional needs, legal requirements, and best practices • Migrated the library's EZProxy server to our consortial partner, the Fenway Library Organization (FLO), to maintain stable remote access to online library resources.

PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Advised the Greater Boston Area Black Social Workers' History and Archives Committee on best practices for processing physical, digitized, and born-digital materials from their collection that is now housed at the University Archives • Taught as adjunct faculty in the Simmons School of Library and Information Science • Served on the Oberlin Group of Libraries Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee • Participated in the COF Leadership and Management Training Program • Served on the steering committee for the Simmons Center for Information Literacy (SCIL) • Received SCIL mini grant to study information literacy in public libraries • Made presentations to student PFLAG group, Oberlin Annual Meeting, FLO Information Literacy Symposium