Simmons
UNIVERSITY

LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT 2025–2026

FROM THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN



Welcome and welcome back from the Simmons University Library. The energy and excitement of a new academic year complements the enthusiasm we have in sharing the Library's 2025—26 Annual Report. Looking back at the past year it is clear that the Library has once again been an active force in ensuring that the community is reflected in the work we do. The relationships we have with students, faculty and staff, administrators, and alumni are an integral part of our mission to foster a culture of knowledge cultivation and we are committed to continued excellence.

Assessing the value and impact of the Library is an important part of how we make decisions around collections, resources, and services. This past winter and in collaboration with our colleagues in Technology, we conducted the Measuring Information Services Outcomes (MISO) survey. This provided us with critical feedback on our services, ranking their importance to you and your satisfaction with them. We appreciate your support for the Library and will continue to keep you informed on our directions and initiatives. We are so grateful to everyone who took the time to participate.

The Library collaborated with faculty from SLIS and Ifill in founding the Simmons Center for Information Literacy supported by a grant from the Mellon Foundation. Created as an interdisciplinary center, it looks to advance information literacy and critical thinking skills through educational programming, focused research, and engaging communities. A team from the Library was awarded a mini-grant to investigate the information literacy needs and professional development requirements of library workers in a large urban public library system. Some of the findings from this research project were published in the library journal *Against the Grain*.

Simmons, along with some of its signature programs, celebrated milestone anniversaries in the past couple of years. In recognition of the country's semiquincentennial, the Library and Archives explored how our institution, that has been around for half the life of modern America, has been a force for transformation through its people, ideas, and events. Our digital exhibit, Simmons 125 to America 250, highlights stories, moments, and experiences from our community that celebrate Simmons as an engaged participant in the evolution of the American experiment. The exhibit further underscores our ongoing responsibilities as stewards of this very special place.

We hope you enjoy a snapshot of the year in review and encourage you to keep up to date with activities and events in the University Library and Archives through simmons.edu/library and our social media.

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 68 instruction sessions in-person and via Zoom • Provided 450 research consultations to support students and faculty • Managed 21,664 student study room bookings to provide workspace for students • Added 217 books to the print collection • Formalized a partnership with Simmons' WRI101 program • Engaged in the restoration of Notable Women of Simmons Digital Scrapbook websites (built by past SLIS LIS 462 Digital Libraries classes, presenting material created by early Simmons students and now owned by the Archives) to working order.

INCLUSIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Partnered with the Fenway Forward Community Center to organize multiple story time events, and replenish their Little Free Library • Processed materials for the Black Student Organization collection (BSO); created archival description to enhance access and use of the BSO collection • Planned and hosted the Greater Boston Association of Black Social Workers (GBABSW) Conditional Deposit Agreement Signing Ceremony and accessioned the first part of this collection into the Archives • Secured the donation of the Ambassador Harriet Elam-Thomas papers, a collection of personal and professional papers from a Simmons Alumna and Black Ambassador • Managed multiple digitzation projects highlighting the Black experience at Simmons. Digitized collections include: *Abafazi*, *Our Little Black Book*, and *Vantage Point*.

SUSTAINABILITY

Updated the Library's disaster plan • Connected with library directors in the New American Colleges and Universities group • Worked with colleagues in FLO to develop a growth strategy for the consortium • Conducted a systematic review of finding aids for the Archives' manuscript and charities collections and migrated them to SUDA to increase public access to collections information • Managed the migration of the Massachusetts Coalition of Nurse Practitioners (MCNP) oral history project to SUDA for public access • Managed the complete digitization of the Archives' historic manuscript photograph collections now publicly available via SUDA.

PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Presented "Strategies for Small Libraries Working in FOLIO" at the WOLFcon 2025 conference with Jamie Jesanis, Technical Services Librarian and Assistant Professor, MCPHS • Attended ASIS&T 88th Annual Meeting: Difficult Conversations: The Role of Information Science in the Age of Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence • Organized and ran 12 programs/events including the "Therapy Dog visit", "Blind Date with a Book", and "Keys to Special Libraries" webinar • Presented Swimming with the Sharks: Critical AI Across Campus at the Boston AI Festival and at NERCOMP with campus colleagues • Created an AI Literacy and Instruction Community of Interest for the Oberlin consortium members • Welcomed Dr Lynne Bowker, Allen Smith Visiting Scholar, to the Library for a fascinating conversation around LLMs and on plain language article summaries.