Showing Off UNI Student Research

Since its founding seven years ago, UNI ScholarWorks - [https://scholarworks.uni.edu/](https://scholarworks.uni.edu/) - has expanded to feature a rich offering of high-impact student research. Hundreds of UNI student research posters and over one thousand UNI student theses and dissertations have been uploaded and archived. Since being added to ScholarWorks, these student works have been downloaded more than 500,000 times by scholars and community members throughout Iowa, the United States, and worldwide.

Dr. Thomas Connors has, for many years, been crafting ingenious and challenging historical projects for his students. Dr. Connors provides each student with a primary historical document (e.g., handwritten letter, political cartoon, or photo). In turn, these students work with UNI librarians to discover (if possible) the authors' identities and subjects of letters or the artists and subjects of cartoons or photographs. As a result, students will develop research skills and better understand the past. The use of dozens of digital archives and historical databases will help them discover clues about their documents and the period they came from.

What would happen if these remarkable programs were to join forces? This past fall, Dr. Connors brought a proposal to the Rod Library Digital Scholarship Unit (Ellen Neuhaus, Bill Maravetz, and Edye Johnson) to feature his history students' research and preserve and make accessible historical letters and images in ScholarWorks. The two courses chosen for this collaboration were an honors section of HIST 1023 - continued on page 2

A cartede-viste historical photograph of the Lion of Lucerne, Switzerland
Aftersagreeingtothisadventure,thedigital
ScholarshipUnitscannedtheprimarieducuments
andcreatedacollectioninScholarworksforeachclass-
IOWADocumentsat[https://scholarworks.uni.edu/his_-
iadocuments_sp2022/](https://scholarworks.uni.edu/his_iadocuments_sp2022/)andMonumentsandMemoryat-
[https://scholarworks.uni.edu/his_monuments_sp2022/](https://scholarworks.uni.edu/his_monuments_sp2022/).

Inaddition,studentsthemselveswouldcontribute
tobuildingthesecollectionsbyprovidingthemetadatas
fortheirprimarysourcesusingworksheetsdesigned
byEllenNeuhaus.

Thelibrarylibrariansforhistory,ChrisNeuhaus,was
thenbroughtintocraftLibGuides-[https://guides.lib. 
uni.edu/Iowa-historical-documents](https://guides.lib.uni.edu/Iowa-historical-documents)and[https://guides.lib.uni.edu/monuments-and-memory](https://guides.lib.uni.edu/monuments-and-memory)-toprovide
guidanceandsuggestionsforstudentsworkingon
theseprojects.EllenNeuhausaidedinplacinglinksto
thecoursecollectionpagesinScholarWorks,themetadataworksheets.

Eachcourseplannedthreeclasssessionswith
librarians(EllenandChris).Earlyinthesemester,Ellen
providedanoverviewofUNIScholarWorksforeach
courseandtheprocedureforgatheringmetadatafort
theprimarysources.Chrisreviewedsomeofthe
archivesfeaturedonthecourseLibGuidesthatmight
provehelpfulforstudentresearch.Thesecondand
thirdsessionstookplacemid-semester.Duringthesesessions,Ellenguideduploadingtheirmetadatato
ScholarWorks.

Thoughthisexperimentisstillinprogress,theresults
havebeenveryencouraging.Studentstreacheach
coursehavebeenveryengagedbothduringthework
sessionsandduringtheon-one sessions with
EitherEllenorChris.Fouroftheeightstudentsfrom
theIOWADocumentscourseandsixofthefifteenseven
studentsfromtheMonumentscoursehavealready
begunloadingtheirmetadatatoScholarWorks.

Tobe sure, this has been a time-consuming project
forallinvolved.Facultyandstaffhavedevotedmany
hours to instruction and digital collection creation.
Studentsarefinding success while completing this
project and have dedicated many hours learning
aboutvariousdigitalarchivesanddatabases.They
havededicatedevenmoretime to exploring
theseresourcesastheygathertheinformationfor
theirproject.Thesuccessfulstudentsalso spenttime
craftingtheirmetadatalanduploadingthemetadata
toScholarWorks.As aresult, they gained a first-hand
appreciation for the time and care that goes into
buildingdigitalpublicarchives.

Takeaways? Our first impressions regarding this
collaborative course experiment are that:

Thisformofhands-oninstructionleadstosignificant
studentengagementandagreatsenseofproject
ownership. For some students, placement of the final
project in a publicly accessible format may increase
project motivation. Also students appear to develop
adeeperappreciation for the development and
availability of publicly accessible digital archives.
Rod Library has many student jobs available every semester. It is currently ranked the third-largest student employer at the University of Northern Iowa. These jobs include responsibilities for various tasks throughout the library that are invaluable to the library functions, services, and sources. The Special Collections & University Archives is one of the departments that has students doing exciting and essential work. Thanks to Carl Oldsen, a generous donor, a student collections technician position was created to focus on preservation which extends the life of items in the collection for future researchers to also enjoy.

About three years ago, Raegan Christianson, an undergraduate Sociology and Communication major, began working with the archives. She enjoys her position in Special Collections & University Archives because she finds UNI history interesting, especially discovering what UNI has been like over the years. The Special Collections Coordinator and University Archivist, Jaycie Vos, has been very pleased with her work; she shared, “Raegan is an amazing student that has learned so many processes quickly, from humidifying and flattening items that had been rolled or folded for decades to making custom enclosures for fragile rare books!”

In March, Raegan wrote a highlight on some of the glass plate slides found in the archives. Raegan found the slides fascinating as she had never seen anything like them before. When asked about the experience, she said, “It was cool to write about the slides to help others learn about them and realize that they are even here at UNI." A snip of the project, “Highlight: Glass Plate Slides,” is below, and the entire write-up is on their website.

**Highlight: Glass Plate Slides**

SC&UA offers a retro and revitalizing way to explore history—through the viewing of glass plate negatives and lantern slides! Glass plate slides have often been used for educational and presentational purposes. A glass plate negative or lantern slide functions similarly to that of a modern slideshow or PowerPoint presentation, except that they have to be manually swapped. The viewing device used with these lantern slides came to be known as a “magic lantern”.

University Archives includes glass slides that were once used in the classroom and in everyday work. Some of these slides actually depict images taken on campus, such as buildings and student activities. Some of them feature other historical contexts, such as art work, geography, and more! Many of these historical slides come from George R. Swain’s A Catalogue of Lantern Slides for the Use of High Schools, Academies, Colleges, and Universities... View complete article: [https://scua.library.uni.edu/highlight-glass-plate-slides](https://scua.library.uni.edu/highlight-glass-plate-slides)
Mary Ann Bolton, class of 1970, never forgot the positive impact of her experience at UNI. After a long and impactful career in librarianship and many endeavors in supporting libraries, she looked back to her academic roots to explore a way to give back. As a librarian who witnessed the changing and increasingly complex information landscape, she recognizes the importance of information literacy and library research as essential skills for academic success. Further, she is committed to the idea that supporting students in their undergraduate years can provide an important boost in academic confidence.

The added confidence will position them for continued success in their academic pursuits. So, in 2017, she worked with Rod Library to establish an endowment with a specific interest in using her donation to support and recognize undergraduate students' research projects. In 2018, Rod Library established the Mary Ann Bolton Undergraduate Research Award, an annual celebration of UNI's undergraduate students' extraordinary research, scholarship, and creative work. The awards go to students who demonstrate excellence in library research conducted in support of an undergraduate paper or project carried out under the guidance of a UNI Faculty member or approved mentor.

Every year, at the end of the Spring semester, the library hosts a reception to honor the work of three undergraduates and present them with their cash awards. Mary Ann Bolton attends this reception to congratulate the student and see the impact of her generous donation.

The archived past award winners' projects are in ScholarWorks, the university's institutional repository.

**2021 Awards**

- **Understanding the lived experiences of Asian American transracial adoptees in college**, Frances Elizabeth McDermott Open Access Honors Program Thesis 2021 Award
- **Assessing the implicit curriculum in social work education: An examination of the University of Northern Iowa students' experiences**, Madison Motz Open Access Honors Program Thesis 2021 Award
- **The moderating role of mindful awareness in the associations of adverse childhood experiences and coronavirus exposure with sleep patterns**, Shyanne Faith Sporrer Open Access Honors Program Thesis 2021 Award

**2020 Awards**

- **Breathe in, breathe out: An exploration of the impacts of yoga on self-regulation and classroom community**, Shaylyn Trenkamp Open Access Honors Program Thesis 2020 Award
- **Testing the effects of mindfulness meditation in reducing music performance anxiety as measured by cortisol and self-report**, Anya E. Shorey Open Access Honors Program Thesis 2020 Award
- **Spectral time: How Gérard Grisey's concept of musical time is still relevant today**, Isaac Raymond Smith Open Access Honors Program Thesis 2020 Award

**2022 Award Winners**

- **1st Place**: Natalee Lyons’ honors thesis, “A Descriptive Analysis of Intuitive Eating on the UNI Campus.”
- **Runner Up**: Sandra Thiman’s project, “The Gender Bias Burden on Business: Women’s Access to Credit in Bahrain.”
A major aspect of Rod Library operations that most people aren't aware of is collection management. Managing the library's collection is how we develop and update library resources and balance responsiveness to our users' needs with fiscal responsibility in an increasingly tight funding environment. The library has been busy doing just that this year.

Recent projects included:
- Reviewing the Reference and Career collections and integrating them into the open stacks for improved accessibility
- Upgrading access to highly used ebooks
- Combining several separate DVD and BluRay collections into a single browsing location

Reducing holdings while maintaining access to materials our UNI community needs takes much time and consideration. To make this more manageable in the future, the library is developing a multi-year plan for continuous review and updating of all holdings and streamlining, evaluating and adding gift materials.

To best serve the UNI community, the library faculty and staff also spent a great deal of time this past year improving the efficiency and frequency of our reviews of subscriptions. Although reviewing and selecting is a natural part of a library's collection management process, it was especially urgent this year. Due to decreased funding and sustainability of the library's materials budget, an extensive review of almost all of the database and journal package subscriptions was the next step. Rod Library's materials budget is facing a $300,000+ shortfall in the fiscal year 2023. That is not a number to take lightly; therefore, the library has been taking a hard look at reducing ongoing database, journal, and journal package subscriptions.

A trending strategy for combating the ongoing inflation of database and journal packages is to focus one-time spending on electronic resources that can be owned and accessed perpetually. A prime example of such a purchase is the ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Black Newspapers collection. This collection allowed the library to gain five full-text primary sources covering a century of news and culture. An additional one-time purchase gained UNI several JSTOR journal packages that we now permanently own with no continuing subscription costs.

Another common library strategy is to collaborate and cooperatively manage and develop collections across a group of libraries. We are especially looking forward to the Regents Collaborative Collection project in the coming year. This joint project to explore cooperative projects, efficiencies, and collection building with the University of Iowa and Iowa State will benefit all Iowans.

The project will:
- explore aligning policies and procedures
- leverage the capabilities of the library software platform we all use
- develop coordinated strategies for physical item storage

Rod Library is also looking at becoming an institutional member of HathiTrust, joining the other two Regents libraries. Founded in 2008, HathiTrust is a not-for-profit collaborative of academic and research libraries preserving 17+ million digitized items. HathiTrust offers reading access to its collections to the fullest extent allowable by U.S. copyright law, computational access to the entire corpus for scholarly research, and other emerging services based on the combined collection. HathiTrust members steward the collection — the most extensive set of digitized books managed by academic and research libraries — under the aims of scholarly interests.

With these strategies, Rod Library will continue to strive to provide access to information and steward the broadest possible collection of research materials for the UNI community.
Scholarly Communication Committee

Did you know that the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) has a Scholarly Communication Committee? The committee has permanent and elected representatives from Rod Library, Research and Sponsored Programs (RSP), and the general university faculty. The role of this committee is to support scholarly output and research at UNI.

Regular meetings have been taking place this year to discuss issues of interest to the university research community. The committee also regularly hears reports on Open Educational Resources and the library's Digital Scholarship Unit (DSU) work.

Since the Fall 2021 semester, the committee has successfully completed two projects. The first project was to aid committee member Chris Neuhaus in refining and finalizing a Library Research Guide called "Where to Publish?". The guide gathers information on finding and assessing publishing venues, especially identifying and avoiding "predatory" journals. The second project supported the collaboration and launch of UNI Impact, a newsletter that highlights the research, grants, and awards of UNI's staff & faculty. The newsletter was designed and pulled together by two other committee members, Maggie Heretakis (RSP) and Digital Scholarship Librarian Ellen Neuhaus.

The committee looks forward to revisiting a project that has been delayed due to COVID. In the fall, the committee will continue a project to investigate and propose a university-level Open Access Publishing Fee fund to assist our faculty and graduate students in making their research more freely accessible. Another exciting event that will be returning in October will be an Open Access Week Conference. The conference is expected to include presentations and panel discussions on creating and using OER textbooks, Creative Commons licensing, a journal editors' panel, and more. The conference will also allow UNI to celebrate all the hard work and accomplishments of the first seven years of the institutional repository, ScholarWorks.

Rod Library's Fall Semester
July 2021 - March 2022

Collections
✓ 20,163 Materials circulated
✓ 445,726 Library database searches
✓ 763,724 ScholarWorks downloads

Services
✓ 8,673 Reference Interactions
✓ 303 Instruction sessions
✓ 7,130 Student attendees of instruction sessions

Spaces
✓ 262,010 Visitors to Rod Library (including IRTS and the Marshall Center School)
✓ 48,351 Public computer logins
✓ 11,289 Study and meeting rooms reserved
✓ 118,682 Social media reach and impressions
Demonstrating Student Research in Rod Library
Rod Library’s instruction program is moving into a new era - beginning with the fall 2023 semester the library will offer a 3-credit course in the new general education curriculum, UNIFI. The library, along with partners from across campus in psychology, math, philosophy, and political science, has created a new Critical Thinking and Information Literacy certificate.

Studies show that two of the three key elements employers seek on college graduates’ resumes are problem-solving and analytical/quantitative skills. These skills are related to critical thinking and information literacy. The library’s class will help build those skills in students through thoughtful engagement and dialog surrounding the world of information.

The new course is not the library’s first foray into teaching for-credit class. In prior years the library has taught a 3-credit class, “Creating Wikipedia for the Arts,” and a 1-credit class, “Beyond Google.” The UNI Museum, part of Rod Library, annually teaches the 3-credit course, “Collections Care and Management,” within the Museum Studies Certificate.

In addition to the library’s credit-bearing class, we partner with departments across campus to integrate information literacy concepts within the curriculum. By working closely with a library liaison, faculty can build skills into their disciplines through a scaffolded integration of library instruction to help meet programmatic and accreditation requirements. The library also collaborates with faculty who seek shorter, targeted library instruction tailored to address specific information needs for an assignment. Faculty can initiate conversations with their library liaison on either of these options by filling out a library instruction request form or contacting their liaison directly.

Upcoming Events

/Open Access Week
October 24 - 30, 2022

/RodCon 2023
April 1, 2023

Librarians know that information literacy is a lifelong skill with impacts beyond the classroom. The class, “Question Everything: Navigating Information Overload,” will focus on a variety of information issues (e.g., misinformation, fake news, commoditization of information, algorithms) and encourage students to reflect on their experiences so that they are better prepared to navigate today’s information landscape. The library is excited to partner with others on campus to help the university ensure that student success is paramount throughout a student’s life.