



Beatley Library

The Simmons Library, which includes the Beatley Library, College Archives, and the Miller/Knopf Career Resource Library, serves as the gateway to the world's knowledge for the Simmons College community. Library resources and services stimulate scholarship and learning, and lead individuals to become discerning users of information and ideas. The Library plays an integral role in the successful implementation of the educational goals and mission of the College by delivering access to information that supports the scholarly needs of all members of our community, and by partnering with faculty to advance information-literacy and critical thinking through teaching individuals how to find and apply the best information for each research need.

After a 3-year multi-million dollar renovation project led by Library Director, Daphne Harrington, Beatley Library, the main College library, is located in a new 45,500 square foot, 2 ½ floor facility in the Lefavour Building. The new library provides a comfortable, productive and welcoming learning environment and is open 99.5 hours per week for in-person use. The Library also provides 24/7 access for off-site use to its many e-books, e-journals, databases, e-reserves, and web resources. Beatley was designed to accommodate up to 522 patrons in a variety of individual and collaborative study seating options:

- 14- high-tech group study rooms
- 14-seat Archives Reading Room
- 22-seat media listening and viewing room
- 22- seat library instruction classroom
- 155 computer workstations
- Soft seating areas on all 3 levels

The Library design is flexible enough to provide College-wide events and reception space; recent examples include the celebration of National Poetry Week and a GSLIS-sponsored panel discussion of censorship and intellectual freedom during National Banned Books Week.

Our “new” library boasts a

- 1,300 current journal browsing display.
- Popular diversions collection of new non-curricular book and media, and periodicals
- Effective information commons which co-locates the reference, technology, and circulation/reserves desks for user ease-of-use.
- Fully ADA compliant and library staff is always willing to help students with physical issues with library access.
- Internet connections on all tables and WiFi network access throughout the Library and 37 circulating wireless laptops for student use

Contrary of reports of the deserted libraries, Beatley is brimming with users engaged in curricular and individual interest activities. Data has steadily increased since the partial Library opening in 2007 and in FY09 experienced as weekly gate count of 10,850 visitors.

Off-site visits have also been active with a total of 46.7 million proxy authorization accesses to subscription resources with Graduate School patrons representing 44% of the total during FY 09. In 2008, the Library’s website recorded 265,558 visits with the GSLIS Collection second with 48,131.

Library Staff

The Library staff is recognized by the College for its knowledge, approachability, and highest level of customer service. The fulltime Staff is comprised of 18 energetic professional librarians who include 4 subject specialists responsible for developing and marketing collections, providing classroom instruction, offering reference services to their faculty and students, as well as other collaborative efforts with the individual schools and faculty. Linda Watkins, the School’s “librarian’s Librarian” has served as GSLIS Librarian since 1981. In addition to being a member of the Simmons Library, she has GSLIS faculty voting privileges, attends faculty and curriculum meetings, and serves on GSLIS committees. Because of her LIS-subject expertise and commitment to the profession, she plays a vital role in the school—building a first-rate LIS collection; providing reference and instructional services to faculty, students, staff, and alumni; and collaborating with faculty to develop resources for classroom instruction. Projects on which she has collaborated recently include the creation of content-rich curricular based web-pages for the support of selected blended and online courses. The Librarian regularly evaluates the Library’s resources, and services and initiates plans for improvement.

Since the inception of the GSLIS West at Mount Holyoke Program in 2003, there has been a GSLIS funded pre-professional staff person based in the Library to provide distance and onsite reference, instruction and document delivery services. Currently, the GSLIS Dean's Fellow for GSLIS West and the Mass Center of the Book, Brooke Bergantzel, spends 20 hours a week in Boston and Mount Holyoke providing services and resources and is co-supervised by Linda Watkins and Meg Ragland, Associate Director for Access Services, in collaboration with Terry Plum, Director of the GSLIS West Program.

Library's Mentoring Role

The Library has always enjoyed an especially close relationship with the School which has created successful and rewarding mentor and role model opportunities for both:

- The Library Assistant Program Library employs 5 fulltime paraprofessional staff who gain practical experience in areas such as Collections, Systems, Reference, Serials, and Circulation. They receive salary with benefits and GSLIS tuition waivers for up to 5 courses per year.
- Library employs an average of 14 part-time GSLIS students in Archives, Reference, Serials, Cataloging, Acquisitions, Circulation, and Career Resource Library.
- GSLIS Deans Fellows Library Internship Program offers Beatley Library internships to the GSLIS Deans Fellows who might not otherwise gain practical library experience
- Librarians serve as role model both in the classroom as adjuncts and in the Library.
- Library serves as learning lab demonstrating best practice

Collections

The Library's collection strengths complement the Simmons curriculum and include library and information science, social work, women and leadership, children's literature, and reference.

The LIS Collection is one of the oldest (1899) and strongest collections of library information and library science materials in the United States and serves as the collection of record for the profession in New England and beyond. The Library houses all "Z" Library of Congress classified titles covering all aspects of librarianship—mostly on the research level as defined by ALA Collecting Levels. Collecting efforts are retrospective as well as current in order to ensure breadth and depth of the collection. It is a rich and well maintained collection of print and electronic materials for GSLIS students, faculty, staff, and alumni, for non-Simmons information professionals and LIS researchers. The GSLIS Librarian participates in GSLIS curricular and faculty meetings and discussions to ensure collection development is relevant to the classroom.

LIS Librarians nationally collaborate via a listserv to communicate information, issues, and to serve as collaborative allies. Most recently at the ACRL LIS Collections Group (LISCDG) meeting at ALA Midwinter, an agreement was made to notification of print journal cancellations and holder of record.

The LIS collection currently (FY09) consists of:

- 26,050 monographs
- 350 (?) current journal subscriptions
- 10,564 bound periodicals,
- 918 microfilm (dissertations)
- 97 videos, and other media
- 951 bibliomysteries

From FY 04 to FY09, an average of 480 volumes were added to the collection. The GSLIS Librarian also selects material in non-Z areas to support the curriculum such as Archives, Research Mythology, Children's Literature, Management, etc which are not included

The Beatley Library has a total 208,272 print volumes and 1,757 journal subscriptions. Its electronic holdings currently include 70,000 ebooks, 49,000 fulltext e-journals, and 130 databases. GSLIS has access to additional 100 databases gifted through LIS gratis programs offered by vendors such as Wilson, ProQuest, OCLC, Gale, and more.

The College Archives contains:

- 45,000 cubic feet of archives and manuscripts
- More than 10,000 photographs,
- 300 memorabilia
- 5,900 historic books,
- Extensive collection of faculty publications.

Services

The Library staff provides a wide range of services including circulation, reserves (print and electronic), reference, instruction and interlibrary loan, as well as acquisition and cataloging of materials. All library resources and services are available to GSLIS faculty and students. Librarians are available to help with research in person, over the phone or email, or through online live chat (AskNow). Historically, GSLIS has been high-volume consumers of its services.

Library Technology

The Library's technology infrastructure is managed by the Library Technology & Systems department comprised of System's Librarian and Library Assistant for Systems who are

responsible for optimizing the use of existing technologies, implementing new technologies, and leading the exploration of new and relevant technologies. The Library's core systems:

In June 2007, the Library upgraded from Innovative Web OPAC to Innovative WebPAC Pro and formed a year and a half OPAC Usability Taskforce to redesign, improve functionality, and offer library 2.0 features such as LibraryThing records and tags option to email specific library records via cell phone, search searches. Usability testing was conducted in 2007 by GSLIS students in LIS 403 as part of their usability testing assignment and again starting in December 2009 conducted by library staff to ascertain any difficulties users were having with basic OPAC functions for possible re-design, instruction, or addition for more onscreen help.

With an anticipated launch date of Summer 2010, the Library will soon transition to a new web presence that will realize several advantages. Along with bringing the design of the site in-line with the Library's other web services, and streamlining access to the various information components of the website, the new website will offer the following improvements:

- Improved options for patrons to search resources directly from the Library's homepage
- Subject-specific portals grouping together common resources and research topics
- Reduced duplication and improved grouping of content clarifying the web site's structure for patrons

All of these improvements will aid the Library in providing a user-friendly and information rich online environment for patrons.