Public Services had a very successful 2020-21 year. The biggest project is the library-wide inventory project that staff completed in October 2020. Circulation staff completed the initial scanning of the collection in January 2020. Overall, the scanning portion of the project lasted from October 2017-January 2020. In total, Circulation staff handled 817,846 item. Staff inventoried 801,663 items and 20,012 items were not located and marked “Missing.”

In 2019-20, Blair worked with the Head of Reference and Research Services, and IT Systems Coordinator to procure a STEP grant to replace old scanners. Blair worked with the IT Systems Coordinator and Valerie Jumonville in fiscal services to reconcile issues with purchasing the new digital scanners. Grant writers purchased six KIC scanner, three tabletop and three standalone machines. Staff placed those machines in the first floor copy center, in the stacks on the second floor, and the first floor copy center. Special Collections departments and Interlibrary Loan received two of the extra machines that the grant provided. The old machines were repurposed in other departments.

In 2019-2020, Blair worked with the Head of Reference and Research Services and the IT Systems Coordinator to write a STEP grant to get funding to replace the computers in the ROC Lab. The initial grant cycle was incomplete due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but the grant was updated and resubmitted to the summer 2020 cycle. The grant was accepted and the ROC Lab computers were replaced in fall 2020.

Blair also collaborated with the Head of Reference and Research Services and the Head of Cataloging to develop a Geaux Forward crowdfunding campaign for the library. Campaign managers will use the funds to purchase new mobile, adjustable chairs for the ROC Lab. The campaign will go live in September 2021.

Blair did a lot of work as the Chair of the university-wide Library Committee. The committee worked to select a winner for the Caffery Competition and update the guidelines and rubric for the competition to include digital projects. As Chair of the committee, Blair worked with the Assistant Dean of Technical Services and other members of the committee to write a letter of support for the funding of graduate assistants. The significance of graduate assistants in the library was the highlight of the letter. The
University President, Dr. Joseph Savoie, Provost, Dr. Jamie Hebert, Dean of the Graduate School, Dr. Mary Farmer-Kaiser, and Vice President for Administration and Finance, Jerry Luke LeBlanc all received copies of the letter. The decision was made to continue funding of the current graduate assistants working in the library. There will be one graduate assistant position that will remain unfilled for 2021-22.

In previous years, the library has collaborated with Mentoring Matters and the Writing Center to provide space for those services in the building. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, those services were not available in the library during the 2020-21 year. Blair has been working with the director for Mentoring Matters to re-establish the program in the library for fall 2021.

In August 2021, Hurricane Laura devastated parts of Louisiana and McNeese University in Lake Charles, Louisiana suffered heavy damage. The University of Louisiana at Lafayette opened their doors to the students, faculty, and staff of McNeese. Circulation and IT staff added McNeese students and faculty to our library’s system and that addition allowed those users to have full access to the services and resources we provide. This partnership continued throughout the entire fall 2020 semester.

In late November 2020, the library’s heating and air conditioning system on the first floor was replaced. The building closed after finals ended in late November and did not reopen until mid-January 2021.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on services provided by Public Service departments. The University and Library building closed on March 25, 2020 and did not reopen to the public until August 2020. During this time, Blair worked closely with the Interim Dean and Assistant Dean of Technical Services to make plans for teleworking, library building operation, library shutdown, and remote services. Blair collaborated with Public Service department heads to create work plans for each member of their departments as well as continuity plans for the spring intercession and summer semester. Blair worked with department heads to prepare for the fall semester as well. She maintained frequent contact with Public Service employees and have kept them updated throughout the period of remote work. She notified Mentoring Matters and Writing Center employees of the library’s plans for operating the building and the shutdown. Blair provided research assistance to the Instruction Committee for the Ragin’ Cajun Resiliency Task Force regarding college and university decisions and plans for reopening the fall of 2020.

Prior to closure, Public Services faculty and staff set up and maintained main entrances and exits, creating a one-way-in and one-way-out scenario where staff could monitor who was in the building. At one point, the decision was made to limit library use to students, faculty, and staff only, so a schedule was created for Public Services staff to be present at the main entrance to check for campus ID’s. When the building reopened in August 2020, the one entrance scenario remained in place through the fall and spring semesters. The back door to the building remained closed from March 2020-the summer of 2021. The library was open to all users, with mask requirements in place. Blair worked with the Interim Dean to hire temporary staff through Westaff and these employees helped the library to maintain a regular schedule at the main entrance. The library had the opportunity to hire four employees through Westaff. Two temporary staff members were needed at the main entrance, so additional Westaff employees
worked with Government Documents on an inventory project and the other worked with the Gaines Center. When the library first reopened in August 2020, there was a limited capacity of 25%, which later moved to 50%. The staff at the door were keeping count manually of the number of users entering and exiting the building to ensure that we never went over the limited capacity. Due to the heavy use of remote, online courses, the number of library users remained low throughout the 2020-21 academic year.

Along with modifying the main entrance to ensure safer access for library users, faculty, and staff, all public spaces in the library were modified to meet the six-foot social distancing guideline. Staff removed some furniture placed it in storage on the third floor. Blair moved remaining tables and chairs were create a distance of six feet. Blair taped off some individual study tables to encourage use of other seating. All study rooms and study carrels were closed with the exception of the Lactation Room. In total, 49 individual study tables and their corresponding chairs, 101 full-sized study tables and their 404 corresponding chairs were moved.

The library modified its operating hours to try to slow the spread of COVID-19. For the fall and spring semesters, the library was open Monday-Thursday, 7:30 am-9:00 pm, Friday 7:30 am-4:30 pm, Saturday 10:00 am-5:00 pm, and Sunday 1:00 pm-9:00 PM. Finals hours were also altered to closing at 2:00 am instead of staying open 24 hours a day on fewer days than the usual two weeks.

For the summer of 2020, some Public Services staff and faculty returned to the building with hybrid and regular work schedules to complete tasks that required them to be in the building. Blair worked with the Head of Circulation, Head of Interlibrary Loan, and the IT Coordinator to create a curbside pickup service for library materials. Curbside pickup was only available to university students and affiliated faculty and staff. She also worked with the IT Coordinator to keep the library’s COVID-19 webpage updated.

Due to spacing and distancing concerns, the Mentoring Matters and Writing Center satellite sites that are normally available in the library closed for the 2020-21 academic year to ensure the safety of staff members and students using those services.

In previous years, the library has created annual surveys to address needs of library users when considering services and spaces. In the fall of 2020, Blair created a survey using new access to Qualtrics to gage library users’ perceptions of the library’s immediate and long-term response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Laurie posted the survey on the library’s website and Tiffany posted the survey on our social media platforms. There were 62 respondents. Seventy-five percent of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the library’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Blair also completed the ACRL Value of Academic Libraries Committee COVID-19 survey on behalf of our library.

The measures to meet COVID-19 guidelines put in place for the fall semester remained for the spring and summer semesters of 2021. Plans are in place to lift some measures for the fall 2021 semester, and Blair worked with Public Services faculty and staff to get the library spaces and services back to as close as normal as possible during the summer intersession and summer semester of 2021.
Circulation

Circulation Services item usage statistics show a decrease of 9,253 for 4,782. Most of the decrease is due in part to the COVID-19 shutdown and lower library use numbers after the building reopened in August 2020.

Ade Menard retired on May 1, 2021. That position remains vacant.

Circulation staff worked diligently to complete several tasks during the 2019-20 year. They helped to set up and staff checkpoints at the main entrance of the library and maintained user counts. Circulation staff helped to rearrange furniture and seating to meet social distancing guidelines and installed directional traffic signage for the main entrance and STEP Lab.

Circulation staff also worked with the Head of User Engagement to facilitate the distribution of books to patrons who registered to attend the virtual “Who Gets to Vote” events.

Staff worked with the Head of Special Collections and Louisiana Room staff to help them get started with their own inventory project.

Circulation staff worked to establish non-student patrons’ use of a temporary Cajun cash account, to add webcams and headphones to the system for check out and use in the building, and worked with Laurie Vanderbrook to get new scanners installed and activated.

The Head of Circulation worked to convert room 204 from a copy center and vending machine room to a group study room. He is also working to convert 33 of the 66 individual study carrels to 2-hour checkouts for all patrons in an effort to increase the use of those spaces. Thirty-three carrels remain available for graduate student use.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the university closure dealt a heavy blow to circulation statistics, most heavily affecting the number of items checked out and the gate counts for the front and back entrances of the library. The building closed to library users on March 26, 2020 and did not officially reopen until August 2020. The front entrance count for 2019-20 was 683,937, down from the previous year due to the shutdown. The back entrance count was 294,458 in 2019-20, but the back the door entrance remained closed from late-March 2020 through July 2021.

Circulation staff also answered 829 questions.

Distance Learning

This year, Dupré Library’s distance learning services continued to service the needs of the University’s online learning community. The primary responsibility of the Head of Distance Learning Services, Ian Richardson, as the distance learning librarian is to meet the needs of the online community of both students and faculty in distance education. As the library open educational resources specialist, Ian
works with faculty and university administration on implementing open educational resources for courses offered at the university.

As the departmental librarian for both the College of Business and College of Nursing and Allied Health Professions, Ian provides reference and research services for distance students and faculty in these areas. Faculty needs primarily require resource location, tutorial and instruction requests, copyright concerns and integrating materials for their courses into the LMS. Student needs are focused on research collection and delivery, technology issues and access to materials.

For the fall 2020 semester, Ian embedded in nine course sections and in seven for the spring 2021 semester and all of these were graduate level courses in total, there were 402 students enrolled in these courses. As the embedded librarian, Ian enrolled as a fellow instructor in the Moodle course and included links to his contact information as well as subject specific research guides. Most of his reference duties in these courses directed to the students.

Ian received 149 direct email requests from students and faculty for reference and research related information. He also conducted twenty-five phone/Zoom consultations with nursing students and faculty.

The Distance Learning Appropriations Committee continued to use the 22202 account funds sourced from student fees from online and hybrid courses acquired by the Office of Distance Learning. This provides funding for the purchase of databases and journals to support online programs. The amount available to the library remains steady at $100,000, but increasing costs for electronic resources has made it difficult for the library to continue to cover all of the resources that are currently available. The library is able to continue to support the College of Nursing and Allied Health because of that college’s financial support. In 2020-21, the College of Nursing and Allied Health paid for $35,428 of database subscription costs for databases that support their discipline.

Ian has served a significant role in the University’s move to increase use of Open Educational Resources by faculty in an effort to save money for students. This year, the library continued to see savings benefits to students through previous LOUIS Curriculum Driven Acquisition affordability programs. There was a dramatic increase in savings for the fall semester due to a lot of carryover from the additional programs LOUIS offered due to COVID-19 in the spring semester of 2020. From fall 2020 to spring 2021, there was a total of $57,204 in savings to students.

COVID-19’s effect on fall 2020 was less disruptive than it was for spring 2020. While there was, no significant increase in technology assistance required from the students there was an uptick in issues from faculty, particularly those who had not taught during the previous spring semester. Ian teleworked from March 2020 to May 2021. Working remotely caused no disruption in the level of service he was able to provide students and faculty.

Instruction

The 2020-21 academic year, profoundly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, challenged the library instruction team to continue to innovate. Although the instruction numbers were far more modest than in previous years, need for primarily online instruction offered opportunities for the development of new library instruction modules and methods of delivery that should continue to improve student access and options for years to come.
The instruction team worked to develop online library instruction tools that were easy for professors to assign and grade themselves using Microsoft Forms. The most popular tool was the virtual scavenger hunt, which used a Microsoft Form to ask questions in a graded open-book quiz that guided students through the library web site to discover the answers.

The instruction team also developed a series of workshops on introductory library topics. The team hosted the workshops on Zoom. They publicized the schedule to UNIV100 professors and to all faculty and students through library social media channels. Unfortunately, attendance for each session was very low and the workshop schedule did not extend beyond the original dates planned for September and October 2020.

Jennifer and the instruction graduate assistant, Isaac Johnson, worked to develop an annotated online tour of the library home page and research services using ThingLink. Jennifer also worked with other library departments to help them use available online instruction tools, including working with Zack to orient him to how the 360 tour of the Louisiana Room/Archives that she had built in ThingLink could be used to provide a more interactive and engaging orientation than meeting classes by Zoom alone.

The instruction team collaborated with the Office of First Year Experience to distribute two information literacy surveys in the fall of 2020. The first, distributed in September, received 870 responses and asked about students’ prior research experience and use of libraries as well as several general information literacy questions. The second survey, which received 652 responses, was distributed in November 2020 and asked parallel questions regarding students’ first year undergraduate research experiences and library use. The results continue to inform development by providing a picture of how students may have used libraries in the past and what new research experiences and understandings they develop during their first semester at UL Lafayette.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced the majority of library instruction to occur online either synchronously or asynchronously. Even with the new options created by the instruction team, instruction numbers for 2020-21 are down seventy-eight percent from the 2019-20 academic year. This was to be expected and we expect there will be an increase in instruction sessions for the 2021-22 academic year. In 2020-21, the instruction team taught 75 instruction sessions and 1,935 student contacts were made.

**Interlibrary Loan**

The InterLibrary Loan department started the fiscal year still working short-staffed, but nonetheless still ensuring that they provide quality service to our patrons. Dan Phillips retired in July 2020. The department was able to fill a position that was open prior to his retirement in June 2020 when Katlyn Sarile was hired. Dan worked remotely to train Katlyn on his duties. The department shutdown as the university and library did in March 2020 and staff in the department maintained hybrid-working schedules from June until August 2020. The department continued to have a student aide working with them, but unfortunately, that student will not be back for the fall 2021 semester.
Interlibrary Loan staff worked with Circulation staff to coordinate and implement a curbside delivery service. In addition, as consequence of the pandemic, Interlibrary Loan staff, the Assistant Dean of Public Services, and the Interim Dean of University Libraries made the decision to suspend the $2.00 processing fee for articles and photocopies. That fee suspension is still in place. Patrons are still responsible for any additional fees that lending libraries may charge.

During the shutdown and through the 2020-21 fiscal year, Interlibrary Loan staff completed several trainings, including ILLiad trainings for the upcoming update. ILLiad updated to version 9.1.1 in July 2020 and an additional update to version 9.2.1 followed in September 2020.

Yolanda Landry worked with Laurie Vanderbrook in IT to redesign and update the webpages for Interlibrary Loan. The two of them also coordinated with Zehra Zamin at LOUIS to update the pages. The new webpages will help simplify the choices available to patrons for submitting requests. The new pages launched in May 2021 with no issues. The Interlibrary Loan department is very thankful to Laurie for her work on this project.

In spring 2021, the department received a new scanner that was part of the STEP grant for scanners received by faculty and staff of the library. The department gave the old scanner to the Louisiana Room.

Through 2020-21, there were 3,366 requests for articles and books. Faculty, staff, and students of ULL made 1,510 of those requests. The department received 2,437 requests for lending. These numbers are down from previous years, but with the issues caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, that was expected.

Reference & Research Services

The Reference and Research Services department provides informational resources in support of the university’s academic and research programs. Staff provide professional and expert reference assistance and instruction to library patrons in their research or information-seeking processes through face-to-face interactions at the reference desk, and via telephone and electronic reference services.

In July 20, the hiring process for the vacant Research Librarian position halted due to the COVID-19 closure. That process completed in late summer and the new Research Librarian, Peter Klubek, started working in mid-September. Currently, there is one vacant Research Librarian position in the department.

The Head of Reference and Research Services worked to secure STEP grant funding to upgrade the 24 public access workstations in the Reference Online Center. Staff installed the new equipment prior to the start of the spring semester.

Reference and Research Services staff worked remotely from March 2020 until August 2020. Upon their return, staff in the department worked to ensure COVID safety protocols were in place for the fall semester.

Plexiglass shields were installed at the Reference Desk, hand sanitizer and disinfectant cleaners were made available to staff and users, study tables were relocated to maintain the recommended six feet for
social distancing, and keyboards and mice were removed from computer stations at the Reference Online Center and placed signage to alert users to workstations that were closed.

The Head of Reference and Research services also developed safety procedures for staff working at the Reference Desk including limited use of shared equipment by giving each staff member their own mouse and keyboard to use when they worked at the desk and all surfaces at the desk were cleaned between each staff member’s shift.

The traffic and use of the Reference and Research Services department was low due to the mostly remote operations of the University, so for the spring semester, staff in that department went to a hybrid work schedule to limit staff member’s possible exposure to COVID-19. All Reference and Research Service employees returned to a normal working schedule in the library in May 2021.

Because of the low use of the library and library services through 2020-21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, reference transactions, in-house and virtual, decreased approximately 46% from the previous year. The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically affected in-house interactions. The building closed in July and December 2020 and only virtual services were available during that time.

While working from home, the Library Specialist Supervisor created a policies and procedures manual for Microforms. It includes policies for using Microforms, instructions on how to use the scanners and cubicle guidelines.

In previous years, Microforms staff worked on a microforms weeding project and that project continued into the 2020-21 year. In February 2021, Veolia North America picked up an estimated 10,000 pounds of microfilm, unnumbered microfiche, and unnumbered microcards. The microforms weeding project will continue and staff hope to have a final bulk pick up of additional materials sometime in the next fiscal year.

User Engagement
The Head of User Engagement & Instruction Librarian serves a dual purpose as a User Engagement Librarian and an Instruction Librarian, with the primary responsibility being User Engagement. As an Instruction Librarian she works closely with the Head of Instruction to develop and implement a comprehensive literacy program. As the sole User Engagement Librarian her responsibilities are to form collaborative relationships within the University community and to design and promote services and activities based on user needs. Inspiring returning users and attracting new users to the Library are done through the coordination of outreach efforts, social media, and publicity.

In her role as Instruction Librarian, she taught twenty-three instruction sessions with students including workshops, classes, and one-on-one reference appointments.

Instruction is not limited to face to face interactions but also can be achieved using such resources as LibGuides. Along with subject specific guides, she partnered with the Hilliard Art Museum to create LibGuides for their exhibits. Each LibGuide provides information about the exhibit and museum as well as suggested readings and viewings. There are currently thirty-nine LibGuides that she has created with the top viewed being the Voter Information LibGuide with 4,566 views.
The Grand Hallway has floor space and glass display cases available for exhibition purposes. Two traveling exhibits that Tiffany secured for 2020-21 were on display in the hallway. The first, “Determined to Rise: The Woman’s Suffrage Movement in Louisiana,” was on display during April 2021. The second, “The Pelican State Goes to War: Louisiana in World War II,” from the National WWII Museum in New Orleans, was put on display in May 2021 and continues to be available for viewing.

Throughout the year fourteen programs were delivered virtually or in-person with a total attendance of 401. Events included collaboration between the library and University departments and organizations, as well as community partners, such as the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities and Lafayette Public Library. Events included free popsicles for freshman, online open mic sessions, virtual trivia, handmade letters and cards, and grab bags. Funded by a LEH grant proposal, the event with the most publicity was “Who Gets to Vote” weekly book discussions. After the Lafayette Public Library board denied the event, Dupré Library took over the event. Tiffany worked with other library faculty to write the grant proposal, publicize, and facilitate the event.

As Chair of the Publicity Committee she oversees marketing and promotion to encourage interest in the Library. Tiffany used the University Calendar of Events, digital signs, flyers, Dupré Library News and Events rolls, community media outlets and social media to publicize library news and events.

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram continue to be the social media platforms for the Library. Tiffany used Linktree in conjunction with Instagram to provide users clickable links to posted content. As of June 30, 2021, the Library had 1,384 Facebook followers, 1,125 Twitter followers, and 1,062 Instagram followers.

Due to the safety guidelines for COVID-19, Tiffany utilized alternative methods to deliver some of the programs that would have normally been in person. Tiffany completed all instruction sessions entirely online. Freshman Popsicles, handmade letters and cards, and the Lafayette Public Library information table were in-person passive programs. Tiffany created an in-person dot mosaic in 2019-20 and those mosaics took place online in 2020-21. The Library Therapy wall was also available online. These programs allowed patrons to participate in self-directed activities at their own pace with minimal contact with other library users.