Overview

The UConn Library exists to serve the needs of students, faculty, staff, and researchers in their scholarly, academic, and research work. The library does this in three primary areas:

1. By providing access to a wide variety of information resources necessary for academic research and teaching
2. By providing the space necessary to hold the resources and the staff, and by extension providing a space for the university community to interact with and synthesize information and collaborate with each other
3. By providing critical instruction and guidance in the skills students and scholars need to efficiently and effectively find, organize, and manage information

This is done through the lens of our newly established values - curiosity and inquiry; equity and inclusion; kindness and trust; and having fun. These values, firmly rooted in professional and institutional values, drive how we make decisions, work together, collaborate with the university community, and plan for the future.

The Library system includes Homer Babbidge Library, Archives & Special Collections in the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, two satellite libraries in the School of Fine Arts and Pharmacy, and four regional campuses (Avery Point, Stamford, Hartford, Waterbury). Additionally, the Director of the UConn Health Sciences Library reports to the UConn Library Dean, however the Health Sciences Library is solely supported financially by UConn Health. The UConn Meskill Law Library reports to the Dean of the Law School and supported financially by UConn Law. National rankings require the inclusion of all libraries, regardless of funding or reporting structure.

The Library collaborates heavily with internal and external university partners. Additionally the Homer Babbidge Library is physically home to multiple university partners including: the Humanities Institute, Q Center, W Center, Ombuds, Community Police, and University IT.

In some major areas the UConn Library is in poor health. As indicated in the budget report for FY ’19-21, there have been debilitating cuts to the library in recent years, primarily through reductions in staff positions and secondly, to the collections budget. UConn Library has seen a 40% decrease in staffing
since 2012, with 20% turnover in the last 18 months alone, with low morale a factor in this churn. Because of careful fund management of salary savings the Library has been able to cover the 3% rescissions in 2019 and 2020. UConn Library has been able to maintain current subscriptions to and continue purchasing of library materials via the addition of $1,000,000 each year from the Provost’s Office to the collections allocation. Because of the severely reduced staff size, the Library is missing entire departments that would do work vital to the running of a research library. For example, there is no department that manages technology integration and the user experience. The Library lacks multiple subject specialists to support specific academic disciplines. Because many databases and e-journals are cost-shared across all UConn Libraries, continued resource access is vulnerable to the instability of the library budgets of Law and Health Sciences. Three fourths of the leadership team, including the dean, is new to UConn in the past 18 months, and challenged by acclimating in a unit that had very few policies or procedures in place for basic administrative functions.

Given our significant challenges, outlined above and detailed below, the UConn Library is preparing for the future by focusing this year on completing the strategic framework, through the deep analysis of the institution, all its stakeholders and the whirlwind of change in higher education and information management. The framework will provide direction for next steps and long term planning and will map out how to either reinvest in the UConn Library or how to restructure what the library is able to do within its limited means, as the cuts were deep and haphazard, so rebalancing needs to happen either way.

**Significant Achievements**

- In March of 2019, UConn Library became a public portal in the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) for the materials in the Connecticut Digital Archive. Nearly 80,000 items from the Archives & Special Collections are now shared with a wider audience. [Read more](#).
- The Library continues to be committed to Open Educational Resources state-wide and at UConn. This year the Library became a founding member of the [Open Textbook Network Publishing Cooperative](#), providing editing and publishing support for two open textbooks by Dr. Challa Vijaya Kumar and Dr. Alexander Teplyaev, lobbying for a campus-wide Open Access Task Force, launching GoOpen Connecticut through the CT Commision for Educational Technology, and joining CT’s OER Advisory Board.
- Founded the UConn Collections Collaboration Group. Organizing departments responsible for major collections owned by the University to collaborate in the management and preservation of these collections through seeking ways to share resources and expertise.
- Greenhouse Studios | Scholarly Communications Design at the University of Connecticut, in partnership with UMass Press, received an additional grant of $500,000 from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

**Progress on ’18-’19 Goals**

**Goal 1: Assess ‘What is the Right Library for UConn’**

The multi-year goal is to assess and learn from the University community and create an action plan for the future. Frequent leadership changes at high levels in the institution and the library have made it difficult to provide a consistent path forward. We began by reworking and refilling positions to strategically advance the Library. Hires included an Associate Dean with the expectation of coordinating the strategic plan process, an Associate University Librarian for Academic Engagement to continue to
embed the Library in University research, teaching, and learning, a Collections Strategist to analyze our collections, and a Coordinator for Library Research & Assessment to better incorporate data in decision making.

Staff engaged in a months-long formulation of values to guide our work, creating a statement which includes curiosity and inquiry; equity and inclusion; kindness and trust; and having fun. Once key staffing and the values were in place, the strategic framework process was begun in April of this year.

**Goal 2: Continue System Integrations Across the UConn Libraries**
The impetus behind the ‘One UConn Library’ began in July 2015 under former Provost Choi, and was designed to “enhance library access and services and leverage expertise across the three unique library systems at UConn.” Since 2015 the Library has been successful in increasing meaningful collaboration across all UConn Libraries in areas such as shared leadership, programs including open access, scholarly communications, inclusion in job searches, and resource-sharing. The directive from former Provost Teitelbaum in November 2017 was to pursue possible integrations of three library systems: Alma (collection management), Primo (collection discovery), and ILLiad (interlibrary loan) in order to best support the needs of faculty and students and to realize cost savings where possible. Careful analysis indicated no cost savings nor improvement of the user experience would result from combining Alma and Primo, and for the ILLiad system, costs would increase. Since there was no resultant gain, this integration will not be moving forward. All UConn Libraries will continue to focus on other areas of integration such as the creation of an MOU to formalize the relationship between the libraries, and the successful configuration of NetID with selected systems at Health Sciences.

**Goal 3: Continue with the next phase of the Master Plan work for Homer Babbidge**
The continued implementation of 2015 Master Plan for the Homer Babbidge Library has been placed on hold. At the start of the goal year, upgrades to the Plaza and Level B were paused by the Provost’s Office due to budget constraints. Work shifted to building an exterior staircase required by the fire marshal to be compliant for egress. Work continued in the spring with designLAB architects and University Planning, Design and Construction, building occupants, and the public to communicate construction changes scheduled for May. In June it was announced that due to lack of bids, the staircase project was on hold until the summer of 2020.

Construction projects of this size experience delays, but in this case the disjointed nature of the process, change in leadership and vision for what the Master Plan should be, and the significant staff resources devoted to the design work since 2015, have all negatively affected staff morale. The delay does provide the library the opportunity to include facility planning in the strategic framework. The Library was able to devote funding from the budget for small improvements to the user experience in Homer Babbidge in this past year including: upgrading wayfinding with new directory signage and digital wayfinding to be installed this summer in collaboration with UConn Academic IT. Other improvements funded by the Library were external window washing, and painting to remove graffiti in public study spaces.

**Goal 4: Organizational Development Program**
The UConn Library Organizational Development Program supports the health of the Library by providing new opportunities and shared experiences for staff. These experiences, branded as ‘UConn Library Starts with YOU’, are designed to build trust, strengthen connections, and provide opportunities to explore how staff work together and support each other in the service of users. The inaugural year of the program included defining dedicated resources, appointing a Director of Human Resources (through staff realignment) reporting directly to the Dean, and offering activities specifically selected to provide
employees with the baseline experiences and resources needed to break down silos. These activities included the staff completion of CliftonStrengths, a self-assessment tool to identify individual strengths and talents; conducting a Professional Interest Learning Survey to assess professional development interests; and providing a variety of training sessions including Helping Students in Distress, Managing Unconscious Bias, and Effective Communication.

Additionally the Dean made significant inroads in increasing communication and transparency by providing regular weekly updates, restructuring the Dean’s Library Council to be more participative, and conducting a 180° Dean’s review.

Challenges

In addition to the Library goals, the budget constraints, and staff turnover, these are other challenges of note that the Library is actively working on.

- **Morale:** The numbers in the ARL Investment Index (see Library Ranking section below) are reflective of decreased spending as well as significant morale issues. The Library will continue to work to turn this around through additional organizational development initiatives. This fall we are implementing a Library-wide ClimateQUAL survey, administered by the Association for Research Libraries, to measure library staff workplace climate perceptions and will use the results of the survey to indicate areas in which we will seek to improve morale.
- **Development, Advancement & Stewardship:** In 2017 Foundation support was decreased to .5 FTE, additionally there is no internal dedicated library development staff, no friends group or other board support to manage development work. This coming year a newly created library committee will recommend and implement a formal stewardship program to increase donor engagement and continue to build on our positive relationships with the Foundation.
- **Administrative functionality:** The identification, creation, and implementation of standards and practices continues to be a large part of the work of library administration. This coming year the senior leadership team has an active agenda of specific policies to review or create.

Departures/Hires

In response to the acknowledgement of inadequate Library staffing, in early 2018, former Provost Teitelbaum requested an amendment to the library budget document, outlining staff requirements and the necessary funds to support them. At the request of former Provost Kennedy, the library has folded the amendment into the library strategic framework process. Given the turnover rate, the work of hiring 20% of the workforce is a challenge unto itself. Streamlining the process early in Dean Langley’s tenure has alleviated some of the pressure from having so many simultaneous vacancies.

**Departures**

- **Retirees**
  - 3
- **Left for other positions**
  - 10

**Hires and Transfers**

**Library Assistants and Building & Grounds**

- Matt Carpenter, Buildings & Grounds Officer (September 2018, departed March 2019)
- Sue Cook, Buildings & Grounds Officer (September, 2018)
- Ian Spencer, Buildings & Grounds Officer (October 2018, departed October 2018)
Chad Atwell, Buildings & Grounds Officer (November 2018, departed April 2019)
Ellen Silbermann, Administrative Services Specialist (February 2019)
Jenny Gregory, Access Services Coordinator – Stamford (April 2019)

Archivists, Librarians, and Management Exempt
Rebecca Parmer, Head of Archives & Special Collections (September 2018)
Clara Nguyen, Project Archivist for the Maurice Sendak Collection (September 2018)
Sara Harrington, Associate University Librarian for Academic Engagement (October 2018)
Susanna Cowan, Coordinator for Library Research & Assessment (transfer from CETL, November 2018)
Lauren Slingluff, Associate Dean (February 2019)
Michael Kemezis, Repository Manager (March 2019)
Michael Rodriguez, Collections Strategist (April 2019)

Collaborations with Campus Partners, Innovative Teaching and Research Programs

- In February 2018 the University entered into a contract with the Maurice Sendak Foundation for the Archives & Special Collections Library to house and make accessible his finished artwork. This year the collection transfer was completed and several programs were held including a public reading, an exhibition, and two preview events for the campus community and donors. The materials have been used in classes through English (Children’s Literature, Early College Experience and Professional Development) and Costume Design, Fine Arts (Illustration) as well as by many external organizations and institutions.
- The work of the Greenhouse Studios continues to focus on a new model of inquiry-driven, collaboration-first scholarly production. Collaborations include campus partners such as Music, History, Computer Science, English, Humanities Institute, Art and Art History, NEAG School of Education and externally with Metro State University of Denver, UMass Amherst, Cardiff University, Trinity College (Dublin), George Washington University, University of Chicago, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Duke University Press and UMass Press. Two projects of note include:
  - Husky ReView - The Husky ReView team is building an AR (augmented reality) app that highlights student activism and protest on the UConn campus with materials from Archives & Special Collections
  - Charles VIR - a virtual reality reconstruction of the coronation of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V in Bologna, Italy, in February of 1530
- Staff in the Health Sciences Library continue to support UConn Health through important clinical and patient programs. Staff have been working with clinical teams to improve patient care and safety by increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of information delivery by traveling with clinical care teams, identifying library resources available for the NICHE Project (Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders), and managing health information kiosks that reside in the internal medicine, infectious disease, and endocrinology clinic waiting rooms.
- The UConn Library coordinated the acquisition and implementation of an institutional subscription to ORCID, a unique and persistent digital identifier for researchers and academics.
- Systematic reviews are an increasingly popular form of research in the health, social, and biological sciences to identify, evaluate, and synthesize the results of research. Research Services librarians played an invaluable role in this process by teaming with faculty and graduate students in the Departments of Agricultural & Resource Economics, Allied Health, Kinesiology,
Nursing, and Psychological Sciences to develop, document, and execute comprehensive searches.

- The UConn Library is a founding member of the Eastern Academic Scholars' Trust (EAST), a shared print initiative whose member institutions have committed to retain 9 million books at 60 academic and research libraries in 11 states, including 300,000 books retained at UConn. In the past year UConn Library has contributed to EAST governance, participated in meetings and trainings, and refined internal procedures and workflows in support of EAST.

**Teaching, Intellectual and Service Contributions**

**Staff Publications**


[https://opencommons.uconn.edu/jepch/vol1/iss2/2](https://opencommons.uconn.edu/jepch/vol1/iss2/2)


[https://opencommons.uconn.edu/jepch/vol1/iss2/3](https://opencommons.uconn.edu/jepch/vol1/iss2/3)


[https://journal.code4lib.org/articles/13746](https://journal.code4lib.org/articles/13746)


- Graham Stinnett produced, wrote, edited, published, and promoted 15 episodes for the UConn Archives & Special Collections podcast d’Archive in collaboration with WHUS 91.7 fm
- Khara Leon and Sara Sikes participated in the Boston Library Consortium’s BLC Leads program, a multi-faceted program designed to prepare library professionals who demonstrate leadership potential to take on increasingly demanding roles in BLC libraries
- Jill Livingston and Janice Swaitek participated in the Leadership Institute for Academic Librarians at the Harvard Graduate School of Education
- Kristen Eshelman participated as a traveling archivist for the Traveling Archivist Program administered by Conservation ConneCTion and the CT State Library

Service/Outreach

593 Instruction Sessions (including Health Sciences) for over 25,000 students
1,157 Research Consultations (including Health Sciences)
Community Outreach - over 3,800 hours
Records Management - 16 consultations, facilitation of destruction/transfer with 64 offices
11 semester courses taught

Scholarship

Conference Presentations - 36
Interns Supervised - 16
Research Acknowledgements - 12
Campus Committees - 31
Professional Committees - 48
Exhibitions Curated - 17

Full Professional Services Report
Major Philanthropic Gifts

- Participated in the second annual Day of Giving. Donors selected one of two projects to support - a Relaxation Zone in Homer Babbidge or the digitization of UConn Athletics film footage from the 1940s-1980s. $2,473 was raised from 138 donors, with a staff participation rate of 43%.
- Richard H. Schimmelpfeng dedicated fifty years of service to the UConn Library, through his work as head of the Special Collections Department and as a volunteer for 20 years after retirement. After his death in 2017, he left a gift of over $600,000 in unrestricted funding to UConn Archives & Special Collections.
- Significant collection donations to Archives & Special Collections included the Ann Charters Collection of Beat Generation Literature and Ephemera and collections documenting activism and protest movements, including the Howard Goldbaum Collection of Connecticut Daily Campus Negatives documenting student involvement in marches and protests, the Fred Calabretta Collection of 1960s Memorabilia, and the Joyce McKelvey Rawitscher Papers, the latter two extending the understanding of local, state, and national peace movements.

Major Goals for ’19-’20

Goal 1: Continue to assess ‘What is the Right Library for UConn’

Metrics:
- Complete Strategic Framework - a concise, jargon-free 10 page document, a communication plan to disseminate it to stakeholders, and recommendations on staffing, infrastructure, and space needed to implement (February 2020)
- Complete a hiring plan for the 2020-2021 year consistent with the recommendations from the Strategic Framework Committee (February 2020)
- Complete and disseminate the MOU document between Health Sciences and Law Libraries to clarify the relationships and help frame the ‘Right Library for UConn’ conversation with other campus partners (August 2019)

Goal 2: Space planning for Library facilities

Metrics:
- Re-engage with architects and UConn Planning to revisit Master Plan for Homer Babbidge Library (May 2020)
- Form a taskforce to research and identify improvements that support teaching in the Archives & Special Collections facility (May 2020)
- Install digital wayfinding in Homer Babbidge Library (August 2019)

Goal 3: Increase activities in development, advancement, and stewardship

Metrics:
- Create a timeline/calendar for ‘19-’20 stewardship activities (August 2019)
- Produce donor focused newsletter (Spring 2020)
- Create and implement internal processes and tracking for gifts and spends (Spring 2020)

Goal 4: Identify and increase efficiencies in essential workflows

Metrics:
- Identify, formalize, and implement Library policies and procedures (Continuous)
- Create timeline for and review of policies schedules (Spring 2020)
Library Rankings

The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) Investment Index provides a summary measure of relative investment in 127 academic libraries across North America. These numbers include UConn Health Sciences Library and UConn Law School Library. While it does not measure levels of services, quality of collections, or success in meeting the needs of students, faculty, and researchers; it does provide benchmarking between peer institutions. The chart below shows our rank since 2008, which has been on a downward trend since 2011 and reflective of the budget challenges faced by the State of Connecticut and the University.

This chart shows UConn Library total expenditures (navy bar), expenditures for materials (pale blue bar), professional salary wages (medium blue bar) all as reported to ARL, and our ARL index score (yellow line) from 2008 to 2018.

The numbers represented on the above chart from ARL are:
For comparison purposes, below we have highlighted how the UConn Library compares to the University of Virginia Library. While UConn has slightly larger enrollment numbers (27,578 vs. 24,360) and maintains a similar student to faculty ratio (16 vs. 15), library expenditures for professional staff and materials show a significant difference.

This chart compares UConn Library (medium blue bar) and UVA Library (medium orange bar) expenditures for professional salary wages, UConn Library (light blue bar) and UVA Library (light orange bar) expenditures for materials, all as reported to ARL, and the ARL index scores (UVA/orange line and UConn/blue line) from 2008 to 2018. Note: The numbers reflect the overall budget decrease by 5.5 million and 40% fewer staff.