Introduction

The Mardigian Library and Stamelos Gallery Center faced the challenges of COVID-19 as the university moved to remote learning in March 2020 and mostly remote learning through the summer and fall 2020, winter 2021 and then a mostly full reopening in fall 2021. During the 2020 academic year the Mardigian Library instituted live reference and user experience “chat” through the LibCal application, maintained service hours from Sunday-Friday 9am-7pm, and provided outdoor pickup and drop-off for library materials. The Stamelos Gallery hosted several digital exhibits and lectures including a juried exhibit of campus photography entitled: Art in a Time of Pandemic. The Mardigian Archives and Oral History Center began collecting oral histories, essays, poems, and drawings related to the campus’ response to the pandemic and hosted a digital exhibit titled: UNPRECEDENTED · A Campus Community Reacts to a Pandemic. In January 2021 the Mardigian Library led an effort to join forces with Career Services and Global Education to form Experience Plus (EXP+) designed to promote a Dearborn Wolverine's academic, personal and professional growth. Students will have access to technological support, undergraduate research, intercultural opportunities and career development through interactive learning experiences. This effort resulted in several successful programs including supporting the SURE (Summer Undergraduate Research Experience) 2021 program with 25 faculty/student pairs, Tech Tutors providing virtual and in-person software support for students, faculty and staff, a K-12 summer tutoring program for the families of faculty and staff and led by UM-D trained student tutors, Digital Storytelling, a paid opportunity to train our students in the art of creating and producing digital stories challenging the myths and stereotypes about the Detroit Metro area, Dearborn, and regional branch campuses, and support for the Wolverine Mentor Collective, a new collaborative initiative with student life and Mentor Collective | Impact-Driven Mentorship for Higher Education Institutions. As of October 2021, the Mardigian Library and Stamelos Gallery are open to all current students, faculty, and staff of UM-Dearborn who are in compliance with the vaccine mandate and we provide full use of study space, group study rooms, computer labs, loanable technology including Chrome books, chargers, noise reducing headphones, printing services, Interlibrary Loan, and MelCat. We have hired a new Head of User Services and an Engineering and Mathematics Librarian.
Patron Interactions

The User Services team and Library Research Center (LRC) partnered together to support students and faculty through the LibAnswers virtual chat reference service. This service extends the reference service and research support beyond the physical hours and spaces of the library, which has been especially important as the physical library hours have been very limited.

Between AY2020 and AY2021, we have continued to see increased usage of our LibAnswers services, including virtual chat and text message capabilities. According to User Services data, the library saw a 30.43% increase in LibAnswer interactions in AY2021 (690 interactions) compared to AY 2020 (529 interactions).

Despite not being physically present on campus, the LRC was still able to fully support 3,822 students and the faculty of the University. Here is a brief summary of the support offered this past academic year:

**New Innovations**
- 641 virtual reference interactions with students (via LibAnswers)
- 100 online learning objects created and deployed
- 36 online research skill sessions/workshops/orientations
- 42 new customized subject guides created or revised (LibGuides)

**Continued Services**
- 146 courses supported
- 344 point-of-need Canvas announcements
- 27 Masters thesis format checks completed MAINTAINED
- 13 Doctoral dissertation format checks completed MAINTAINED
- 28,442 total subject guide (LibGuide) views

**Highlights from remote delivery**

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and the resulting changes to physical circulation and services, the Mardigian Library worked to provide necessary services and expand digital resources to all students, faculty, and staff.

In September 2020, the User Services department began offering an external, contactless pick-up/return service for UM-Dearborn students, faculty, and staff. This involved patrons placing holds library materials and scheduling pick-up/return appointments for them using an online calendar system.
Contactless services were a new initiative in the library during AY2020. There was a high demand for appointments when the service was first offered, which decreased as the semester went on. Although the winter semester did not see as large of an initial demand, use of the contactless appointment system remained steady.

Since this year was entirely worked under COVID restrictions, the Library Technical Systems (LTS) department purchased more online resources. In 2020/21 we purchased 56% more ebooks than the year before, gaining access to 228 ebooks. We also were granted access to 3,552 ebooks purchased by the Ann Arbor library system. Almost all the vendors Ann Arbor works with grants access to ebooks to both the Flint and Dearborn campuses. We are also part of many ebook package deals between the three campuses. This year we reached the milestone of having access to 1,077,707 ebooks.

We were able to maintain our subscriptions to databases and serials, most of which are online. Our streaming video collection was well used this year. We piloted a collection called Feature Films for Education. There were 1,015 views on this collection. We also started using the Flex collection of Swank streaming videos. This allowed us the flexibility to have access to streaming videos for short periods of times so we could match our titles against the class syllabi for specific lessons throughout the semester. We were able to present more streaming videos for the same cost as last year. We will be able to continue the Flex collection for the coming years.

The Gallery staff hosted three digital exhibitions since August 2020 and coordinated the first physical exhibition for our return to campus, which opened September 9, 2021. While remote, Gallery staff worked with the Facilities Department to complete project to clean, repair, re-paint, re-locate, and re-install four outdoor sculptures with newly laid concrete pads. Our Curator
supervised Art History student intern/Gallery Assistant for a one-year appointment and department staff worked with student on numerous projects, including a digital tour of the outdoor sculpture collection, and a research and writing project for numerous paintings in the collection, to provide her with a well-rounded, hands-on experience in museum work. Our Registrar coordinated the professional photography of approximately 55 collection pieces. Additionally, our Curator served on the COVID-19 Archives Committee gathering University of Michigan-Dearborn related archival materials during the pandemic, conducting, reviewing and summarizing oral histories, and curating two sections of the exhibition.

During these complex and troubling times, members of the LRC team collaborated with the User Services team on creation of LibGuides to collect information and resources about timely events occurring in the news including: Covid-19, Anti-Racism, Asian American/Pacific Islander Anti-Discrimination Resources, the January 6th Insurrection, and Essential Studies on the Modern Middle East (a work in progress with Dr. Camron Amin).

**Key Projects**

**Student Employee Professional Development Program:** Coordinated by Emily Chippa, the library’s Student Employee Coordinator, User Services developed a formalized Student Employee Professional Development Program. Program goals include teaching student assistants the importance of professional development and transferable skills, how to apply the National Association of College and Employers (NACE) competencies into their current and future professions, and setting academic/professional/personal goals. The program will consist of 1:1 monthly check-in meetings between student assistants and User Services Supervisors, four workshops, and end-of-semester evaluations. The program will launch in August 2021.

**Digital Objects Inventory:** In an effort to streamline our work and in the spirit of sharing and collaboration, the Library Research Center (LRC) began an inventory of online learning objects that have been created over the years by the team. We hope that, once complete, this inventory will help us to respond quickly to requests for these types of course support resources. In addition, we hope that reviewing the inventory will show us where gaps exist which will inform the resources we create in the future.

**Cambridge Read and Publish:** We are part of the Cambridge Read and Publish deal. This allowed us access to several hundred Cambridge journals but also made it possible for our faculty to publish open access articles in qualified Cambridge journals at no cost to the faculty member.

**Digital Storytelling Project:** Members of the LRC team worked with the larger Experience+ team to identify areas of collaboration and to plan programming and events to support the literacies defined by the Experience+ mission. The head of the LRC is working with EXP+ on a digital storytelling project in response to a grant received by the University from the Coalition for
Life-Transformative Education (CLTE). So far, this has involved a 10 week certification program from StoryCenter. EXP+ annual report: