

ANNUAL REPORT



2023–24

Folke Bernadotte Memorial Library

Annual Report

FOLKE BERNADOTTE MEMORIAL LIBRARY

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Above: The Library sponsored a reading challenge in March 2023.

TEACHING & LEARNING

Our instruction program shrunk a bit during the 2023–24 academic year. Library faculty members taught 131 library instruction sessions, reaching 1,486 students. Here is a snapshot comparing last year with this year:

Last Year (2022–23)	This Year (2023–24)
Asynchronous – 1	Asynchronous – 2
Hybrid-online – 0	Hybrid-online – 0
Simultaneous hybrid - in-person – 0	Simultaneous hybrid - in-person – 0
Synchronous - in-person – 140	Synchronous - in-person – 129
Synchronous - online – 5	Synchronous - online – 0

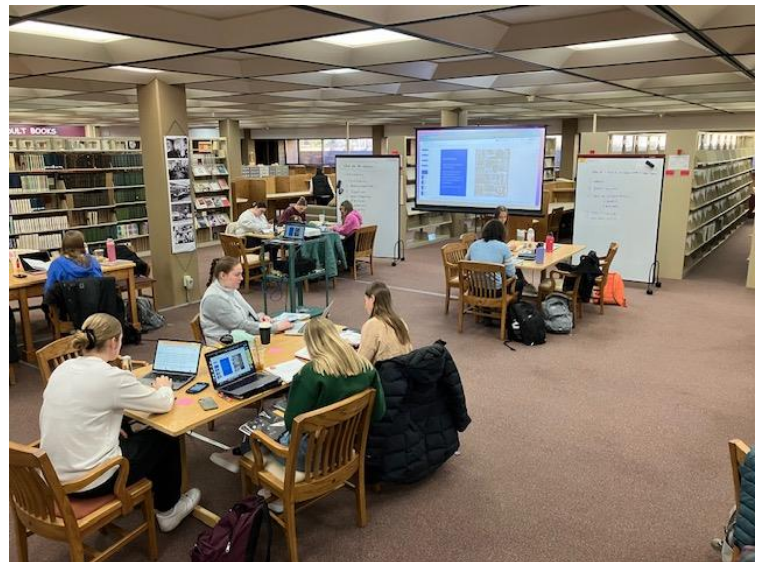
We received fewer reference questions this year compared to last year (276 this year compared to 292 last year). We did see a 10% increase in the number of questions that required a librarian (80% this year vs. 70% last year). We fielded most of our questions in person at the reference desk (44.9%). “By appointment in-person” came in second (34.1%), followed by email in third place (14.1%).

In addition to our typical reference and instruction responsibilities, we also hosted a Fall 2023 internship for Mia Eisenbacher '24 (Major: English) and a Spring 2024 internship for Clare Koll '25 (Major: English).

This past year, the College and Lutheran Church Archives assisted 243 patrons, an increase over last year’s numbers. They also welcomed many individual researchers and groups into the Special Collections & Rare Books room (SCRB) and the Imaginarium.

Faculty in our department also contributed to the following for-credit course this year:

- POL 200: Analyzing Politics Embedded Library Component - Fall term, enrolling 10 students (Gilbert)



Above: Students in EDU 320 (Literacy for K-12 Teachers) learned how to find children's and YA literature in our collections and were introduced to wordless picture books.

Mission Statement: The library advances the teaching mission and intellectual life of the College by offering inclusive services and programs, selecting diverse materials, and facilitating equal access to information for all. The library promotes information literacy by instructing in the ethical use, interpretation, and evaluation of resources.

COLLECTIONS

We added more than 3,700 items to our collections this past year, including:

- 3,630 Books
- 38 DVDs
- 42 Streaming Videos
- 18 Other formats

This year we received 1,543 gift items. We continue to partner with Better World Books for unneeded donations.

In 2023–24, the library circulated 8,981 items from the physical library collection. There was a slight increase in foot traffic in the building compared to last year, averaging 6,848 visitors per month (last year we averaged 6,400 visitors per month).

We often rely on interlibrary loan through our statewide network of libraries to provide materials that we do not have available in our collection. Fortunately, our fill rate for borrowing requests is high; this year, we were able to fill 96 percent of requests.



Left: A Books in Bloom display inspired by The BFG (author: Roald Dahl) was paired with a poster promoting Children's Book Week; this was a perfect pairing that allowed us to highlight several books in our children's and YA collections.

SUCSESSES & CHALLENGES

Successes

- Student Advisory Board. Thanks to support from the Friends of the Library-Gustavus Library Associates, the Library's inaugural cohort for a Student Advisory Board was selected in Fall 2023, and the members began their work in Spring 2024. In addition to executing two outreach events for the Library and assisting with Books in Bloom (one of our signature community events sponsored by the Friends of the Library – GLA), the five members provided the department with feedback on computer use/setup in our main instructional classroom and advice about promoting our Research Next Steps service.
- Better data on building usage. This past October we purchased the PEARL People Counter from SMS StoreTraffic and it allows us to analyze our foot traffic by hour, day, month, etc. With changes to the daily schedule and academic calendar next year, we will continue our subscription for at least one more year.



Above: The Staff Enhancement committee organized a tour of the Zoology Museum on campus (led by Jon Grinnell of the Biology department).

Challenges

- Staffing cuts. Losing two staff positions has been challenging, as there are many specialized roles within libraries and the remaining staff members are stretched thin. Our morale has suffered, as members of the department struggle under this weight and feel that our work (which is often invisible by design) is unrecognized or unappreciated by those outside of the department. In addition, we had to reduce our summer student staffing from three student employees to just two; this has resulted in a reduction of building hours this summer. As service-oriented professionals, it is painful for us to know that these changes (and other changes to come) will have a negative impact on our users.
- Deferred maintenance. This is what was written in last year's report, and the year before: "From water leaks to worn-out carpet to crumbling brickwork, our building is showing its age. With the College prioritizing other facilities and with limited forward progress in fundraising, we will do our best to keep the building functional by submitting capital requests for improvements and repairs." Improvements to our facility have been mentioned in every annual report for the past several years.
- Chronic stress. While we are far from the only department impacted by cuts, losing two staff positions in nine months has been very stressful for our department. FAFSA delays and uncertainty about the incoming student FTE is feeding our anxiety. Everyone in the Library has continued concerns about enrollment and how decreasing enrollment might have an impact on our staffing levels and budget.

WITH GRATITUDE

This year, our wonderful Friends of the Library group, Gustavus Library Associates (GLA), collaborated with us for another successful Books in Bloom event. Established in 1977, GLA continues to promote “learning, literature, and the Folke Bernadotte Memorial Library.” This preeminent academic-library support group has an active membership of more than 300 and has built an endowment nearing \$3 million. It is led by a dedicated board of directors who plan and host an array of cultural, educational, and social events. The fundraising done by GLA provides approximately 25 percent of the library’s acquisitions budget. We could not support faculty teaching or student learning without their generous efforts.



Left: The 2024 Books in Bloom Committee: Barbara Carlson, Ava Goepfert, Mim Kagol, Sonja Timmerman, Michelle Twait, Ginny Bakke, Jill Haugen, Dana Lamb, Kate Sonstebly. Not pictured: Alecia Gazzola & Dean Wahlund.

"Friends of the Library - Gustavus Library Associates (GLA) promotes learning, literature, and the Folke Bernadotte Memorial Library at Gustavus Adolphus College."

LOOKING AHEAD

As the College grapples with an enrollment crisis and many uncertainties, the library faculty and staff will do our best to support student learning while engaging in the important (but difficult) work that lies ahead.

Selected 2024–25 Goals

- Adjust to second major reorganization of staff because of position eliminations.
- Continue developing the role of the Library's Student Advisory Board with returning & new board members for 2024-25, focusing on student surveys and social media initiatives.
- Continue to advocate for improvements to the building (e.g., carpeting, study rooms, etc.).
- Moving toward appointment-based reference services.
- Continued conversations with the Art & Art History department to discuss potential collaborations related to GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Museums) and a teaching museum space.

Resource Priorities

Staffing priorities:

- Restore the Library Operations position.
- Be thoughtful, creative, and forward-thinking with staffing and workflows in the face of enrollment challenges.

Monetary resources:

- Increased budgetary support for electronic resources (e-journals and databases).
- Restructure our current acquisitions model to provide us with more flexibility within our budget.
- Seek funding to make improvements to the facility (such as replacing carpeting and building study rooms).



Above: During spring break, the e-classroom was updated with new monitors that offer USB-C ports. In addition, we removed half of the machines to improve sightlines and create space for students who bring their own devices.

APPENDIX A: FACULTY/STAFF ACTIVITIES

Presentations & Publications by Library Faculty and Staff

Adrianna Darden offered a “memorabilia display” and answered questions from attendees during the May 2024 Books in Bloom event.

Rachel Flynn co-presented along with faculty members Hayley Russell (HES) and Lauren Hecht (PSY) at the Society for the Teaching of Psychology Annual Conference on Teaching. Their presentation was entitled, “Critical Consumption and Production of Psychological Information.” Rachel Flynn was also an invited faculty panelist at the annual MAYDAY! Peace Conference, “Navigating Conflict: How Do We Communicate Across Differences and Work Towards Peace?” Rachel and faculty member Laura Burrack (BIO) will offer a workshop in May and August for the John S. Kendall Center for Engaged Learning 2024 Summer Teaching and Learning Workshop series entitled, “Incorporating Information Literacy in General Education Courses and WRITL.”

Rachel Flynn, Julie Gilbert, and Anna Hulseberg offered a Teachers Talking session in April 2024 on “Designing Research Assignments for Information Literacy.”

Julie Gilbert published *Cora and the Deadly Storm: A Tri-State Tornado Survival Story*, part of the *Girls Survive* series from Capstone.

Jeff Jenson presented a Faculty Shop Talk titled “*Crotalus horridus*: A History of Destruction in the North Star State.” He presented a related paper at the Northern Great Plains History Conference (Sioux Falls, SD).

James Nickras assisted in planning and led a roundtable discussion at the 2023 OCLC WMS Community Unconference in September 2023.

Kate Sonstebj traveled to New Jersey in March to speak to Alpine Elementary School for their “Wild about Reading” week. In two assemblies, she met hundreds of kindergarten, first-, and second-grade fans, and she fielded innumerable questions during four lunch periods! Kate is the author of nearly 250 children's nonfiction books, making her well-known in school-library circles.

Sonja Timmerman was a panelist at the Minitex Connect conference in Brooklyn Park in May 2024.



Above: Rachel Flynn, Instructor and Academic Librarian, served as one of the panelists for this year’s MAYDAY! Peace Conference.

Additional Achievements

Adrianna Darden worked with the College's main content creators (Marketing, Athletics, and Fine Arts) to make sure their digital content gets saved in the Archives. She liaised with the Nicollet County Historical Society regarding collection transfers between our two organizations. She also attended the Minnesota Archives Symposium, as well as webinars on collections assessment and disaster planning.

Rachel Flynn served on the FTS Advisory Board, as co-Program Assessment Liaison for the library's instruction program with Anna Hulseberg, and as the supervisor for the 2023-2024 Patricia Lindell Scholar award winner. She also served on the library's Outreach & Promotion Committee.

Julie Gilbert won the 2023 Best Indie-Published Young Adult Fiction Author award for her novel, Cemetery Songs. The award was sponsored by the Minnesota Author Project, MN Writes MN Reads, and the Minnesota Library Foundation. As a certified meditation teacher, she offered multiple secular meditation sessions in the Bonnier Multifaith Center and gave meditation talks and led practices at events in the library, Gustavus Professional Development Days, the Step Up program, a Chapel service, and in several classes as an invited speaker. Julie served on a review committee for a senior continuing faculty member and was also a new faculty mentor. Within the department, Julie was a member of the library's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee and was the site supervisor for the library's fall intern.

Anna Hulseberg served on the library's Outreach & Promotion Committee and as Program Assessment Co-Liaison. She also served on the Third Year Review Subcommittee of the Faculty Personnel Committee, as Historian for the Gustavus Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, and on the steering committee of the Minnesota Oberlin Libraries Technical Services Group. She participated in admissions and faculty development programming.

Jeff Jenson served as a Liberal Arts Search Representative (LASR) on tenure-track searches for the departments of Nursing and Psychological Science. He was appointed to the college's new Adjudication Board. In addition, Jeff attended the Minnesota Archives Symposium (St. Paul), the annual meeting of the Midwest Archives Conference (Des Moines, Iowa), and the MNOBE Technical Services-ish Gathering (Carleton College). Jeff also served on the department's Staff Enhancement Committee.

Dan Mollner served as Faculty Ombudsperson and a member of the College's Institutional Review Board during the fall semester. Within the library, he served on the DEI and Library Space Committees.

James Nickras added many of the Information Desk responsibilities to his role in October. He was a Gustavus Employee of the Month for December.

Melissa Perron assumed the responsibility of stack maintenance after library reorganization in the fall. She updated all 98 of the LC category signs on the end of book ranges throughout the

building. She served on two library committees and participated in a Canva for Campus test group originating in the Marketing department.

Jeannie Peterson served on the library's internal Staff Enhancement Committee planning and implementing professional development activities as well as emergency response drills (e.g. fire and tornado). Outside the library, Jeannie provided leadership for the Academic Administrative Assistants for the second consecutive year. She also repeated her committee role in planning and facilitating sessions for the Human Resources' Gustavus Professional Development Days held January 29 – February 1. Jeannie also served on the Campus Safety & Health Committee and attended several ACUE webinars fostering inclusivity practices across campus.

Kate Sonsteby had her second baby at the beginning of fall semester but was back in time to co-chair the employee holiday party for the campus Events Committee! She served as an Onboarding Buddy to two new Gustavus employees, and she exercised her editorial skills as part of the planning committee for Books in Bloom (May 3–5, 2024), assisting in the production of all promotional and descriptive materials. Along with Sonja Timmerman, she mentored the library's first cohort of Student Advisory Board members and oversaw their outreach efforts.

Sonja Timmerman. In addition to serving on the library's Space, Wireheads, and DEI Committees, she trained a new student assistant; attended the MnOBE Technical Services conference in Northfield in April 2024; planned and executed the Books in Bloom event in collaboration with the Library's Friends group in May 2024, and completed ASL language lessons throughout the year.



Left: A staff photo taken in December 2023 for the yearbook.