

litaohkoonimao'pi Maana'piisti University Library



Creating Connections: **University Library Impact Report 2024/25**



University of
Lethbridge

Library
litaohkoonimao'pi



Dr. Harold Jansen
University Librarian

I often get asked "How are things going in the Library?" I then go on excitedly about all the exciting things we're doing and the difference we're making in the lives of the University of Lethbridge community. We decided to take a moment and put some of these stories together into this impact report for a broader audience.

Libraries have gone through tremendous change over the last few decades as digital forms of information eclipse traditional physical materials. This, combined with the impact of inflation and a weaker Canadian dollar makes for a very challenging environment within which we do our work. It is a testament to the unwavering dedication of the Library's staff that they continue to find ways to excel and help the University of Lethbridge achieve its goals. As you will read in these pages, the Library does this through means such as making sure we get the right resources to researchers, creating

and maintaining spaces for study and contemplation, and working with instructors to support and enhance what they are doing in the classroom.

I hope you enjoy reading these stories and learning more about the incredible work the Library is doing. I know you will find them as inspiring as I do.

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Supporting Student Success

During the May 2025 convocation, Jaxon Reiter walked across the stage, accepting not only his parchment for his Master of Science in Biological Sciences, but also the Governor General's Gold Medal for the highest academic achievement among graduate students. Reiter's hard work is obviously most responsible for his accomplishments, but he also credits the Library.

"The Library played a huge role in my academic success, not just by giving me access to the resources and quiet spaces I needed to study and research, but also through the support of its incredible staff"

- Jaxon Reiter

Prior to his Master's Degree, he did his Bachelor's Degree at the University of Lethbridge. He figures that, during his time as a student, he used almost every service the Library provided, from using the physical and digital collections, borrowing technology, using group work groups to getting reference help from staff.

Among Library staff, Reiter is best known for his extensive use of the Library's [interlibrary loan service](#), which he describes as a "game changer" for him. He estimates that in his time as a student, he requested more than 500 interlibrary loans and used those materials not only for his own research, but also to support his work as a graduate teaching assistant. "The process was always straightforward," says

Reiter. "The material was received in a timely manner, and the staff were incredibly helpful and accommodating. I always felt supported in getting exactly what I needed."

Reiter's favourite memory of the Library is using the space in the quiet summer months, when he would gather a stack of books, settle into a quiet spot, and "read for hours." For him, the Library was a space where he could return to the core of being a student: "the personal pursuit of knowledge fueled by curiosity."

Reiter is heading to the University of California to pursue a Ph.D. and the staff of the Library will miss seeing his friendly face. As for Reiter, he will look fondly back on this time in the Library: "It was a constant throughout my academic journey, where I could return again and again to advance my studies and feel at home."



Photo from left to right: Marnie Rogstad and Jaxon Reiter at the Library's Services Desk.



2,990

interlibrary loans fulfilled



3,581

students who received library instruction



234.1K

views of Library-created help guides



6,068

reference questions answered

Library-Faculty Partnerships

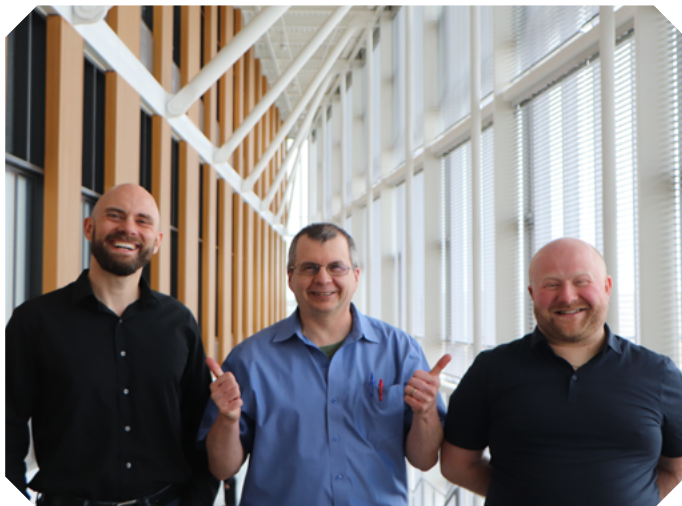


Photo from left to right: Bryson Duda, Dr. Derek Peddle, and Rob Horlacher in the Science Building

The University Library's [Project Sandbox](#) is a distinctive initiative that is enriching student learning through hands-on workshops and technology that are used in real-world applications. Crucial to its impact are the many strong partnerships forged with faculty members, exemplified by the long-standing collaboration with Dr. Derek Peddle from the [Department of Geography & Environment](#). His experience demonstrates how this synergy significantly enhances student outcomes.

Leveraging its in-house expertise and infrastructure, the University Library delivers specialized Project Sandbox workshops covering areas such as Python programming, 3-D modeling software, and effective research poster creation. Led by Library staff members Rob Horlacher and Bryson Duda, these workshops equip students with crucial technical skills directly applicable to their coursework and future careers. Dr. Peddle underscores that this partnership provides students with invaluable access to knowledge and support.

This synergy is also pivotal in facilitating work-integrated learning (WIL). Students in Dr. Peddle's mapping and remote sensing courses have engaged in major projects with diverse local and regional partners, spanning government, private industry, and non-profit sectors in areas such as agriculture, forestry, energy, environment, and urban mapping. Students apply skills acquired through Library-supported Project Sandbox workshops in these experiential learning settings.

"Project Sandbox definitely has enhanced the courses and the student experience. It creates a very rich learning environment."

- Dr. Derek Peddle

The University Library's resources and staff expertise are integral to students' abilities in research, data management, and effective presentation. Dr. Peddle highlights this impact, stating, "The practical skills gained through this collaboration directly translate to tangible outcomes in real-world projects, with partners such as CPAWS-Edmonton, Alberta Geological Survey, Alberta Southwest, Tourism Lethbridge, Runner's Soul, City of Lethbridge and Agriculture Canada. Students learn by doing - Project Sandbox has been a great help with that!"



53

Project Sandbox
workshops and events



655.4K

locally digitized items



5,519

visits to the OPUS
research repository



283.4K

searches for books, articles,
videos, and other content

Community-Building Initiatives

On December 6, 2024, the Women's Peace Garden was revitalized to honour those women slain in the École Polytechnique massacre 35 years earlier. The space features a beautiful mural on level ten of the University Library, with 14 plants dedicated to the women lost and a prominent listing of their names to ensure they are never forgotten. This project was done in cooperation with many individuals across campus, including artist Claire Lahey (a student in the Faculty of Education who also works in the Sexual Violence Support & Education Office) and Marnie Rogstad (University Library).

Marnie felt the former Garden, which consisted of plants in a corner of the Library, could use more prominence. The massacre occurred in Marnie's first year of university and she recalls it being "a stunning act of violence.... so targeted and so anti-woman and anti-gender-role." Knowing the 35th anniversary of this event was in 2024, and wanting to remind people that these acts of violence against women were not solely in the past, Marnie worked with the offices of [Accessibility, Belonging and](#)

[Community](#) and [Sexual Violence Support and Education](#) to bring the project to light.

"There's hope in her artwork, not just the sorrow... there's the remembrance, but there's the resilience. And I think she's just done a beautiful job of capturing that."

- Marnie Rogstad

A generation later, Claire had only a vague understanding of the École Polytechnique event, having never learned about it in school. Her mural incorporates 14 roses, each inspired by a victim of the massacre. While working on this project many people asked her about the event, which gave her the chance to talk about it and further inspired her. Marnie added, "there's hope in her artwork, not just the sorrow... there's the remembrance, but there's the resilience. And I think she's just done a beautiful job of capturing that."

Claire said she wants to make "more work that is striving for change in our world... public things that speak on important issues, where we can use art to make sorrow into a possibility for positive realities."

Overlooking Science Commons, the garden stands as a living memorial and demonstrates our community's dedication, resilience, and solidarity against those that oppress and silence women for daring to achieve in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

[Learn more about the Women's Peace Garden.](#)



Photo from left to right: Marnie Rogstad and Claire Lahey standing in front of the Ecole Polytechnique memorial.



119.3K

visits to locally-digitized
digital collections



2,132

participants in library events



254.1K

in-person visits to the library



3,184

followers on social
media platforms

Spotlight on Collections

Our Library collection has changed substantially over the past few decades, but the shift from print to digital has been particularly dramatic in the past ten years.

Ongoing subscriptions such as journals and databases continue to rise each year, lowering the proportion of funds available for one-time (book) purchases. At the same time, we've seen a complete flip in the book formats we purchase: In 2015/16, 79% of our book purchases were print copies; a decade later, 71% of our book purchases are electronic. There are pros and cons to this, of course, but our patrons seem to prefer the ease of access and searchability of e-books; it's also obviously much easier for those on our Calgary campus and those studying at a distance to access them. The shift from electronic to print is also a trend we see in journal subscriptions, where we have radically decreased our print serials collection due to lack of use and our users' preference for the convenience of electronic.

Another big benefit of e-books is that we

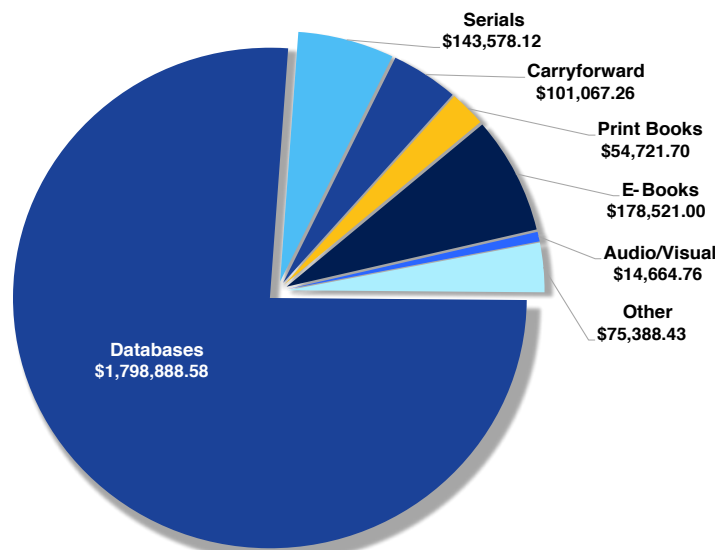


Chart: Library's Acquisition Expenditures for 2024-2025

can participate in patron-driven acquisition models. The records of books we have not yet purchased are in our system, and in some cases are completely free for us to use several times, after which we automatically purchase them. In other cases, we

can choose at the end of the year which books we keep permanently based on those that were most used. It's a great way to ensure we are creating a Library collection that responds to the needs of our community. Of course, we value faculty input at all times so if you do have a collection request, please reach out to your Subject Librarian.

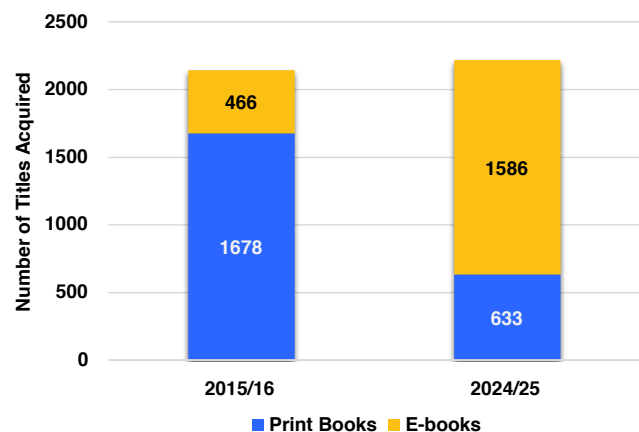
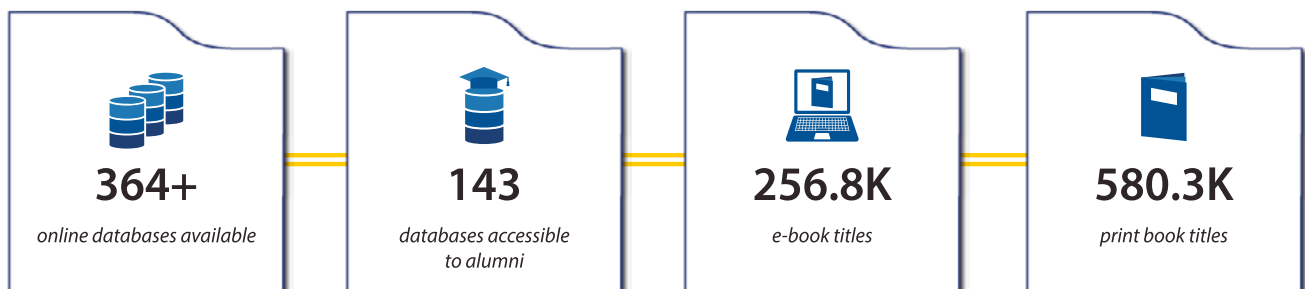
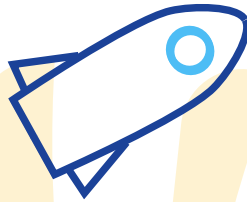


Chart: Library's Print vs E-Book purchases then and now



Supporting the Strategic Plan



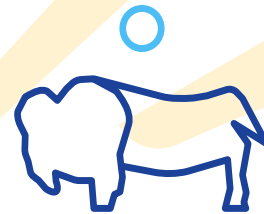
Shape the Future

- Learning assistance & technology support
- Formal & informal classroom instruction & technology support
- Dissemination of research outputs using Library-supported platforms (e.g., OPUS research repository & Borealis data archive)



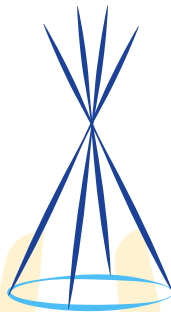
Challenge Boundaries and Inspire Curiosity

- Access to key online & physical collections via discovery tools
- Research assistance & technology support at time of need
- Access to locally-digitized digital collections (e.g., Lethbridge Herald archive)



Engage Communities

- Partnerships with local & regional cultural organizations
- Community engagement initiatives (Blackfoot language signage, "Our Stories" Indigenous collection)
- Preservation and access to community resources relevant to Southern Albertans (Archives, Special Collections; SPAN project)



Be a Place Where People Aspire to Learn, Work, and Contribute

- Provision of a variety of Library spaces including quiet zones, individual desks, group work rooms & 24-hr study
- Library themed events & social networks that cultivate student engagement
- Collaborations with faculty to support teaching & research