

Library Department

Annual Report
2023-2024

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Letter from the Director

Penfield Library faculty and staff accomplished so much throughout 2023-2024, contributing to SUNY Oswego's institutional priorities while fulfilling our library's core values of access, learning, equity, sustainability, and collaboration. This annual report presents a picture of what we achieved and the impact it had on our patrons - SUNY Oswego students, faculty, and staff, as well as the local community and broader community of alumni and researchers worldwide.

Our ultimate goal is to facilitate student and faculty success during their academic careers and beyond, and we achieved this in 2023-2024. We provided and improved access to a vast wealth of library materials, including celebrating the past through our historical collections and moving forward into the future with new acquisitions and increased online access. Our staff is approachable and helpful - we answered the impressive number of nearly 7,800 questions. We improved the experience of using our facility, making it more welcoming, useful, and accessible to patrons. This is a vibrant and busy place where students and faculty want to be - we had over 320,000 visits to the library last year. We collaborated throughout the year on projects with faculty and students, and engaged with alumni, local businesses, and the community.

We gathered feedback from students who attended information literacy classes taught by faculty librarians. Nearly all students learned something new and felt more confident about their ability to complete assignments based on what they'd learned. Yet some reported that they didn't previously know about the library's valuable services and resources, and wish they had sooner. This is precisely why we continue to prioritize educational outreach, creating and seizing strategic opportunities to engage with SUNY Oswego's students and faculty. Read on to learn about some of the wonderful outreach we did in 2023-2024.

I hope you will enjoy reading this report highlighting the accomplishments of the Penfield Library faculty and staff in 2023-2024. I look forward to seeing YOU in the library, at our events, or collaborating with our staff in 2024-2025.

Sarah C. Weisman
Library Director

Fast Facts 2023-24

430,614+ searches run



322,342 visits to Penfield Library



11,651 physical items loaned



7,783 questions answered



6,838 pages digitized



1,245 books / individual items added to the collection



160 collections processed in Archives & Special Collections



139 class sessions taught



Access Services

Access Services is the library unit in charge of loaning materials to SUNY Oswego students, faculty, and staff, as well as members of the public. In addition to staffing the Check-Out & Reserves Desk for all **3,646 hours** that the library building was open, they completed several large initiatives in 2023-2024 with a goal of making the library more welcoming and useful to all library patrons.

Self Checkouts



Self checkout stations support patron privacy, allowing users to check out materials on topics they may not want others to know they're reading.

This year, library faculty and staff moved the Penfield Library's self checkout station to an improved location with line of sight to the main entrance and the Check-Out & Reserves Desk.

Self checkouts more than doubled to 203
uses of the station.

(There were 72 uses in 2022-2023.)

Access Services (continued)

Resource Sharing

Penfield Library participates in a network of libraries around the country who share materials so that users can freely access what they need. In 2023-2024:

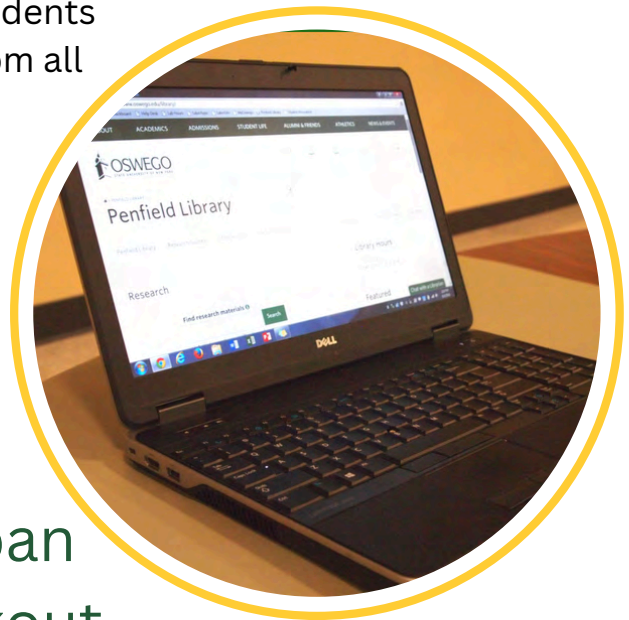
- **1503 items** borrowed from other libraries
- **2916 items** loaned to other libraries
- **38 e-documents** scanned and delivered to SUNY Oswego users

Extended Laptop Loan Program

Access Services collaborated with Campus Technology Services and the Dean of Students Office to upgrade library laptop loans from all being 3-hour, in-building use.

Now the library is able to offer:

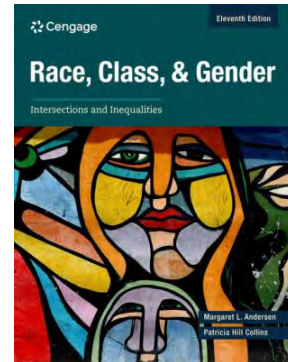
- **10 laptops**
for week-long loan
- **10 laptops**
for semester-long loan
- **MacBooks** for checkout



Access Services (continued)

Most-Borrowed Physical Resources

Course Reserves remain the library's most popular items for checkout, allowing students to access print copies of textbooks and assigned readings for select courses free of charge. 100% of the library's top-10 most-borrowed resources for 2023-2024 are course reserve titles:



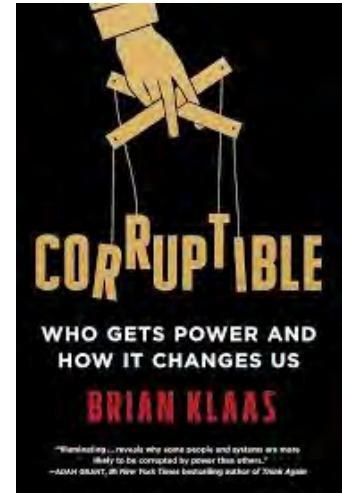
1. *Race, Class & Gender: Intersections and Inequalities*
2. *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study*
3. A tie!
 - a. *Sources of Global History Since 1900*
 - b. *Drugs and society*
4. *Deculturalization and The Struggle For Equality: A Brief History of the Education of Dominated Cultures in the United States*
5. *Aim for the Heart: Write, Shoot, Report, and Produce for TV and Multimedia*
6. *Elementary and middle school mathematics: teaching developmentally*
7. *Energy, Power, and Transportation Technology*
8. *Rethinking Our Classrooms, Volume 1: Teaching for Equity and Justice*
9. *Major Problems in the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era*

Access Services (continued)

Most-Borrowed (Excluding Reserves)

If we exclude Course Reserves materials from the library's most-borrowed titles of the year, we see a wide range of titles and topics topped by the year's Oswego Reading Initiative book: *Corruptible: who gets power and how it changes us*, by Brian Klaas.

1. *Corruptible: who gets power and how it changes us*
2. *Bloom into you*
3. *Obsessed*
4. A tie!
 - a. *Early American Indian documents: treaties and laws, 1607-1789*
 - b. *Roads to infinity: the mathematics of truth and proof*
 - c. *Dear brother*
 - d. *Houghton Mifflin social studies: states and regions*
5. *Brookings-Wharton papers on urban affairs.*
6. A tie!
 - a. *California golden: a novel*
 - b. *Encyclopedia of energy*
 - c. *Lessons in chemistry: a novel*
 - d. *Northeast snowstorms*



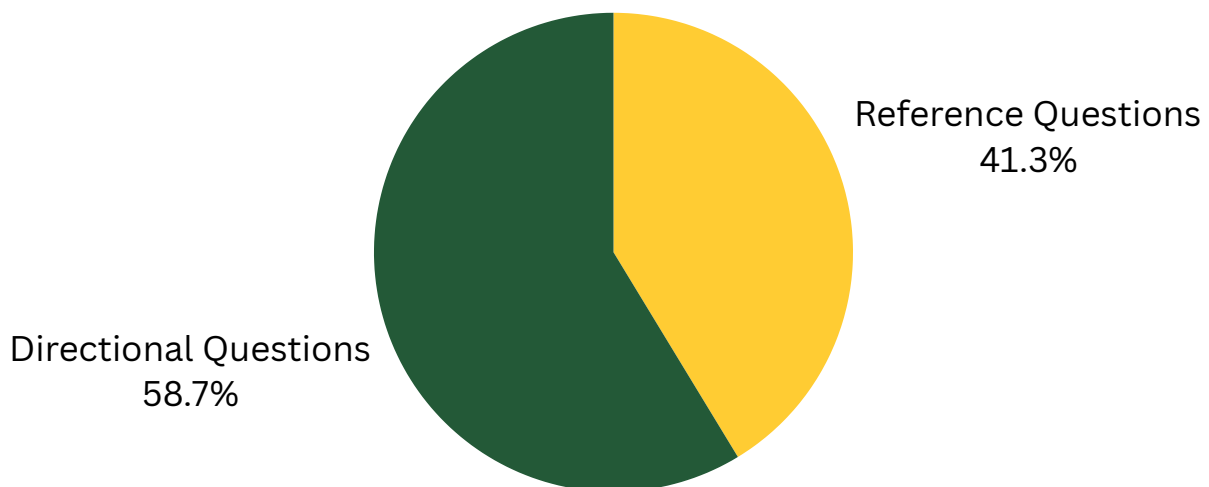
Reference



Penfield Library’s reference services help users navigate the library and also provide on-demand, individualized support for research. Library faculty and staff answer a broad spectrum of questions for students, faculty, staff, and visitors to campus. From July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, library employees recorded:

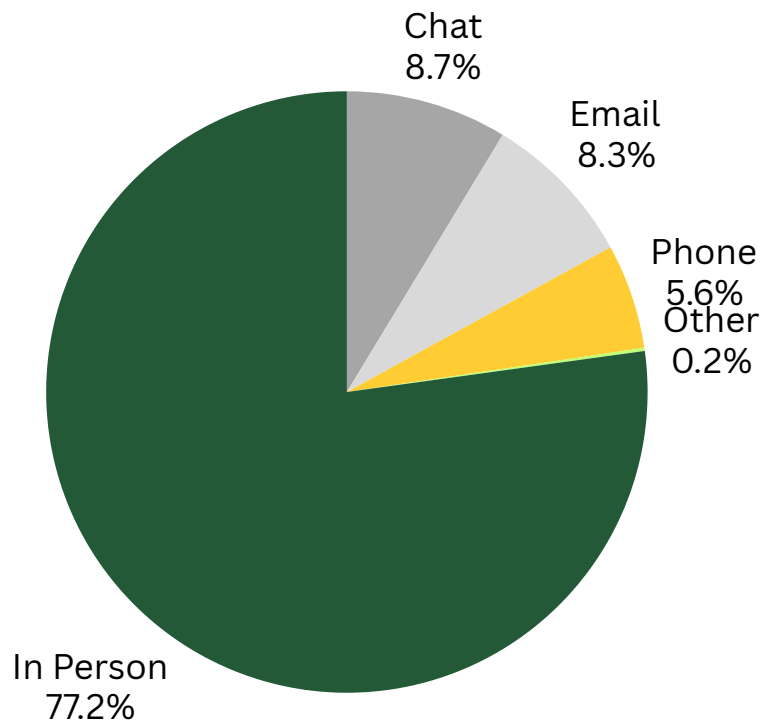
7,783 questions answered

Of those questions, there were approximately **4,500 directional questions** (e.g. “We’re lost; where is new student orientation?” “How many books can I check out at once?” etc.) and just over **3,200 reference questions** (e.g. “How can I find empirical case studies on the use of a specific type of assessment on K-12 students?” “Can you help me find my SUNY Oswego master’s thesis to show my grandchild?” “How do I cite this source in my paper?” etc.).



Reference (continued)

While by far the most questions were walk-ins, library employees also served SUNY Oswego community members outside of the Penfield Library building by answering nearly **1300** questions by email, phone, chat, text, video conference, and more. In addition, Penfield's faculty librarians held **24** research consultations with SUNY Oswego students. These consultations are one-on-one meetings that any student can schedule with a librarian for in-depth help with even the stickiest research problem.



Faculty librarians also contributed to Ask Us 24/7, the global cooperative that allows us to offer 24/7 research assistance from librarians (not chatbots) to SUNY Oswego students, faculty, and staff. As part of this reciprocal cooperative, SUNY Oswego librarians contributed:

- **208 hours** monitoring Ask Us 24/7
- **492 questions** answered for library users around the globe



Instruction

Library instruction remains one of Penfield Library's core offerings. Faculty librarians work with classroom faculty to create class sessions tailored specifically to each course's needs. These librarian-led class sessions support students at every level of their college journey, from first encountering college-level research all the way up through intensive research projects in their capstone classes.



In the 2023-2024 school year, Penfield's librarians taught:

- **139** class sessions
- **31** subject disciplines
- **3,000** students reached

Of those students, 728 completed a feedback survey containing both open- and close-ended questions after their class sessions.

95% of students reported learning something new to help them succeed in their classes

In addition,

- **95%** intended to apply what they learned
- **91%** reported feeling increased confidence in completing their assignments

Instruction (continued)

Students' answers to open-ended survey questions were analyzed with the help of Claude (a popular generative AI tool). In answer to the question, "**What did you like most about this session?**," these features of library instruction sessions were most commonly mentioned:

"I did not know about the databases so this was very helpful."

- student response

1. Learning how to use the library website and databases effectively.
2. Learning about new resources they hadn't known about previously.
3. Learning about citation tools and methods.
4. Appreciation for the interactive and hands-on nature of the session they attended.
5. Finding the librarians who taught the classes to be knowledgeable, friendly, and helpful.

When asked, "**What else could the library do to help you succeed in your classes?**," the most common response was to be unable to think of anything more the library could do to help students succeed. The top two responses after that were:

1. Have more library instruction sessions for students.
2. Improve student awareness of existing library resources and services.

"I personally just think more classes should get in here so students learn what the library can do."

- student response

Collection Management

Penfield Library's Collection Management Unit facilitates access to all physical and online resources. In addition to purchasing materials and organizing them so patrons can discover them, this unit also reviews collections to enhance accessibility and provide up to date resources that meet or exceed our users' needs.

Acquisitions

1,114 physical book, DVD, or reference items were added to the library collection in 2023-2024, as well as **131** individually selected ebooks. This includes materials funded by:

- New York State Coordinated Collection Development Aid Grant
- Wellness / COVID grant
- Penfield Library acquisitions budget

Multi-Year Collection Review Project

As we enter the second year of the collection review project,

Nearly 1/3 of the collection has been reviewed with feedback from librarians and faculty.

Subjects reviewed and improved this year:

- Business
- Finance
- Accounting
- Marketing
- Management Economics
- History
- Anthropology
- Philosophy
- Religion
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Technology including Photography
- Medicine
- Agriculture
- Naval and Military Science
- Library Science

Collection Management (continued)

The Collection Management Unit collaborated with a history faculty member and their liaison librarian using the history book collection review to create a book assessment assignment. Students reviewed books using a rubric, the Collection Management Librarian reviewed a final time, and in most cases followed student recommendations. This project gave students real-world experience evaluating information sources.



13 rows of shelving were removed from the library's 3rd floor, improving the physical accessibility of the collection.

Other Projects & Collaborations

- **Policy Revision** - Teaching Resource Center (TRC) collection policy was revised in collaboration with the relevant liaison librarian. Several sets of textbooks were removed which allowed for the creation of a manipulatives section.
- **Supporting Local Businesses** - Reestablished connection with River's End Bookstore in Oswego to purchase some books directly from them.
- **Sustainability Work** - To aid the sustainability initiatives of the campus we have teamed up with the Director of Sustainability to plan a major recycling initiative for the library.

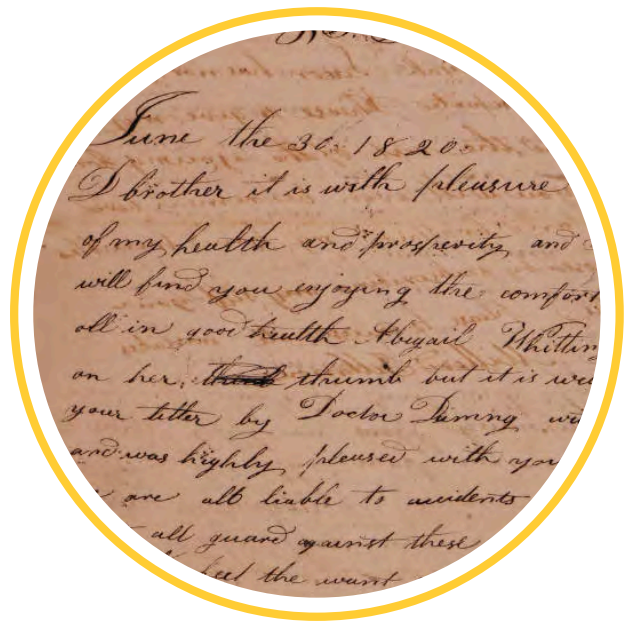
Archives & Special Collections

Penfield Library's Archives & Special Collections focuses on collecting, preserving, and providing access to materials about the culture and history of SUNY Oswego, Oswego County, and New York State.

Engagement and Education

- **8 class sessions** taught by librarians
- **18 appointments**
- **43 visitors**; open 7 hours per week
- **102 research questions**

Students, faculty, staff, alumni, and outside researchers asked questions about: naming of campus buildings; manual arts, industrial arts, and technology education; Prohibition in the Oswego area; Black Student Union; letters from Millard Fillmore; Dr. Mary Walker; Emergency Refugee Shelter at Ft. Ontario; photographs of students and campus recreation; Gay And Lesbian Association (GALA); oral history collection; and Hideo Takamine letters in the Herman Krüsi Papers collection.



Archives & Special Collections (continued)

Exhibits

We mounted physical and digital exhibits (available through the library website) on:

- Eat, Drink, Sleep Schools: Celebrating 200 Years of Edward Austin Sheldon
- Display To Archives (faculty and professional staff publications)
- Theatre Through The Years



Collaborations

- **Building cross-campus engagement** - The University Archives Advisory Committee is a coalition of supporters and advocates.
- **Sustaining the Sheldon legacy and engaging with alumni** - Hosted visit of descendants of Edward Austin Sheldon and presented at Alumni Reunion Weekend.
- **Advancing classroom best practices** - Facilitated a faculty panel, "Archives Aloud: Experiences and Strategies for the Classroom," discussing teaching with primary sources, exploring student experiences before and after a visit, and motivations for class interactions.
- **Student involvement** - Student assistants got hands-on experience working with our collections. They digitized items; entered metadata; and researched, designed, and installed an exhibit.

Archives & Special Collections (continued)

Making Collections Available

160 items and collections inventoried, organized, and described (memorabilia, photographs, and concert posters)

- **Digitization projects**

- **84 issues (1,200 pages** with metadata) of *The Spokesman* newsletter, 1963-1984: NY State Industrial Arts Association.
- **8 years (5,638 pages** with metadata) of the Millard Fillmore Papers Collection: letters of the 13th President of the United States.



- **91 Donations and Accessions**, including:

- Book: *Are You Prepared for the Storm of Love Making?: Letters of Love and Lust from the White House* with letters from the Millard Fillmore Papers Collection and a Thank You from the author
- 6 concert posters booked by the Student Association, 1984-1986. Donated by Allan Shaw '86
- Rice Creek Field Station newsletters, publications, and promotional objects
- Ta-Nehisi Coates (Nov. 3, 2023) visit event photographs and documents
- OUTspoken, student magazine, 2013, published in collaboration with the Pride Alliance. Donated by Erik Wade (English & Creative Writing)
- Slide collections (2) created by former faculty Barbara Gerber (Psychology) and James Hastings (Industrial Arts/Technology Education) on a blind & visually impaired workshop and New York State IA shop models circa 1960s

Outreach

Each year, library employees organize and run a wide range of outreach activities. These are primarily designed to spread awareness of library services and resources, support student success, and increase students' comfort visiting and fully utilizing the library. These outreach efforts foster a sense of belonging in the library and as part of SUNY Oswego's vibrant academic community, while also striving to build and strengthen relationships between library faculty / staff, the rest of the university, and in some cases the local community.

Welcome Fest

The library department celebrated the first day of the Fall 2023 semester by inviting students to join us for Welcome Fest.

Research shows that students new to college typically report feeling anxiety about using the library. Welcome Fest is intended to minimize anxiety and to increase students' awareness of the services, resources, and people available to support their academic and personal success.



Library faculty and staff hosted games and activities throughout and outside of the library building, ranging from karaoke to cornhole. Each activity a student participated in earned them a ticket to enter drawings for raffle prizes.

201 students participated in the festivities and entered to win raffle prizes.

Outreach (continued)

Oz Reads Banned Books

An estimated **200+** students attended Oz Reads Banned Books on October 3, 2023.

This annual event is a longstanding collaboration between the library and the English & Creative Writing Department, and this year saw the **Politics Department** join in as a third co-sponsor.

2023 saw a record number of book censorship attempts in libraries across the US. Oz Reads Banned Books engages students with this challenging topic, and connects the dots to show them how civic engagement like voting at the local level is a powerful force to stop censorship.



Faculty Research Exchanges

Librarians hosted **3 Faculty Research Exchanges** in 2023-2024. Each of these events features two SUNY Oswego faculty members, from different departments, giving an informal presentation on their research. Attendees have the chance to brew a mug of tea while engaging and asking questions on disparate subjects that may touch on their existing interests or introduce them to something entirely unfamiliar.

Approximately **146 attendees** engaged with faculty research from departments ranging from Atmospheric & Geological Sciences to English & Creative Writing.

Outreach (continued)

Maker Madness

March 2, 2024 marked the **5th annual** Maker Madness. This collaboration with the Zonta Club of Oswego brought **nearly 300** K-12 students and their adults to Penfield Library for an afternoon of crafts and Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM) activities. Makers from around the university and the local area shared their expertise.

Attendees could make their own lava lamp, learn to repair old computers, build a marble maze, and more.



Total Solar Eclipse: April 8, 2024



This year, SUNY Oswego was in the path of totality for a solar eclipse, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for our campus. Visitors traveled from around the country to join us in events and activities before viewing the eclipse through a perfectly timed break in the clouds.

Outreach (continued)

Students, faculty, and staff borrowed books from the library's eclipse-themed book display, while visitors of all ages joined us in creating do-it-yourself pinhole projectors and eclipse-themed chalk art, and taking pictures at our galactic selfie station.



The library had guests from around New York state as well as Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Delaware, and more.

We recorded **216** interactions at our staffed activity stations.

Other Library Outreach

- **Research Parties** - Research parties are held twice per semester. These evening events provide a relaxed and inviting atmosphere for students to work on their projects with librarians and other support personnel on hand to help out as needed.
- **Sheldon's 200th Birthday** - It's not every day your school's founder turns 200! This event featured birthday cake, remarks, and a unique display with Archives and Special Collections content on two floors of the library.

Outreach (continued)

- **Yarn Crafting Meetups** - Library employees host two monthly yarn crafting meetups: One targeting students, and one targeting faculty and staff. These meetups are a relaxing venue to share our love of knitting, crocheting, and more, while building community ties that transcend someone's role on campus.
- **Penfield Loves You Day** - The library's annual Valentine's Day event celebrates our love for our students (and provides a study break with snacks and fun activities). This year, SUNY Chancellor King even stopped by!
- **Fall and Spring Success Fairs** - These information fairs bring together the people and resources which support student success. Representatives have an opportunity to meet students where they are and share more about critical support services and resources.
- **Window Painting** - This year we began painting welcoming and encouraging messages on a window facing the academic quad. This initiative is designed to visually distinguish the library from our neighbors and to engage passersby with the library.



Outreach (continued)

- **Book Displays** - Every month, library employees create displays to highlight our collection.

Topics included graphic novels, Hispanic Heritage Month, student recs, and more.

- **Love the Library Video Contest** - This spring, we asked students to create short videos describing what they like best about Penfield Library so that we could share with other students. Students told us about their love for the 24-Hour Room, study carrels, the library's productive atmosphere, and more. Two lucky winners received gift certificates to the Lake Effect Café.



- **Pop Up Penfield** - To support campus initiatives and connect students with the library's print collections, this spring we started taking tables full of relevant books to campus events. Librarians check books out on the spot to interested students, faculty, and staff.