

Special Collections and OSU's Academic Plan:

Highlights from 2005

OSU's Academic Plan names six general strategies for the University to improving its academic excellence. In 2005, how did the special collections of The Ohio State University Libraries contribute to the University's goal of becoming "one of the world's great public research and teaching universities," as stated in the Academic Plan (October 2000)?

Special Collections collect, preserve, and promote the use of rare books, manuscripts and other primary research materials. Research libraries pride themselves in the breadth of their holdings of rare and unique documentation of culture because it is what makes them distinctive among their peers. Within the OSU Libraries, special collections are the Cartoon Research Library (CGA), the John Glenn Archives, the Hilandar Research Library (HIL), OSU Archives, the Polar Archival Program, Rare Books and Manuscripts/ Charvat Collection of American Fiction (RAR), and the Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute Library (TRI).¹ In addition the Medical Heritage Center (MHC), which is part of OSU's Prior Health Sciences Library, is a special collection and a partner with the OSU Libraries.

Even as the Academic Plan "is the initial roadmap for the journey to academic excellence" it is also the roadmap here. This report lists each of the strategies of the Academic Plan and states the accomplishments of the special collections in 2004 that pertain to the strategy. Included are highlights only; a comprehensive list would lengthen this report considerably.

In reviewing the activities of the curators and their staffs, credit should also go to Special Collections Cataloging and to Office of Preservation. Many materials in the OSU Libraries, Special Collections present special challenges of access and preservation. Scholars and students cannot learn about Special Collections without catalog records in Oscar and the World Wide Web. Many of the collections require original cataloging because as unique items, there are usually no catalog records elsewhere that can be copied. Fortunately, the Special Collections Cataloging Department has worked to provide the records needed for access.

No one should use items that will suffer from use. Because Special Collections contain materials for which duplicates are hard to find or do not exist, Special Collections have extra-ordinary needs for preservation. Again and again, OSU's Book and Paper conservator, has provided invaluable assistance in the work of Special Collections.

¹ Rare Books and Manuscripts and the Charvat Collection of American Fiction are presented as RARE because they share the same staff at this time.

Strategy: Build a World Class Faculty

- *Recruiting.* Research materials that are rare or unique and of extraordinary quality have been used in the recruiting processes during the past year. In 2005:
 - Prospective graduate students and faculty in History of Art and Architecture, English, History, Slavic and East European Studies and Theatre toured CGA, HIL, RARE and TRI ;
 - OSU's colleges and departments continued to use photographs and historical material from the University Archives for displays, brochures, and websites.
- *Exhibiting.* Loaning research materials for national and international exhibition serves to promote the University as a center of world-class scholarship. In 2005:
 - Rare loaned selected Don Quixote titles to Brigham Young University and Oberlin College to assist in celebrations of the 400th anniversary of its printing.
 - Polar Archives lent artifacts from the Byrd collection to the Newport Harbor Nautical Museum in Newport Beach California.
 - CGA loaned items to the Charles M. Schulz Museum in Santa Rosa, CA, to the Armand Hammer Museum at UCLA, and to the International Print Center in New York City.
 - Artifacts from the Glenn Archives have been loaned to COSI, the John and Annie Glenn Museum in New Concord, and the Astronauts Hall of Fame in Titusville, Florida.
 - In downtown Columbus, at the Riffe Gallery, TRI curated "Design for the American Stage" the largest and most successful exhibit of TRI materials shown to date. The event drew much attention to TRI and also to OSU.
- *Research use.* Special Collections are part of a global community of scholarship in that researchers from all parts of the United States and many different countries used special collections at The Ohio State University Libraries last year. Highlights from 2005:
 - HIL attracted scholars from Bulgaria, Spain, Lithuania and Canada. In addition, HIL participated in the new and international organization, Association for the Study of the History and Culture of Eastern Christianity.
 - Rare hosted scholars from Spain, United Kingdom, Ireland, and France.
 - Researchers using the TRI collections included internationally known dance scholar Marcia Siegel whose research in the Twyla Tharp Archive resulted in a book about Tharp published in 2006.

- CGA hosted scholars and answered queries from Purdue, University of Toronto, Columbia University, Tokyo, London, and Germany, to name a few.
- The Glenn Archives provided film footage for a production company in London to create a documentary about air combat during the Korean War and MIT requested documents from the Glenn Archives concerning the Apollo space Program.
- Approximately 24% of requests received by Polar in 2005 were from researchers in foreign countries.
- The University Archives has responded to requests from many states as well as from researchers in Mexico, Germany, and other countries.

Strategy: Develop Academic Programs that Define Ohio State as the Nation's Leading Public Land-Grant University.

- *Collections.* OSU Libraries have extra-ordinary documentation, that include the papers of writer James Thurber, cartoonist Milton Caniff, choreographer Twyla Tharp, polar explorer Richard Byrd, the heroic Jesse Owens as well as microfilm from Hilandar monastery. In 2005 curators continued to acquire collections, some of which are :
 - At TRI, the papers of Professor Jarka Burian, the foremost English-language scholar on Czech theatre and his widow Grayce Burian, added significantly to the already fine holdings concerning Czech theatre. In addition, TRI added 100 original costume, scene and poster designs by Romanian director/designer Mircea Marosin, as well as documentation of Irish playwright Lennox Robinson from the estate of Professor Lawrence William Kuhl.
 - HIL initiated a new exchange in agreement with Serbia to make available manuscripts on microfilm from the Serbian National Library.
 - Rare added the papers of poet and professor David Citino and more than 60 original drawings of famed cartoonist James Thurber.
 - CGA acquired 31 very rare lithographs from the 19th Century and more than 3,000 original Calvin and Hobbes comic strips, and materials from the studio of famous cartoonist Will Eisner.
 - Polar Archives acquired the 1929 diary of Jacob Bursey, a dog driver on Admiral Byrd's First Antarctic Expedition.
 - MHC added to its collections the papers of Dr. Arthur James and Grace Sills, who helped to found the American Psychiatric Nursing Association.
 - The Glenn Archives received papers of Milton A. Wolf of Cleveland, who had been an ambassador to Austria and national campaign manager for Senator Glenn in 1984.

- *Recognition from national agencies and foundations. In 2005:*
 - Polar Archives received grants from the Frederick A. Cook Society, the Lincoln Ellsworth Foundation, and the Kane Lodge Foundation.
 - MHC won a traveling exhibit award, “Changing the Face of Medicine: Celebrating America’s Women Physicians “ from the National Library of Medicine and the American Library Association.
 - Curator of CGA received the National Cartoonists Society Tim Rosenthal Award for Volunteerism.
 - CGA curator served on the Pulitzer Prize jury for editorial cartooning, helped to judge the Herblock Prize competition, the Swann Foundation fellowship applications for the Library of Congress, and the Scripps-Howard college cartoonists/Schulz Award contest.
 - TRI curator was elected vice chair of the National Dance Heritage Coalition.
 - The Glenn Archivist served on the steering committee of the Society of American Archivists’ Congressional Papers Roundtable.

- *Participation with units that have received Selective Investment Awards because of their national prominence. In 2005:*
 - Rare worked with the English Department to help its History of Print program.
 - University Archives and Rare worked with the History Department in developing a Public History Program for undergraduates.

Strategy: Enhance the Quality of the Teaching and Learning Environment

- *Classroom instruction by curators in 2005:*
 - The curators of the Cartoon Research Library, Rare Books and Manuscripts and the Theatre Research Institute taught Humanities 294 (“perceptions of ‘Them’ – Race and Ethnicity in American Popular Culture” and used primary sources extensively.
 - CGA Curator taught History of Newspaper Comic Strips.
 - TRI curator led class sessions in Dance 820 (Labanaotation) and Theatre 801 (Research Methods).
 - The MHC Curator was a co-lecturer in OSU’s “introduction to the History of Medicine Mini-module” and also participated in lectures concerning the history of medicine and pharmacy and veterinary medicine.
 - HIL curator taught Slavic 870, which he developed, and also presented in two other classes.

- The OSU Archives participated in the teaching of ASC 500 (OSU: Its History and Its World). In addition, HIS 398 (research methodology) toured the Archives, while students from courses in architecture, art, art history, journalism, landscape architecture, and city and regional planning have made use of its collections and information.
- *Non-classroom activities.* Exhibits and special events also help to enrich the quality of the teaching and learning environment. In 2005:
 - Rare and OSU's Department of Portuguese and Spanish hosted a special Cervantes event in which the Spanish Counsel participated. In addition, Rare worked with the English Department to have a reading by poet and peace activist Sam Hamill and a talk and workshop by noted writers William Gass and Bradford Morrow.
 - Polar Archives exhibited 60 pastels by polar artist David Paige, along with photos, maps and other memorabilia in the Hopkins Gallery. In addition, Polar Archives and the College of the Arts hosted lectures by the well-known environmental writer Barry Lopez that became a First Year Experience event.
 - CGA provided three exhibits in its reading room and gallery within the Wexner Center, an exhibit *Dreams of the Rarebit Fiend* in the OSU Thompson Library, special events that featured Al Feldstein of Mad Magazine and political cartoonist historian Richard Samuel West. In addition, the curator presented lectures at the Columbus Metropolitan Club, and at the Rowfant Club in Cleveland.
 - TRI participated in the Port Clinton Festival, a major outreach activity by the College of the Arts, by presenting an exhibit concerning actress Elsie Janis.

Strategy: Enhance and Better Serve the Student Body

- *In 2005, special collections found numerous ways of connecting to students as individuals and as members of student organizations:*
 - The TRI curator served as one of three faculty advisers on a theatre tour to Prague, Czech Republic.
 - MHC curator serviced as advisor to the medical history group at OSU's College of Medicine.
 - HIL has been cited as among the reasons why graduate students have chosen to apply to OSU's program in Slavic and East European Languages and Literatures.
 - In August 2005, CGA hosted an Honors and Scholars recruiting tour.
 - OSU Archives has worked closely with Ohio Staters in developing a University Museum and the Associate Archivist is a member of the Council on Student Affairs.

Strategy: Create a Diverse University Community

- *By means of public programs, by acquiring collections, and by making available documentation of diversity, the special collections feature the diversity that is our university and our culture. In 2005:*
 - The teaching of “Perceptions of ‘Them’ – Race and Ethnicity in American Popular Culture” was a major accomplishment.
 - Several students made use of the Jesse Owens papers at the OSU Archives for Black History Month projects.

Strategy: Help Build Ohio’s Future

- *Service to the state of Ohio and contributions to its future occurred in different ways. In 2005:*
 - The curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts is board member for the Ohio Center for the Book.
 - The University Archivist is a governor appointed member of the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board and also serves on the Ohio Electronic Records Committee.
 - The Glenn Archivist continued to be an advisor to the John and Annie Glenn Museum in New Concord, Ohio.