

Special Collections and OSU's Academic Plan:

Highlights from 2007

OSU's Academic Plan names six general strategies for the University to improving its academic excellence. In 2007, 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 and the Historic Costume and Textile Museum (College of Education and Human Ecology) are special collections and 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 2007 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 2007:
 - TRI hosted the International Center for Women Playwrights Fourth Annual Retreat. In addition the curator attended the 2007 Prague Quadrennial, the most important forum for international theatre design.
 - 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 ;
 - HIL receives much attention from foreign scholars who credit its resources and services in their work. A prominent example this year is *An Archival History of the Hilandar Research Project at The Ohio State University* which was published in Serbia.
 - MHC continued a scholar-in-residence program.
 - OSU's colleges and departments continued to use photographs and historical material from the University Archives for promotional and displays, brochures, and websites.
 - CGA's Festival of Cartoon Art and the Academic Pre-conference: "Graphic Storytelling: Academic Perspectives" drew many prominent scholars and graduate students to OSU. Scholars from 8 different universities and colleges spoke, including one from Finland. In addition, a prominent filmmaker, a visiting animation historian, and a *New York Times* editor toured CGA.
- *Exhibiting.* Loaning research materials for national and international exhibition serves to promote the University as a center of world-class scholarship. In 2007:
 - Rare has provided items from its Lillian Schwartz Collection of computer animated art to museums in Italy, France, and at the Chicago Art Institute and the Getty Museum in the U.S..
 - CGA loaned cartoons to the Charles M. Schulz Museum, Santa Rosa CA and to the Norman Rockwell Museum and others.
 - HCTC loaned artifacts to the Daughters of American Revolution Museum in Washington, D.C.
 - Glenn Archives loaned artifacts to the Astronauts Hall of Fame in Titusville, Florida.
 - OSU Archives provided images of Jesse Owens to the Museum of Mississippi for an exhibit.
- *Research use.* Special Collections are part of a global community of scholarship in which 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 2007:

- HIL continued to host researchers from Eastern Europe and to respond to requests from scholars in England, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Scotland, and Serbia.
- Approximately 18% of reference requests answered by the Byrd Polar Archives came from researchers in countries outside the U.S.A. In addition, Polar archives hosted the international Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research Historians Working Group.
- TRI hosted the International Centre for Women Playwrights Third Annual Retreat.
- Rare hosted eminent scholars from such prominent universities as Emory University, University of California, Berkeley, and the University of Colorado and New York University.
- OSU Archives provided documents to researchers throughout Europe, in South Africa and Canada.

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, the San Francisco Academy of Comic Art Collection, choreographer Twyla Tharp as well as theatrical designers and critics, polar explorer Richard Byrd, the heroic Jesse Owens, microfilm from Hilandar monastery, and clothing from prominent designers. In 2007 curators continued to acquire collections, some of which are :
 - CGA added *The Adventures of Mr. Obadiah Oldbuck* , 1842, which is often cited as the first comic book printed in America, along with a collection of political prints (1832-1865) and original drawings and proofs by Lucy Collin (1879-1881).
 - TRI with Dr. Joel E. Rubin, who is co-founder of the United States Institute for Theatre Technology has established a collection on theatre lighting in the 19th and early 20th centuries. In addition, the curator received thousands of slides of the work of designer Gordon Micunis.
 - Rare acquired the Jerry Tarver Collection of Rhetoric, Oration and Elocution and the Rick Moody literary archive, collections that the English department will use extensively and intensively. Meanwhile, it has continued to add to its prominent Avant Writing Collection.
 - MHC acquired and made available the Arthur James Collection, a pioneering oncologist who is responsible for the founding of OSU's James Cancer Hospital.

- Glenn Archives acquired an additional 24 cubic feet of materials documenting the career of Senator Glenn.
 - HIL acquired the Pimen M. Sofronov Collection, a leading iconographer of the 20th Century, that included hundreds of unique or rare publications as well as works of art.
 - Byrd Polar Archives received a collection of original newspaper clippings of the controversial race to the North Pole by Frederick Cook and Robert Peary.
- *Recognition from national agencies and foundations. In 2007:*
 - Glenn Archivist, as chair of the Congressional Papers Roundtable of the Society of American Archivists, supervised an NHPRC grant to write and publish *Guidelines for Managing congressional Papers*.
 - TRI curator serves as vice chair of the national Dance Heritage Coalition, which is supported by the Mellon and other foundations and has been invited to be a member of the International Theatre Exchange, a committee of the USA Committee for UNESCO.
 - Byrd Polar Archives received grants from the Kane Lodge Foundation and the Lincoln Ellsworth Foundation, both in New York City and the polar curator served as a grant reviewer for the National Science Foundation.
 - HIL curator reviewed a grant proposal for the Israeli Science Foundation.
 - Curator of the Historic Costume and Textile Collection served as chair of the Costume Society of America's Grants to Small Museums Committee.
 - OSU Archivist completed service on the National Task Force on Local Government Archives, a federally funded project headed by the Council of State Archivists while the Associate Archivist was a grant reviewer for the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Electronic Records Archivist/Manager was elected to the steering committee of the Electronic Records Section of the Society of American Archivists.
 - *Participation with units that have received Selective Investment Awards because of their national prominence. In 2007:*
 - CGA has partnered again with the Department of History's Harvey Goldberg Program for Excellence in Teaching in developing a curriculum source for K-12 school teachers. Additionally, CGA partnered with the Department of English's Narrative and Cognitive Theory Working Group to host three lectures by visiting scholars and to hold a pre-conference meeting concerning graphic storytelling.

- Rare and TRI partnered with the Public History Program from the Department of History in engaging undergraduates with special collections.
- OSU Archives has assisted these departments with records retention questions and has helped the Department of Psychology in its celebration of 100 years at the University.

Strategy: Enhance the Quality of the Teaching and Learning Environment

- *Classroom instruction by curators in 2007:*
 - MHC is host to a mini-module in the history of medicine.
 - HIL curator lectured for International Studies 235 and Slavic 792 and served on a committee that reviewed two candidates for the MA degree.
 - CGA curator taught “History of Newspaper Editorial Cartoons and guest lectured classes in “History of Photography” and “Foundations and Administration of Archives.”
 - Curators of the John Glenn Archives, the Byrd Polar Archives and the University Archives hosted and made presentations to students in historical research methods classes.
 - TRI taught Theatre 801 (“Research Methods) and participated in Theatre 825 (“Advanced Stage Lighting Design”) and assisted in an honors seminar. In addition, the curator has provided guest lectures in three other classes in Theatre.
 - Three classes from the Department of English have centered their courses in the Rare Books Department. Rare has provided materials for teaching use in the Departments of English, History, Art History, French and Italian and Spanish and Portuguese and both the Chief Curator and the Curator of the Avant Writing Collection have presented frequently to classes.
 - OSU Archivist was one of a team of faculty who taught ASC 500 (“OSU: Its History and Its World”) and taught a Freshman Seminar “Turning Points in OSU History”; in addition the Archivist and Associate Archivist presented “Buckeye Navigator”, a review of OSU History through its historic buildings and sites, as a Freshman Success lecture. Additionally, the Archives has hosted tours and made presentations to undergraduates in an historical methods class.
 - HCTC provided artifacts for instructional use in Textiles and clothing classes and gave a guest lecture concerning Southeast Asian textiles.

- *Non-classroom activities.* Exhibits and special events also help to enrich the quality of the teaching and learning environment. In 2007:

- Rare participated in workshops for graduate students that focused on special collections and medieval manuscripts at OSU.
- CGA curator gave two lectures for the Ohio Humanities Council Chautauqua at OSU Newark.
- MHC curator has visited with students in medicine, pharmacy, nursing and dentistry and given lectures about the history of health sciences.
- HCTC curator engaged students in individual study and internships and assisted an undergraduate honors research project.

Strategy: Enhance and Better Serve the Student Body

- *In 2007, special collections found numerous ways of connecting to students as individuals and as members of student organizations:*
 - OSU Archives helped Ohio Staters to reopen the University Museum in University Hall and assisted other student groups—Gamma Sigma Delta, Lantern, and Sphinx in historical research.
 - MHC curator is advisor to a history of medicine group.
 - Curator of HCTC served as the faculty/staff advisor for the OSU Fashion Guild, a student organization.
 - CGA held multiple exhibits, lectures and organized the international Festival of Cartoon Art and the pre-conference workshop concerning graphic storytelling that attracted student attendance and participation. In addition, CGA held a tour for OSU Undergraduate Admissions Counselors.
 - All prospective graduate students in Theatre visit TRI as part of the recruitment process.

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 2007:*
 - TRI has a new collection of play scripts by members of the African-American Playwrights Exchange.
 - HCTC assisted the Center for African Studies in researching African textiles.
 - Rare added to its Haitian Photograph Collection, the Joanne Grant Civil Rights Collection and the John W. Bennett Anthropology Collection.
 - CGA hosted the exhibit *Korean Comics: A Society through Small Frames* that included a lecture; Hispanic-American Frank Espinosa also presented at a CGA event and numerous presenters at the

2007 Festival of Cartoon Art and the academic pre-conference had diversity as a theme.

Strategy: Help Build Ohio's Future

- *Service to the state of Ohio and contributions to its future occurred in different ways. In 2007:*
 - OSU Archives expanded its web pages to provide more guidance and information about the management of public records, especially digital, that has drawn much attention from other public universities. OSU Archivist continued as a member of the governor appointed Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board while the Electronic Records Archivist/Manager took his place on the Ohio Electronic Records Committee.
 - CGA brought Ohio native Harvey Pekar to speak on campus. His lecture is available to the public through the Center for the Study of Teaching and Writings website. WOSU-TV worked with CGA to develop a short feature on Milton Caniff's work during WW II that was broadcast statewide in conjunction with Ken Burns' WWII series. Finally, CGA worked again with the Department of History in the "Opper Project: Using editorial Cartoons to Teach History. This supports the Ohio Content Standards by linking through the Web editorial cartoons for use in K-12 classroom instruction in Ohio.
 - HCTC had a presentation/tour for K-12 teachers in the History Works program and conducted tours and presentations for many organizations including Cuyahoga County Extension, the Columbus Museum of Art, and the Ohio 4H Fashion Board .provided lectures about the history of clothing at Columbus State and its Lifelong Learning program.
 - Rare continued a monthly program for a local bibliophilic society and the Head of Rare is on the Board of Ohioana Library.
 - Polar Curator, with the librarian of the Byrd Polar Research Center, gave a presentation for the Ohio Library Council conference that met in Columbus.
 - MHC arranges four lectures a year concerning medical humanities that are open to the public. Additionally, MHC started a monthly scholarship workshop that attracts scholars throughout the state who specialize in the history of science and technology and medicine.
 - The Glenn Archivist continued as an advisor to the John and Annie Glenn Museum in New Concord, Ohio.
 - TRI curator gave a presentation on set design collections for a Theatre design class from Otterbein University.

