UCR LIBRARY RESEARCH SERVICES DEPARTMENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

Submitted by: Dr. Raymond Uzwyshyn, Acting Assistant University Librarian for Research and Technology Services and Director of Research Services
Date of Submission: August 25, 2025

DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Research Services Department achieved significant interdisciplinary growth during 2024-2025, successfully integrating research services, digital scholarship, geospatial resources, medical library services, and emerging technologies while beginning to build out an additional library research data and AI unit. The department's collaborative interdisciplinary approach strengthened connections and support across campus units while expanding innovative service delivery models.

Foundational Services and User Engagement

The department served over 2,000 patrons through comprehensive support services. Research Services Assistant Andrew Morales coordinated 1,368 information desk transactions and 1,395 poster printing requests, representing a 41% increase in research poster services from 2023-2024. This foundational support enables specialized research consultations, with staff providing 125+ consultations across digital scholarship and geospatial services, plus 61 medical library interactions serving a wide university research constituency.

Interdisciplinary Digital Scholarship Integration

Dr. Jing Han joined the department in 2025 as the Digital Scholarship Librarian, launching four signature programs creating new pathways for cross-disciplinary engagement: the Reference Desk Podcast featuring faculty conversations, quarterly ORCA Forums celebrating student research, digital scholarship-focused certificate workshops, and innovative maker collaborations. The *Scan-to-Sound* event, developed with the Music Department, transformed the library into a technology-driven creative space, demonstrating successful academic unit partnerships that expand research possibilities across science and humanities areas.

Collaborative Maker Education and Research Infrastructure

Makerspace Coordinator Brendon Wheeler and Innovative Media Librarian Alvaro Alvarez integrated CreatR Lab resources across multiple disciplines and the arts and sciences ranging from bioengineering to English literature, embedding maker pedagogy in Bioengineering 180L, History 27, and Classical Studies 10C classrooms. Their month-long Robotics Summer Camp focused on introducing robotics to wider university audiences and disciplines, serving 16

students. The Creat'r Lab also facilitated media 'Green Screen' enablement by offering VR and 3D modeling workshops to English literature students. Work with Native American Student Programs demonstrated inclusive, cross-cultural collaboration beyond technical disciplines. These initiatives bridge academic departments with hands-on learning technologies.

Geospatial Services and Campus-Community Partnerships

Geospatial Information Librarian Janet Reyes facilitated 11 Geospatial meetups attracting 237 registrations and 132 attendees from a wide variety of academic departments, administrative units, and community partners. Disparate groups were brought together through successful meetups as well as an event featuring Planet Labs and ArcGIS parent company Esri. The aerial photo collection enhancement project—mapping 6,357 frame center points and creating 7 web applications—involved collaborative work with Conservation, Digital Initiatives, and Metadata library units, making previously inaccessible historical resources available to researchers across disciplines.

Medical Education and Clinical Research Integration

Medical Education and Clinical Outreach Librarian Elisa Cortez contributed to interdisciplinary initiatives including Master of Public Health program development and LCME accreditation preparation. Her embedded approach connects library services with clinical practice through curriculum taskforces, evidence synthesis collaborations with faculty, and clinical site partnerships spanning the Inland Empire. These efforts demonstrate integration between library services and health sciences education.

STRATEGIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES

Cross-Departmental Leadership and Infrastructure Development

Organizational restructuring facilitated enhanced interdisciplinary coordination across Research Services, Geospatial Data, and Emerging Technology units. The new Data Scientist/AI Research Librarian hiring initiative, led collaboratively, designed forward-looking positions for AI research infrastructure development. The Digital Scholarship & AI Literacy Series represents a new campus-wide collaboration with new RAISE@UCR and AI Teach/Talk initiatives.

Scholarly Impact and Professional Development

Department members contributed to professional knowledge through publications, presentations, and service. Notable outputs include editorship of a book "New Horizons in AI for Libraries" (IFLA/De Gruyter, Uzwyshyn ed., 2025) UC Love Data Week presentations on 3D data, photogrammetry and AI (Wheeler, Alvarez, Uzwyshyn) and several collaborative grant proposals addressing sustainable environmental and creative technology solutions.

Research Infrastructure and Grant Collaboration

Strategic grant initiatives demonstrate interdisciplinary partnership capabilities. The "Transforming and Recycling 3D Printer Material Waste" proposal involved collaboration with SoCal OASIS and the Research and Economic Development Office. Participation in US DOE's Frontiers in Artificial Intelligence RFI also positions the department within national research infrastructure planning for workforce development along with a departmental subcommittee developed in tandem with this purpose in mind.

Academic Integration and Workforce Development

The planned Digital Scholarship Certificate program and Janeway university libraries pilot for conference proceedings management and refereed academic journal development represent innovations in new scholarly communication workflow possibilities. More robust student workforce development programs for student workers integrate academic disciplinary learning with real world career readiness skills, creating new models for library employment as educational experience that serves both student development and departmental capacity.

GOALS FOR 2025-2026

Enhanced Interdisciplinary Programming

The department will expand signature programs while strengthening interdisciplinary academic department partnerships. Digital Scholarship Certificate implementation requires coordination across multiple schools and colleges. Expanding the new ORCA Forum and the Reference Desk podcast will involve cultivating strategic partnerships with research faculty and student organizations across campus for a more complex and innovative research/marketing orientation.

Integrated AI Literacy and Research Support

Completion of the AI Research Librarian hires will enable comprehensively introducing research faculty to AI, workshop development, student research training, and ethical AI policy framework development. Integration of AI tools into existing services requires collaborative staff development and careful change management across all units.

Strategic Campus and Community Partnerships

Strengthening relationships with academic departments, research centers, and administrative units remains essential. Medical library support for LCME reaccreditation requires sustained School of Medicine collaboration. Geospatial services will expand environmental and social sciences support through enhanced visualization capabilities and software partnerships.

Marketing and Workforce Development subcommittees will raise the department's campus profile while providing enhanced customer service and workforce skills development.

Infrastructure and Assessment Development

Technology infrastructure expansion requires strategic planning for equipment maintenance, software licensing, and space allocation in collaboration with the library's Cyberinfrastructure/IT department. Development of data-driven assessment frameworks will capture and communicate impact beyond traditional metrics, supporting strategic decision-making and resource allocation across all service areas.

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Capacity and Integration Management

Rapid student and program growth at UCR creates capacity challenges requiring careful staff integration and training. Continued anticipated expansion of AI-related positions and digital scholarship programming may require additional specialized staff as robotics programming develops and larger societal workforce training shifts occur. Maintaining service quality during growth requires sustained attention to mentorship and professional development.

Technology and Space Evolution

Success of high-tech spaces reveals infrastructure limitations requiring ongoing investment and staff development. The evolution of maker spaces, robotics lab and visualization technologies demands continuous adaptation to user needs and technological capabilities, supported by strategic donor development initiatives.

Assessment and Strategic Planning

Developing robust assessment frameworks becomes critical for demonstrating value and guiding future development. Expanding assessment approaches across all service areas will support strategic decision-making, resource allocation, and continued innovation in academic library services.

APPENDIX A: SERVICE STATISTICS SUMMARY

Service Area	Key Metrics
Support Desk Services	1,368 transactions; 1,395 posters (41% increase)
Research Consultations	125+ across digital scholarship/geospatial; 61 medical library
Instruction/Workshops	11 GIS meetups (237 registered, 132 attended); 42 Workshops (GIS, Digital Scholarship, AI, Innovative Media, Medical, Creat'r and Robotics Lab)
Digital Resources	838 GIS guide views; 896 aerial photos guide views; 7 web apps (1,092 views), Several Libguides
Maker Spaces & Robotics Lab	3+ course integrations; Robotics Lab Extended Summer Camp
Outreach	4 major clinical sites; multiple interdisciplinary orientation programs, outreach initiatives

APPENDIX B: SCHOLARLY CONTRIBUTIONS

Publications & Presentations:

- 3D data and photogrammetry UC Love Data Week presentation (Wheeler, Alvarez)
- Data Research Repositories, Open Science & AI, UC Love Data Week (Wheeler, Uzwyshyn)
- Medical Library Association sessions and continuing education (Cortez)
- "New Horizons in AI for Libraries" (Book). De Gruyter: Berlin, 2025 (Uzwyshyn, Ed.)
- Make, Document, Share: Leveraging Digital Scholarship in Maker Education UC Tech 2025 Presentations (Han)
- AI literacy/Deep Research Models Presentation UC Tech 2025 (Uzwyshyn)
- Stuck on the List: Resource Sharing in the Digital Humanities ACH 2025 (Han)

Awards & Recognition:

- UC Geo Connect LAUC-funded research participation (Reyes)
- Ripple Effects Kickstarter library selection (Cortez)
- IFLA IT Section. Dynamic Unit Award for international impact (Uzwyshyn)

Collaborative Initiatives:

- SoCal OASIS environmental sustainability grant proposal (Wheeler, Alvarez, Uzwyshyn, McGee)
- US DOE Artificial Intelligence RFI participation (Uzwyshyn)
- Multi-unit aerial photo collection enhancement project (Reyes)
- Embedded support for clinical faculty research and scholarly activities (Cortez)
- Digital Scholarship Workshops, McNair Scholars and Mellon Way Fellowship Programs (Han)