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## Final Report: 2020-2023 Inclusion Action Plan Musselman Library

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## Final Report: 2020-2023 Inclusion Action Plan Musselman Library

### Abstract

This report documents Musselman Library's accomplishments and progress made on the [2020 Inclusion Action Plan \(IAP\)](#).

### Keywords

inclusion action plan, diversity, equity, inclusion

### Disciplines

Library and Information Science

# Final Report: 2020-2023 Inclusion Action Plan Musselman Library

Prepared by the Musselman Library DEIB Committee, March 2024

This report documents Musselman Library's accomplishments and progress made on the 2020 Inclusion Action Plan (IAP) in the areas of:

- access and equity—recruitment and retention
- access and equity—policy/administrative initiatives
- campus climate
- diversity in the curriculum/co-curriculum
- organizational learning—internal
- organizational learning—community outreach

The plan followed the campus template set by then-Chief Diversity Officer, Jeanne Arnold.

The committee's decision to sunset the 2020 plan and embark on a new one is based on changes at Gettysburg College including a new chief diversity officer, newly established institutional priorities and programs, decreasing budgets and staffing, as well as changes in the higher education landscape including declining enrollments and tuition revenues. The new plan will be completed in summer 2024. This report will serve as the 2020 Inclusion Action Plan's final assessment.

## ADMINISTRATION

In support of the Inclusion Action Plan, the Library Administration added positional flexibility to some job assignments after the college's Remote and Hybrid Work Policy was created. We continued to consider whether a diversity resident position (likely affiliated with the ACRL Diversity Alliance) was right for Musselman Library, and ultimately did not create such a position. Regular opportunities for individual librarians to share their conference learnings with the entire staff were established. The Holley Internship was re-imagined as a career exploratory for undergraduates and redesigned as a one-semester, cohort experience. It has been offered each spring since the inaugural cohort in spring 2022.

## COLLECTIONS & TECHNICAL SERVICES

Musselman Library's Inclusion Action Plan (IAP) identified objectives and assigned specific strategies to responsible departments and/or staff. Collections & Technical Services (CaTS) made progress towards strategies related to cataloging and metadata, collection curation and development, and student internships.

In the areas of cataloging and metadata, CaTS audited and analyzed Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) deemed to be offensive, outdated, and/or ethnically, politically, or racially insensitive. Following the audit and analysis, CaTS developed normalization rules to make adjustments to import profiles and Primo display. CaTS also developed new cataloging and metadata workflows, local notes in the bibliographic record,

and wrote a statement about inclusive cataloging. Additionally, staff members received Alma training on local authority control including inclusive non-LCSH vocabularies, and Preferred Term Correction (PTC) to automate LCSH changes.

In the areas of collection curation and development, we have automated the acquisition and collection of literary awards and prizes by and about marginalized and underrepresented groups. Furthermore, staff have worked with students, student groups, and library interns to curate 11 book displays highlighting DEIB-themed materials and topics; the displays are also used as a collection development tool.

Staff members supported the Holley Internship by including instruction focused on inclusive cataloging and critical librarianship. Issues such as personal and cultural bias in cataloging, limitations of controlled vocabulary (LCSH) and the process to change it, and alternative traditional methodologies to organizing and describing collections are explored. Students also engage with topics of intellectual freedom, the ALA Core Values of Librarianship, and critical librarianship practices in serving a diverse set of user needs.

Moving forward, the department will continue to support the Inclusive Language Initiative by monitoring and updating new LCHS language via SACO and other networks and updating metadata as appropriate. The department will continue to update and promote the Antiracism reading list and other materials in OverDrive and Muscat Plus. Finally, the department will continue to evaluate collection practices to increase the representation of historically underrepresented groups in our collections.

## RESEARCH & INSTRUCTION

With a continual focus on DEIB in its practices, the Research & Instruction Department has focused its attention on a few key areas: administrative processes for hiring and recruitment, student learning, and pedagogy.

With several department members also being certified campus inclusion partners, we revised our hiring processes to widen and diversify applicant pools, adjusted job description and job posting language to be more inclusive, and redesigned the interview process to remove possible barriers for candidates.

As the department's main function is to support the research needs of library users and to support students' development of information literacy skills, we also redesigned our principal library classroom. The room now supports greater flexibility with movable furniture and an adjustable height table, sight lines are improved through multiple screens, and a microphone provides improved acoustics for learners. Additionally, the classroom can now support a wide range of active learning exercises and accommodate a range of learning needs.

With our pedagogy, the department has ongoing professional development in this area, through conferences, workshops, and annual summer readings, such as bell hooks' *Teaching to Transgress* and Harriet Schwartz's *Connected Teaching: Relationship, Power, and Mattering in Higher Education*. This shapes our teaching in the classroom and internship and peer learning experiences in the library. In the case of the Peer Research Mentor program, we have revised the training curriculum considering our professional readings and to be in line with updated guidelines from the American Library Association for reference and information service providers, including a focus on supporting diverse patrons and library users with learning differences.

With the expansion of online learning objects in our teaching, such as interactive tutorials and videos, we have also instituted best practices to support learners in flipped and asynchronous learning modes. We have continued to conduct an accessibility audit each semester of online learning content and have delivered staff development workshops on creating accessible learning objects, ensuring all learners can take advantage of our growing collection of materials.

## SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATIONS

The library's equity mindset for supporting student success demands that we support textbook affordability through our services, collections, and collaborative work. The Scholarly Communications department's focus on OER (Open Educational Resources) specifically and textbook affordability more broadly continued to expand and evolve between 2020 and 2023.

We worked with library colleagues to gather and describe several library services related to textbooks (OER, course reserves, ebooks) under the banner of Affordable Course Materials. This work was supported by the creation of the Library Digital Course Materials Purchasing Policy in 2021, which was updated and superseded by the Textbooks and Course Materials Purchasing Policy in 2023. We continued to promote the benefits of open and zero-cost course materials to faculty through book review workshops, informational presentations, and a campus OER newsletter.

In 2021, we began offering an OER grant (which later became the OER/Zero Course Cost Conversion Grant) in partnership with the Johnson Center for Creative Teaching and Learning; \$11,450 in awards have been distributed, resulting in over \$189,000 in student savings—an average 1360% return on investment per course. In addition, we supported external grant applications for OER funding by Gettysburg faculty. We track information about course adoptions, and the outcomes are remarkable: from Fall 2020 through Fall 2023, 127 faculty used OER or zero-cost materials in 440 sections of 132 courses, saving 8,381 students \$1,179,368.43 on required course materials!

## SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & COLLEGE ARCHIVES

Special Collections has pursued the objectives of the 2020 Inclusion Action Plan in three main areas—student education, materials collection, and materials creation. We've collaborated with students on digital and physical exhibits, such as the online [Gettysburg College: A Diversity Story](#) and [Educating Women at Gettysburg College: Progress and Pushback](#) in our Special Collections Reading Room. Students have learned how to create accessible PDF finding aids, inclusively enhance cataloging records, and to apply diversity analysis to archival issues.

Students attending class visits have engaged with a wider selection of diverse materials and historical perspectives. We have collected artifacts representing a wide range of creators and subjects, such as Black and LGBTQIA+ first editions, scrapbooks, documents, and Civil Rights material. We also instituted the [Diversity and Inclusion Oral History Project](#), comprising separate collections highlighting underrepresented groups. These

oral histories are accessible in the Reading Room and, when releases allow, via GettDigital and The Cupola. The project has been promoted via social media and campus talks.

In addition to class visits, we have had hosted open houses for student organizations such as the Black Student Union and the Japan Club. We also continue to welcome Alumni to our Reading Room for conversations on their lived experiences as students at Gettysburg College.

## USER SERVICES

During the IAP years of 2020-2023, the User Services department made significant strides in updating circulation policies that were inconsistently applied and had the potential to negatively impact the most vulnerable members of our community.

Through this work, student overdue fines were eliminated for good in 2021-22, and lost/replacement fees were adjusted in 2022-23 to reflect a fair market value (e.g., users are now charged \$35.00 for lost books or media, rather than \$60.00). In addition, User Services collaborated with other library departments to expand our Course Reserves service to purchase required materials and textbooks for courses through both faculty *and* student requests. The new Course Materials Collection was launched in fall 2023 and has the potential to realize great cost savings for students.

Alongside these measures, strides have also been made in areas related to improving job/position equity and equitable hiring practices in User Services staffing; developing spaces in the library that support diverse learning needs; and applying user research methods to gain feedback on services and resources (surveys, head counts, informal usability testing).

As a department, User Services staff also continues to proactively seek out professional development opportunities to critically engage with issues related to access (privacy, censorship, accessibility, etc.) and staffing (recruitment, hiring, training, and retention practices) that build upon the foundational work of the IAP and that is so core to the work of the department.

## COMMITTEES

### Diversity & Inclusion

The library Diversity & Inclusion committee created a variety of learning and professional development opportunities for library staff. These included book discussion series (titles such as *The Person You Mean to Be: How Good People Fight Bias*, by Dolly Chugh, and *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*, by Heather McGhee) as well as shorter pieces (like “Antiracism in the Catalog,” and parts of the University of North Carolina Libraries’ Racial Equity Challenge), webinars (like *Change the Subject*, about antiracist controlled subject headings), and more.

We continued to coordinate opportunities for staff to take the Intercultural Development Inventory (some for the second time), followed by a small group learning/reflection program called “IDI Squares” program borrowed from the Teaching Squares format. We coordinated a library staff program on indigenous knowledge and libraries. We also organized a DEIB-focused debrief of the ACRL (Association of College & Research Libraries) conference so attendees could share information with the entire staff.

To assess the success of inclusive hiring practices with student employees, we analyzed key demographic categories of applicant pools and hires as compared to the overall student population. We also lobbied for increases to library student worker hourly wages.

Focusing on the institution more broadly, some of our activities included creating an engaging table for the National Coming Out Day event in both 2022 and 2023. We partnered with the Gender and Sexuality Resource Center to host two exhibits related to LGBTQ+ topics. We also shared information about local history and library resources with the entire campus during Black History Month and Women’s History Month.

### Exhibits

One objective of the library’s Inclusion Action Plan (IAP) was to showcase exhibits and/or displays promoting dialogue for social change and bridging difference. Since the start of the IAP, the Exhibits Committee has featured several exhibits—most of which are up for a year—that highlight underrepresented groups, such as the Carl Beam (First Nation’s artist) Columbus Suite that was exhibited in the apse on the main floor. Library visitors could view Beam’s large works, which are part of the Gettysburg College Fine Arts Collection. To provide context, the committee included direct quotations from the artist interspersed with the artwork.

During the fall semesters of 2022 and 2023, the committee was fortunate to partner with the campus’ Gender & Sexuality Resource Center on two short-term exhibits: *The Long Road to LGBTQ+* and *Out on Campus: A History of LGBTQ+ Activism at Pennsylvania Colleges & Universities*. These exhibits coincided with other events happening on campus and were highly impactful. One Exhibits Committee project involved the relocation of the *Change Happens Here* posters created by the library’s Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee. The posters had been hanging in window bays off the main floor, spaced far apart and on walls that made it challenging to read the posters’ content. The new location—above the bank of printers on the lower level—allowed the posters to be viewed in their “chronological” order and close-up, as they hang right where students wait for their printouts. The framed posters will remain there for a while and provide greater visibility on the busy lower level of the library.

## Marketing

The library's marketing committee has worked to bring an intentionality to our programming and outreach that emphasizes collaboration and accessibility and reflects a diversity of experiences. After the murder of George Floyd in the summer of 2020, the library's social media accounts were used to promote anti-racist library materials and related campus events, as well as to participate in larger social media movements, such as #BlackoutTuesday.

The committee has worked to cross-promote campus events in collaboration with departments and organizations like the OME, Land Acknowledgement Committee, and the GSRC. We regularly reflect on our current practices to ensure that our events and digital content alike are accessible to our entire community.

## Student Employment

The Student Employment Committee was formed in 2021 with a charge from the Library Dean to overhaul and organize student employment in the library. Initial areas of focus included: pay scales that make sense, evaluation and hiring procedures, and uniform standards. Part of our goal in standardizing best practices was to minimize bias in hiring and increase equity. To that end, our committee created and maintains a resource guide that library supervisors can refer to in order to keep track of best practices and procedures.

In addition to maintaining the resource guide, the Student Employment committee organizes social events and workshops for all library students. These opportunities provide students a chance to network and connect with other campus and community resources such as the Center for Career Engagement, the Innovation and Creativity Lab, and the Adams County Historical Society.

Finally, the Student Employment Committee supports diversity and equity by promoting the use of the NACE competencies in training materials. Students are not always aware that working in the library helps them develop many soft skills employers seek. Exposure to the NACE framework helps make these connections explicit and provides students with language for articulating their development of these skills to potential employers.