

News from Nova Scotia

News from Dalhousie Libraries

Marlo MacKay, Communications Coordinator

Donna Bourne-Tyson Elected to NDRIO Board of Directors

Canada's New Digital Research Infrastructure Organization (NDRIO) launched earlier this year and recently named their inaugural board. Dalhousie's Dean of Libraries, Donna Bourne-Tyson, is on the fifteen-member board, representing academic libraries and the data management sector.

"Canada has an excellent record of collaboration in developing digital research infrastructure, including the work of the Leadership Council for Digital Research Infrastructure, the Canadian Association of Research Libraries' Portage Network and Research Data Canada, and other organizations providing national leadership for Data Management (DM), Advanced Research Computing (ARC), and Research Software (RS). This bodes well for the future of DM services — a coordinated approach to the discovery, reuse, and preservation of research data will benefit researchers and all Canadians," says Bourne-Tyson.

NDRIO will provide the digital tools, services, and infrastructure that scholars and scientists need to conduct the kind of leading-edge research that benefits society. It is a member-based organization, with founding members comprising more than 135 leading post-secondary institutions, research hospitals, institutes, and established digital research infrastructure (DRI) organizations across Canada (*Source: [CSSE/SCEE Blog](#)*).

NDRIO

New Digital
Research Infrastructure
Organization

NOIRN

Nouvelle organisation
d'infrastructure de
recherche numérique

Open Educational Resources (OER) Grant Recipient: Leanne Stevens

Congratulations to Leanne Stevens of the Department of Psychology & Neuroscience in the Faculty of Science. Dr. Stevens was awarded a \$3,000 OER grant that was co-sponsored by Dalhousie Libraries and the Centre for Learning & Teaching.

Dr. Stevens' explains her plans for the grant:

“Over the last seven years, the Introduction to Psychology program has used four different textbooks. Although the cost of a new copy of the hardcover texts has varied, it has typically hovered around \$150 for students. We have always felt that the cost was too high and posed a significant burden on students. As such, we’ve routinely pressured the leading textbook companies to reduce the cost or to offer more cost-effective options.

In recent years, we have been able to offer online versions of the text for lower prices (e.g., \$60-\$100), but acknowledge that this cost may still act as a barrier to student success in our classes. In an effort to reduce barriers and improve access for all students, we would like to adopt and adapt an open textbook for our Introduction to Psychology & Neuroscience program (includes six courses: PSYO 1011/1012/1031/1032 and SCIE 1506/1507). Building on, and utilizing, the resources created through the work done with our Tricky Topics video series (closed captioning, transcripts, creation of key UDL/accessible images/diagrams), we aim to create a high-quality, academically rigorous, and accessible textbook that would be free to all students.”



Dr. Leanne Stevens

More information about the grant [can be found here](#).

Scholarship @ Dal Libraries Webinar Series

Launched in 2018, this is the third **Scholarship @ Dal Libraries** webinar series, with monthly sessions in February, March, and April. Topics covered were:

1. Introduction to Citation Managers: Beyond RefWorks

Presented by **Shelley McKibbon**, an information services librarian at the W.K. Kellogg Health Sciences Library, who has been assisting users with citation managers since 2003.

2. Introduction to GIS

Presented by **Gwen MacNairn**, coordinator of GIS & Data Services for the Dalhousie Libraries. Gwen has been an educator for more than thirty years. Before coming to Dalhousie University, she worked for ESRI in California, and while there, co-authored *Understanding GIS*, a popular textbook used for teaching GIS concepts to undergraduate students in universities and colleges.

3. Data Management: Getting Started

Presented by **Erin MacPherson**, the research data management librarian for Dalhousie and a research and instruction librarian at the Agricultural Campus in Truro.

Staff News

Jason Flynn is our new Manager of Academic Technology Operations for the Dalhousie Libraries. Jason has worked at Dalhousie for the past 11 years, spending five of those years as a Systems Administrator for the Dalhousie Libraries in the Academic Technology Services unit. He recently returned to the Dal Libraries' ATS unit to take this position.

Cassandra Larose has taken a temporary assignment to the role of Copyright Services Coordinator, until October. She started with the Dal Libraries in April of 2019, as the evening and weekend supervisor at the Sexton Library.

Mike Duggan has a new role of Instructional Technologies Architect. Mike has been working as a member of the Instructional Technologies Team in ATS supporting since October 2015.

James Wilson is new to the Academic Technology Services team as our new Video Conferencing Coordinator. He previously worked in the MedIT department on Carleton Campus

Pandemic Response

The following stories reflect the Dal Libraries' response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in addition to creating [a hub on our website](#) where all of our virtual services are promoted.

Research Bootcamp 2020: Online!

For the 6th year, the Dalhousie Libraries is offering **Research Bootcamp**, a suite of modules designed for teaching and research assistants and graduate students. Research Bootcamp is also open to faculty and staff.

This year, Research Bootcamp will occur **completely online**. Modules on the following topics were posted weekly on Brightspace from **May 25-June 29**: Library basics, literature reviews (searching and writing), citation tools, copyright, legal resources, PubMed, humanities resources, Canadian data and stats, grey literature, research data management, Excel, evidence synthesis, Covidence software, open access and predatory publishers, and conference posters.

Complete module list and descriptions [are available here](#).



A Self-Isolation Care Package from the Dal Libraries: The Browse & Borrow LibGuide

A new guide created by librarians Deborah Hemming and Melissa Helwig has been designed as a self-isolation care package aimed at engaging users from across all Dal disciplines and keeping you entertained and curious. The [Browse & Borrow LibGuide](#) features ebooks and other electronic resources that you can access from the comfort of home.



Each week, we'll be launching a new topic on the guide featuring books, links, podcasts, and general inspiration related to a single subject or genre. Check back often for more featured topics!

So far, topics include:

- [Environment & Humanity](#) -- launched in time for Earth Day
- [Poetry](#) -- launched as HRM announced Sue Goyette as the new Poet Laureate

Happy reading!

A Reliable Guide to COVID-19 Resources

With so much misinformation about COVID-19 at our fingertips, where do we turn for reliable information? Information professionals are here to help! Robin Parker, a librarian whose subject

specialties include family medicine, surgery, and internal medicine has created a [guide to COVID-19 resources](#).

"This guide is a compilation of reputable sources of data and research relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. The resources and information linked here come from a variety of lists and social media sources, including the [Medical Library Association COVID-19 Resources for Medical Librarians and other Information Professionals](#)," says Robin.

Included in the guide are links to pages from a variety of local, national, and international sources. Lists of COVID-19 primary and secondary (evidence synthesis) resource sources are included on the Research tab. [Freely available COVID-19 academic resources also included](#).

The COVID-19 guide will be updated as new resources become available, but may not be exhaustive in all areas. Other similar guides and resource lists are linked in the "Other Resource Lists" tab. The Evidence Synthesis Specialist at the Maritime SPOR SUPPORT Unit (MSSU), has also compiled a list of useful links [here](#).

COVID-19 UPDATES FROM THE DALHOUSIE LIBRARIES

We're here for you!

For resources, especially for Nova Scotia clinicians, check the [NSHA library COVID-19 Research Guide](#).

Robin welcomes suggestions on additional resources that can be included in the guide. She can be contacted at robin.parker@dal.ca

Sharing our Library Collections with the World

Decades before the Internet was invented and Googling became a term synonymous with searching, an international network of libraries formed to share print-based information with the world through interlibrary loans.

Led by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), [the first guidelines for international resource sharing were developed in 1954](#). If you wanted a book or an article that your local academic or public library didn't own, your library would go to great lengths to get it for you, no matter the distance. This published material was sent from the library that owned the content to the requesting library through the mail, then by fax, and eventually through systems running on the Internet.

Even in the digital age, this international lending network has remained an important aspect of library service. Most libraries in the world participate in international resource sharing and the Dalhousie Libraries are no exception.

Dalhousie's service, called [Document Delivery](#), regularly responds to both requests from members of the

Dalhousie community seeking an article or a book the university doesn't have in its own collections, as well as answering calls from institutions around the world for access to articles and materials Dalhousie does own.

"Libraries are the cornerstone of democracy, providing equitable access to information across communities and borders," says Donna Bourne-Tyson, dean of libraries at Dalhousie. "Our ability to share and receive materials from other libraries to support learning, teaching, and research both at Dalhousie and beyond, is a key piece of what we do. Document Delivery allows us to augment our collections and go further to meet the needs of our community."

Adapting to the Challenge

The recent shutdown of most of the world's libraries has put a strain on this international lending network unlike anything that's ever been seen, but the Dal Libraries adapted quickly, and continue to provide this essential service.

When the Dal Libraries closed most of their physical spaces on March 18, Joe Wickens and the Document Delivery team were ready to go remote.

"The five full-time members of our team were set up with laptops and software so they could provide service remotely," says Wickens (pictured), who manages [Document Delivery](#) for Dal Libraries. "There are also a number of staff who normally spend as much as half of their time supporting Document Delivery. Since our physical spaces have closed, everyone supporting Document Delivery has been focused on fielding requests from Dalhousie users to access electronic content owned by other institutions and taking requests from other institutions to deliver access to something we have in our electronic collections".



Joe Wickens

Weeks before the physical libraries closed, the Academic Technology Services team (ATS) — in-house IT support for the Dalhousie Libraries — anticipated what was coming and provided the Document Delivery team with laptops loaded with the e-software required to request and share resources. "I can't say enough about Marc Comeau, the director of Academic Technology Services, and ATS team member John Miffen, who made this transition so seamless for us," says Wickens. "And the Document Delivery team has been amazing, very skillfully managing the change to working from home".

Despite that aspect of the transition going well, a big piece of the regular Document Delivery service was missing: Providing access to Dalhousie's excellent print collections.

"Not being able to loan physical items from our collections is a huge loss, and so we had to figure out a work-around," said Wickens, a 2010 graduate of Dalhousie's School of Information Management

who has been employed with the Dalhousie Libraries since 2001. “We have one of the best collections in Atlantic Canada. It’s our obligation to keep providing access to as much information as we can”.

From Electronic Resources to Scanning Print Items

More than a decade ago, the Dal Libraries began transitioning to eResources as the preferred format for information whenever possible. Electronic resources, or eResources, have many advantages over print, including being accessible remotely at all times, with content often available to multiple users simultaneously. eResources are also more accessible for those with print disabilities and have the distinct advantage over print materials in this climate, when access to most of the world’s print collections is so limited.

Not everything is available electronically, though. With the current inability to loan physical items, Wickens has been coming in to the Killam and Kellogg Libraries daily to scan portions of print material that are essentially needed and not available in an electronic format. “Following copyright rules, we can provide up to a chapter of a book,” says Wickens. “Most people usually only need a chapter, or a specific section, so in many cases we’re still able to provide access to the most crucial content”.

And then, the National Library of Medicine in Maryland stopped scanning from their print collections. “Everyone in North America depends on them for the comprehensiveness of their collection, but due to the COVID-19 restrictions, they can no longer scan from their print collections. Since that happened, the access that we’re providing is even more important. For example, our dentistry collection has a lot of material that is rare in Canada and possibly even North America”.

Dalhousie is uniquely positioned to provide this service during the pandemic. The Dalhousie Libraries collection is both large enough to have the depth to respond to requests, and small enough to fill the requests safely. “The larger library institutions like the British Library have been shutting down the scanned access to their print collections because so many people are needed to search their enormous facilities and with the public health restrictions on social contact, they can’t do it safely”.

“I can do this aspect of the service on my own at Dal largely because our remote team is covering many of the other processes in our Document Delivery system. When I come in, I’m working safely. In most of our five libraries, we also have a manager and staff members who take turns coming in to empty the book return, and they are also helping me with the scanning of our collections to fill requests, both for members of the Dalhousie community and other institutions,” says Wickens.

Meeting Requests from around the World

Since the physical libraries have closed, Document Delivery is seeing about 20 requests a day from the Dalhousie community seeking access to something from our print collections or content not held by Dal, and about 40 requests a day from outside of Dalhousie, seeking content from our print and electronic collections.

“In this new reality, we are not only supplying libraries across the region with electronic resources, but also with scanned copies of print resources,” says Elaine MacInnis, associate dean of library

services and head of the MacRae Library in Truro. “We are one of the few libraries in the country still running a document delivery service that includes scanning from the print collection, and the only one in Atlantic Canada.”

And just how far has Dal’s content been going? “We’ve filled requests in New Zealand and Australia, and quite routinely to Taiwan and Hong Kong,” says Wickens. “The other day, I scanned a thesis for a researcher in the US. She was very appreciative of that. If any of us with depth to our collections can stay in the game, it’s really a plus. It’s good that we’re still able to share.”

How the Dal Libraries Stay Open when they’re Closed

When the Dal Libraries closed most of its physical locations on March 18 due to COVID-19, it meant the Dal and broader communities losing access to hundreds of thousands of print books and journals, study spaces, and face-to-face library services. It also meant much-used computer labs were now inaccessible as well.

With all classes moving online within a matter of weeks the dean of libraries, as well as the provost and the vice-provost student affairs, were hearing from concerned students and knew they had a gap to help fill. At first, the Kellogg Library Learning Commons (KLLC) in the CHEB remained open after other Dal Libraries locations closed, mainly to provide computers for students in an accessible space in the middle of campus.

“Not long after, the public health guidelines severely reduced the size of gatherings that were allowed, from 50 to five, and we had to close the space,” says Donna Bourne-Tyson, dean of libraries. “We knew that meant a number of students would be left without computer access and unable to finish the term, so we had to act quickly.”

Loaning laptops to help students

The day after the KLLC closed, the Libraries were ready to start loaning the laptops they had on hand. Laptop loaning is a regular service offered by the Dal Libraries, but the Libraries had never loaned laptops as a curbside pick-up service, or for such extended loan periods.

The ‘emergency’ service ran out of the atrium and the back door of the Killam Library. The dean of libraries, joined by Janice Slauenwhite, Nancy Melvin, Helen Wojcik, and Jim Kennedy, arranged pick-up appointments over email and set up students with laptops while observing the rules of social distancing. Graham Perkins and Michelle Francis of the Academic Technology Services team (ATS), the in-house IT department of the Dal Libraries, prepped all the laptops with the appropriate software.



It didn't take long for the Libraries to exhaust their on-site supply of laptops. "At one point, Janice had to zip over to Staples to buy ten laptops, which Graham in ATS then quickly prepped for loaning the next day," says Bourne-Tyson. "Once the need for laptops on the Agricultural Campus was filled, Elaine MacInnis drove some laptops to Halifax as well." MacInnis is the associate dean of library services and head of the MacRae Library.

Since March 13, the Libraries have loaned over 40 laptops. "The students are very grateful when picking up their laptops, and we appreciate how patient they have been as they sometimes had to wait a day or two for more laptops to come in," says Bourne-Tyson.

Extending loans while continuing book drops

In addition to loaning laptops, the Libraries is serving both the Dalhousie community and, in some cases, the larger community in general through a number of other initiatives.

When public and university libraries around the province closed their physical spaces in March, many also closed their book drops, instead extending their loan dates and encouraging people to hold on to their books for the time being. Novanet extended all due dates to May 30.

"We understand the rationale for closing the book drops, but we wanted to keep the option to return items available to our students and others, especially those heading to a home out of province," says MacInnis. "There were a lot of people, particularly at Dalhousie, who had library items they wanted to return before they left Halifax. We didn't want students to worry about how they were going to get their books back and allowing them the option to return their library books took that stress away.

"Additionally, we are part of the provincewide Borrow Anywhere, Return Anywhere program, and as one of the few book drops remaining open, we have been receiving returns of books from libraries across the province," says MacInnis.

All five Dal Libraries locations have kept their book drops open and staff take turns coming in to safely empty and sort through the returns. Some days there are as many as 30 books returned that belong to other academic and public libraries throughout Nova Scotia. "We are keeping the books safe for the other institutions, ready to ship them back to their home libraries when normality returns," says Jim Kennedy, one of the staff members who has been on book drop duty.

Expanding Live Help support

One of the Libraries' services that has seen an increase in "open" hours and the number of staff available to assist is Live Help, a chat-based way for students and faculty to engage with the Dal Libraries. Live Help is a Novanet-wide service, staffed by librarians, other library personnel and Master of Information (MI) students who provide reference and research assistance.

“In the weeks before the closure of the Libraries’ physical spaces, we started training additional staff on how to do Live Help as we anticipated an increased demand on the service,” says MacInnis. “Many of the Dal Libraries staff stepped up for the training. Throughout the spring term, we’re going to keep the service open until 8 p.m. through the week, when normally the service would end at 4 p.m.

“Erin MacPherson, our Research Data Management Librarian based at the MacRae Library on the Agricultural Campus, is the provincial coordinator of Live Help. She did a tremendous job organizing the additional training required and logistics behind the expanded staffing.”

The Live Help service covers help finding an article or a subject guide as well as help with requests for Document Delivery, citation assistance, and account inquiries. For more in-depth research questions, the librarians are still available for appointments, all handled remotely. The subject liaisons [are listed here](#), alphabetically by topic, and they can be reached by email.

Course Reserves is another essential service the Libraries have kept running that has also seen an increase in demand as more courses have moved online. Faculty submit their course reading lists and library staff find the content, get the copyright clearances, digitize the content if it doesn’t already exist in an electronic format, and enter the content into the course space on Brightspace.

“We know faculty rely on this service and we fully expected to see an increase in these requests because our print collections are not as accessible now. We want to support faculty in any way we can, and we are especially sensitive to the needs of those faculty members who are more dependent on our print collections,” says Bourne-Tyson. The coordinator of this service, Nancy Melvin, comes in as needed to retrieve print items that need to be cleared for copyright and then digitized. Other Dal Libraries’ staff are also supporting this service.

Contributing PPE, supporting Brightspace

Perhaps the most unexpected way the Libraries have responded to the COVID-19 crisis thus far, was by contributing to the university-wide drive of medical Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) organized by Jerry Aguinaga, director of the Environmental Health and Safety Office.

“We were very happy to donate a significant number of N95 masks and Nitrile gloves that the Archives and the MacRae Library had, left over from various renovating projects,” says Bourne-Tyson.



Brightspace Support Team clockwise from top left; Carlye Stein, Norbert Addo, Michelle McDonald, Mike Duggan

“We are also aware of ways that 3D printers can be put into service in the fight against COVID-19, such as printing ventilator parts and face shields, but we have not yet found a project that is appropriate for the recreational grade of printers that we own. We do have some wonderful in-house experts who are willing to undertake that kind of project, so we are keeping our eyes open for such an opportunity.”

In addition to the 3D printers, the Dal Libraries’ ATS team also manages the IT Help Desks and Brightspace, providing training for faculty and back-end technical support. To address the recent mass move to remote teaching, their team grew exponentially in a matter of days. Dozens of graduate students who had completed the Certificate in University Teaching and Learning were hired and trained in how to provide Brightspace support for faculty.

ATS, in partnership with the Centre for Learning & Teaching, also introduced a virtual Brightspace support service that runs daily from 9 a.m.–8 p.m., and on the weekends from 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Faculty and students can contact support@dal.ca to reach the IT Help Desk for general IT assistance or for more specific Brightspace support.

“Libraries are the heart of any community, and we strive to be the virtual heart of Dalhousie online. Our staff is what makes the Dal Libraries so outstanding, and over the past month, they have demonstrated flexibility, compassion, and ingenuity as we continue to support our communities in any way we can, under these extremely challenging conditions,” says Bourne-Tyson. “I am proud of the work they’re doing for Dalhousie and the greater community.”

A Curated Guide to Free Scholarly Resources during the Pandemic

Library doors may be closed, but access to many scholarly e-resources has opened up, allowing students and researchers to use hundreds of additional online e-books and e-journal articles during the pandemic. The Dal Libraries have taken steps to help everyone in the community to discover this wealth of expanded content.

Around mid-March, schools, offices, and libraries across North America started closing their doors to slow the spread of COVID-19. As difficult as it was to close their spaces, libraries across the continent quickly transitioned to serving their communities in an online only environment.

“Luckily, libraries in general have been building their electronic collections over the past two decades, and the Dalhousie Libraries is no exception,” says Donna Bourne-Tyson, Dean of Libraries. “In many cases, electronic resources are preferred by libraries because they are accessible at all times, regardless of your location, allow simultaneous use by multiple users in some cases, and they don’t take up physical space in your buildings. There is only so much space available in the Dal Libraries, and students want to use the space for individual silent study and group study meetings; any space we don’t need to devote to stacks is appreciated by our students.”

As prepared as the Dal Libraries was to deliver services in an online only environment, there were challenges, some of which stemmed from the licensing restrictions on electronic resources. These

restrictions had always been there, but they were felt even more deeply once libraries closed their doors.

“Licensing restrictions limit who can remotely access our electronic resources. Only Dalhousie students, faculty, and staff — not community members — have off-campus access to the eResources to which we subscribe,” explains Michelle Paon, associate dean resources and head of the Sexton Design & Technology Library. “Community researchers can access our electronic resources from computers on campus, but once we closed our physical spaces, that access was removed for non-Dalhousie researchers.”

Another challenge that is sometimes posed by licensing restrictions on electronic resources are limitations on the number of users who can access a single resource concurrently. “This is especially difficult when a faculty member has assigned a reading to their entire class, if only one student at a time can access the resource,” says Paon. “In some cases, a license can be purchased to allow for more simultaneous users, if we know that is needed.”

Libraries knew these challenges would become even bigger issues in the online only environment, and so, on behalf of all libraries, [the International Coalition of Library Consortia \(ICOLC\)](#) made an appeal to hundreds of publishers and vendors.

The ICOLC is an informal, self-organized group comprising approximately 200 library consortia in North and South America, Europe, Australia, Asia, and Africa. In March, they asked publishers to provide wider access to their electronic resources in the face of library, university, and school closures, and the mass move to remote teaching.

The ICOLC appeal alerted publishers to the difficulties that students and researchers would soon be facing in accessing adequate resources. The appeal encouraged publishers to adopt a number of measures to reduce the barriers to information that libraries knew learners and educators everywhere would encounter.

Well over one hundred publishers and vendors responded to the appeal. The ICOLC relied on crowd sourcing to pull together the list of titles with expanded or free access. Many scholarly publishers lifted some of the stiff restrictions on accessing their content, but sorting out what was freely available was another matter. The result was an extensive, but ultimately difficult-to-navigate list that would be more likely to overwhelm users before they would find it helpful.

“Without some coordination on our part, it would be easy for library users to miss out on being able to take advantage of these resources,” says Paon. “With publishers responding in different ways to the ICOLC appeal, we had to look at each offer individually and curate a list for the Dalhousie audience.”

In addition to the crowd-sourced ICOLC list, there were offers from publishers coming in via the Council of Atlantic University Libraries (CAUL) and directly to the Resources department of the Dal Libraries.

Next, some of the librarians and Resources staff got together and did what librarians and libraries do best — organize information. “We created an internal spreadsheet, adding titles as the information came in, which at that time, was fast and furious,” says Sarah Stevenson, associate dean planning and head of the Killam Memorial Library. “Then we developed a LibGuide for our users, and David Ryan (MLIS, 2008), a library assistant at the Sexton Library, helped to further organize the content into something our users could digest and use.” LibGuide is the term used for the online library guides created by librarians, compiling the best resources on a given topic into one guide.

The resulting LibGuide is called [Temporary Access to Additional Scholarly Resources During COVID-19](#). It untangles the complicated business of understanding what exactly is on offer from each publisher. The LibGuide divides the content into four categories: totally open resources that are available to anyone, eResources that are available only to the Dalhousie community over and above current subscriptions, standards, and courseware.

“The new LibGuide features all of the publishers we know of, what aspect of their collection is now available as a temporary free resource, and when that access is currently scheduled to end,” says Ryan, who spent a couple of weeks wrangling the content into an organized LibGuide. Ryan also spent time adding the Dal Libraries’ “Ezproxy” link to URLs where applicable, ensuring that off-campus users not logging in through the VPN would be able to access the various resources.

The LibGuide, which covers many disciplines, also has a tab linking to a LibGuide on [COVID-19 research](#), which is an ongoing compilation by Robin Parker, a librarian whose subject specialties include family medicine, surgery, and internal medicine.



COVID-19 LibGuide

“This LibGuide is constantly evolving,” says Paon. “We’re updating it as soon as we hear of another offer, and removing content when access has expired. We’re very thankful that the ICOLC made this appeal and that so many publishers responded responsibly. It was a big job to sort out these resources but it was important that we took the time to do that. Every little bit that we can do for our users at this time helps.”

For upcoming events, visit our calendar: <https://dal.libcal.com/calendar/events>