





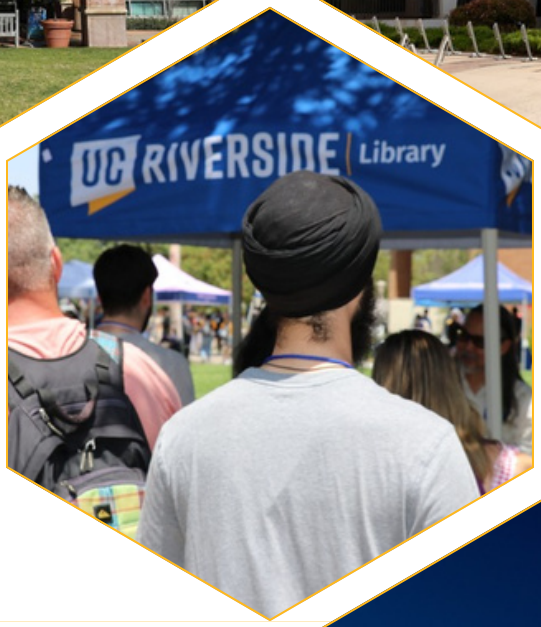



UC RIVERSIDE | Library

Annual Report

2024/2025

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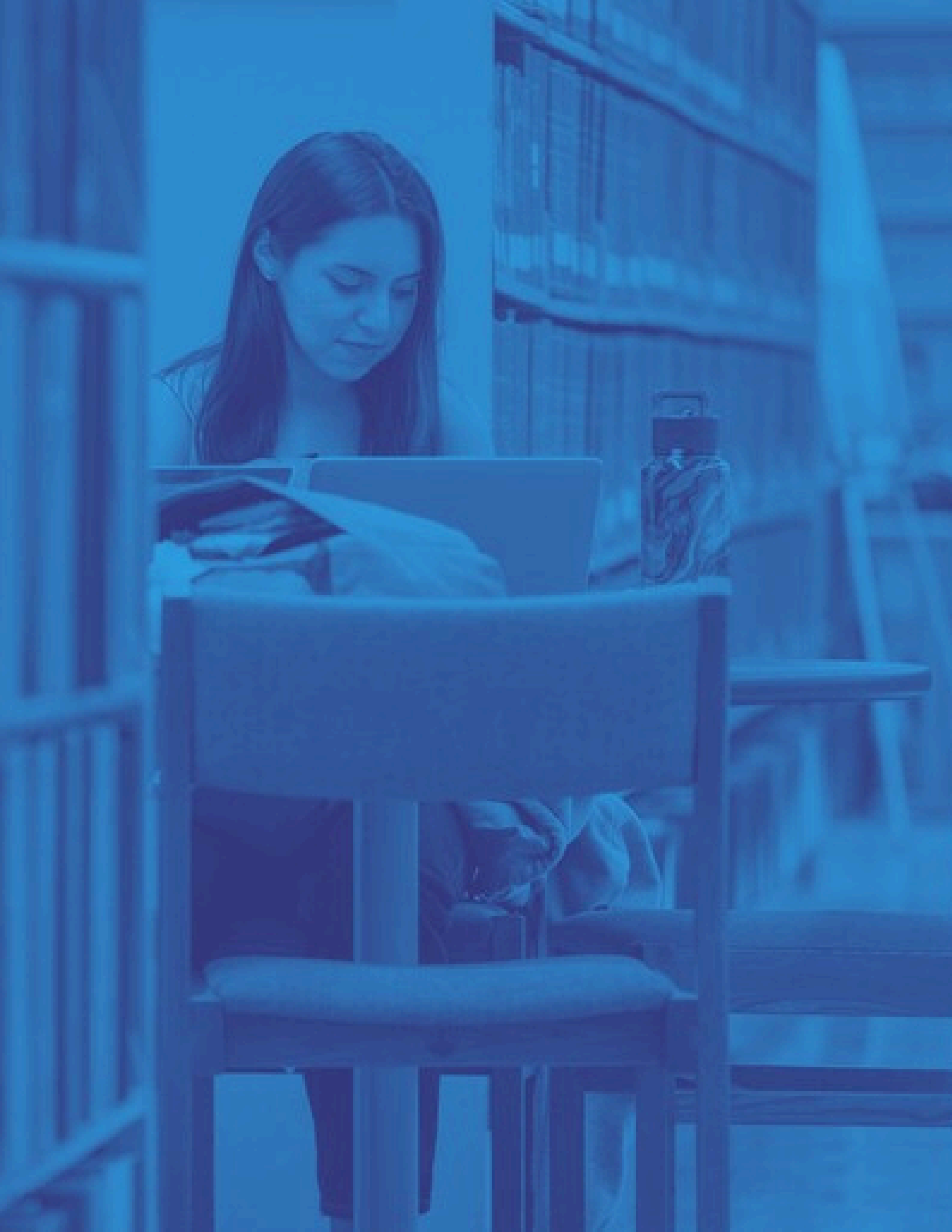




Chancellor Kim A. Wilcox, who also retired at the end of this academic year, and University Librarian Steven Mandeville-Gamble at Steven's retirement party.

Message from the University Librarian

Steven Mandeville-Gamble

For my last duty as University Librarian, it gives me great pleasure to share with you the achievements of the UCR Library for the 2024-2025 academic year.

As you will see in the stories that follow, every division of the Library had an incredibly productive year, demonstrating once again how vital it is to the success of the academic program of the university.

First and foremost, amongst those successes was the unwavering commitment that the librarians and staff of the UCR Library had to ensuring student success on campus. We continued our deep engagement and participation in programs such as the CHASS F1RST initiative, worked to support and extend the effectiveness of the campus' teaching assistants through the implementation of the Information Literacy Teaching Toolkit, and collaboratively launched GradVantage—a joint program of the Library and GradSuccess. Library staff members were also active leaders on campus in terms of creating opportunities for experiential learning; the Creat'R Lab and Research Services department led a Maker Week as well as the inaugural Open Research and Creative Activities (ORCA) Forum, the latter celebrating the academic output and scholarship of graduate students on campus, creating a platform to allow student scholarship to shine.

Continuing on this theme of utilizing the Library as a living laboratory to enable students to explore the world around them, the Library's exhibition program dramatically increased the number, range, and scope of exhibits presented. Our exhibits brought to life the career of noted emeritus faculty member Carlos Cortés, showed the impact that Latinx women have had not only within their home communities but society at large, and illustrated the discordant, challenging and yet ultimately compelling examination of what it means to be human as envisioned in cyberpunk fiction.

The Library has also had a significant impact on the research programs of the university and the research landscape in general, most notably through its leadership in the systemwide efforts to transform the academic publishing landscape to more open, accessible modes of production, including landmark open access agreements with Oxford University Press and others.

The UCR Library's digitization team not only professionalized but significantly increased the rate of production of digitized surrogates of the rare and unique materials held in the Special Collections & University Archives, thereby making the rich holdings of the Library more readily accessible to scholars on the campus, the State of California, and the world.

Perhaps not as obvious at first glance is the Library's shift to the use of OpenAthens, a more user-friendly methodology for authenticating UCR users. OpenAthens allows users to access the full suite of online resources available to UCR students, faculty, and staff regardless of location. OpenAthens dramatically enhanced UCR scholars' ability to continue their teaching and research efforts regardless of where they are physically located.

The most significant set of initiatives launched during this academic year has been a series of efforts to renovate, transform, or improve the aging physical infrastructure of the two Library buildings. The long-overdue project to replace the Orbach Science Library roof was completed in November 2024, and the follow-up project to renovate and restore the Orbach Library 3rd floor started during this academic year. Library team members engaged with leadership in the Facilities Services, Planning Design and Construction, and Environmental Health & Safety departments on campus to coordinate the restoration efforts. As one might expect, getting four different units on campus to coordinate on an effort this complex and extensive was not a straightforward proposition.

However, new leadership in the Planning and Budget division on campus combined with the efforts of Library leadership allowed the project to gain greater traction. It is now well underway and the restored 3rd floor is anticipated to reopen by the end of academic year 2025-2026.

Other significant construction projects launched this year included the renovation of a suite of offices on the first floor of Rivera Library into the home of the new GradVantage program, slated to come online in Fall 2025; a relocated, expanded, and dramatically enhanced Graduate Student Study Area on the second floor of Rivera Library; a complete refresh of the media viewing and gaming rooms on the 2nd floor of Rivera Library; and initial work to create an enhanced learning space, the Studio at Rivera Library. The Studio will provide a flexible and dynamic learning environment that can be used by instructors and students alike, a space that will be enhanced with innovative technologies needed for current and evolving pedagogical practices focusing on the creation of information through multimedia tools, including podcasts, digital exhibits, and zines.

No introductory welcome such as this one can do justice to all of the incredible work accomplished by the dedicated team members of the UCR Library. I invite you to delve more deeply into the stories of their successes and their impact on the university in the pages that follow.

I am extremely proud of what the UCR Library team accomplished, and this was a banner year to go out on. The work that we accomplished together this year will reverberate for years to come in terms of promoting the success of the teaching, research, and clinical mission of UCR.







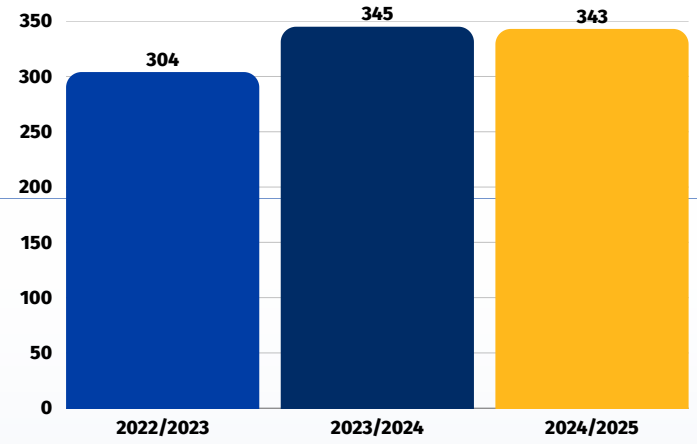




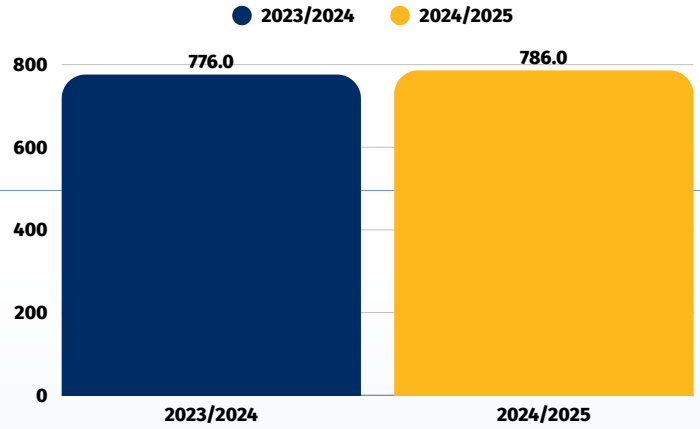
By the Numbers

Tracking our Growth

Instruction & Workshops



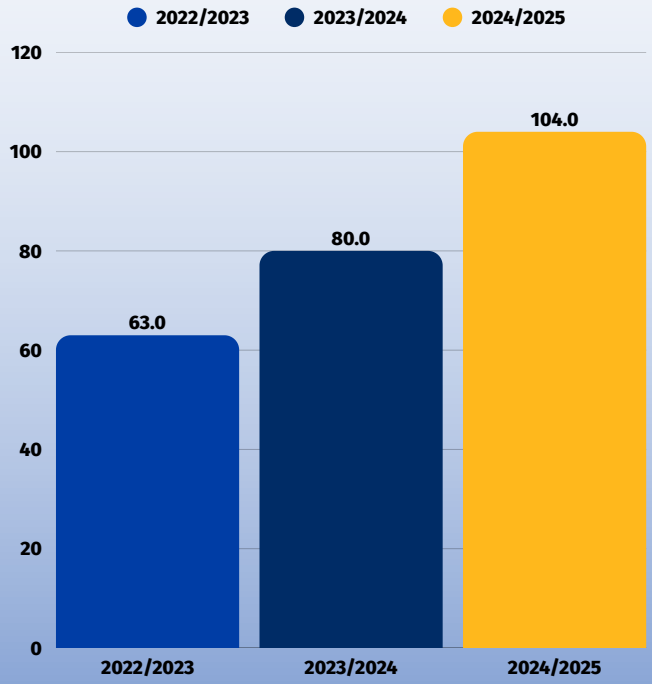
Course Reserve Lists Processed



Reference



Outreach & Engagement



Snapshot of the Year



458,225
Tomás Rivera Library Visits



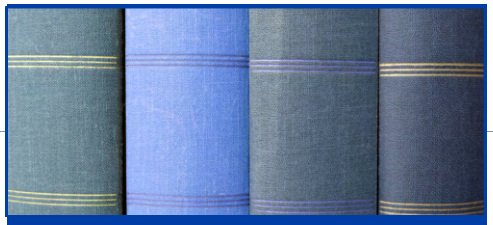
499,753
Raymond L. Orbach Science Library Visits



4,574,539
Volumes Held



1,995,459
Electronic Books



Total Interlibrary Lending: 4,984

Total Interlibrary Borrowing: 8,859



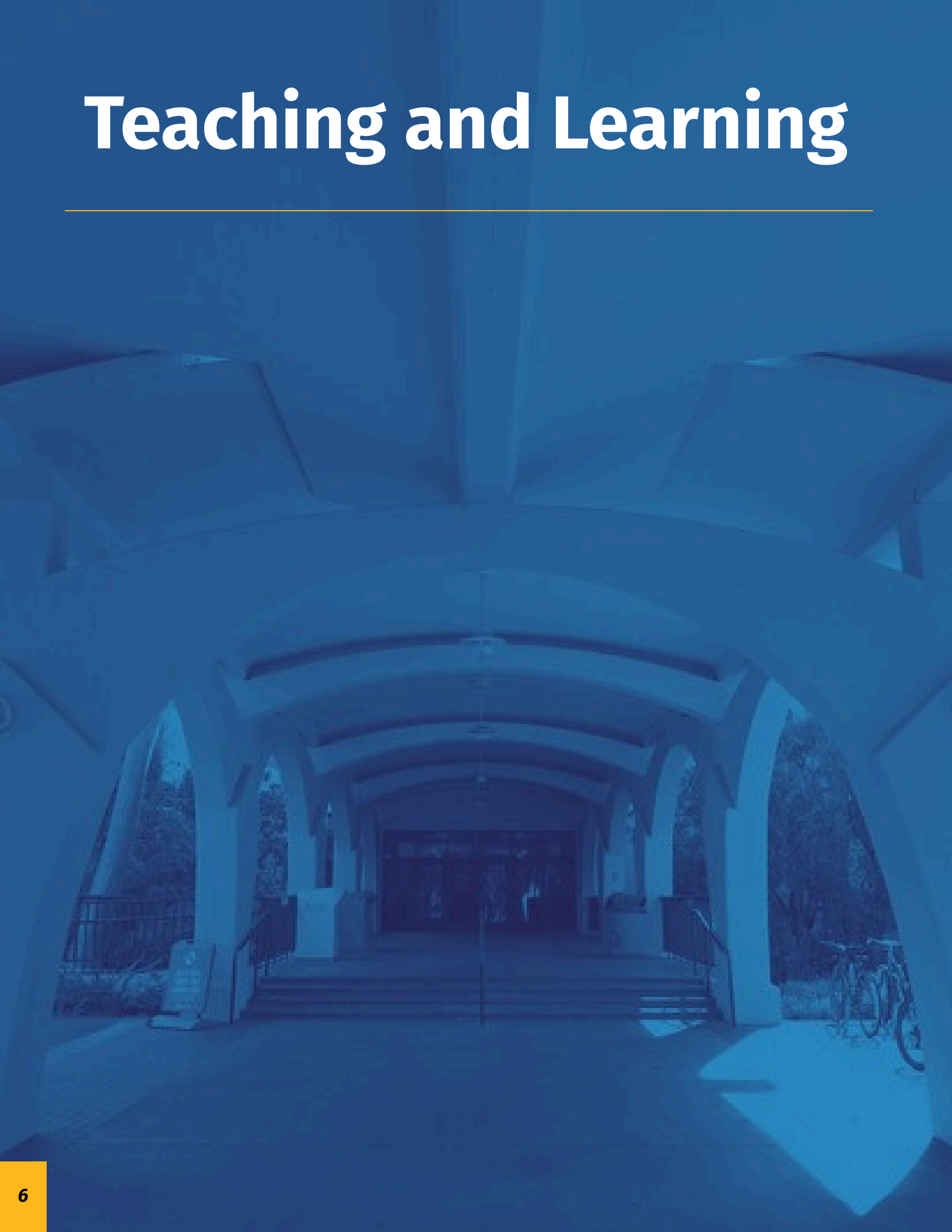
101
Professional and Support Staff

International Research Visits To Special Collections & University Archives

- **Belgium**: 1 visitor
- **Canada**: 1 visitor
- **Chile**: 1 visitor
- **France**: 1 visitor
- **Germany**: 4 visitors
- **Italy**: 1 visitor
- **Japan**: 2 visitors
- **Paraguay**: 1 visitor
- **Sweden**: 1 visitor
- **United Kingdom**: 4 visitors



Teaching and Learning



Supporting High-Impact Practices with CHASS F1RST

The UCR Library plays an important role in supporting CHASS F1RST, a student success program in the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CHASS) that helps first-year freshman and transfer students adjust to college life.

On the Library's end, this collaboration is led by Student Success and Engagement Librarian Carrie Cruce and Social Sciences Teaching Librarian Michael Yonezawa.

The UCR Library contributes to the program in two key ways: by embedding information literacy modules into CHASS F1RST courses, CHFY 007 for freshmen and CHFY 010 for transfer students, and by providing research skills training to the program's peer mentors through the library's WRI (Workshop-Related Instruction) Research Ready program.

Rather than having students come to the Library, the team meets them where they are. "Our modules are integrated into their Canvas courses, and our training for peer mentors happens in their space," Carrie said.

First-year students often face challenges navigating implicit or unspoken academic expectations, a concept sometimes referred to as the "hidden curriculum." According to Carrie, this includes understanding self-advocacy, seeking help, and utilizing campus resources.

"Our collaboration with CHASS F1RST is one of the avenues we have to support students in building academic support networks, cultivating help-seeking skills, and understanding the role and resources of campus support departments like the Library," Carrie explains.

Michael noted that first-year students—and in some cases, new transfer students—are often not aware of the vast resources and services a modern academic library provides.



"The challenge for these students is to learn how to search, evaluate, and effectively use different types of information in their coursework and projects, particularly but not exclusively scholarly and academic information," Michael said. "Ideally, students begin their academic journeys with an introduction to important foundational library concepts."

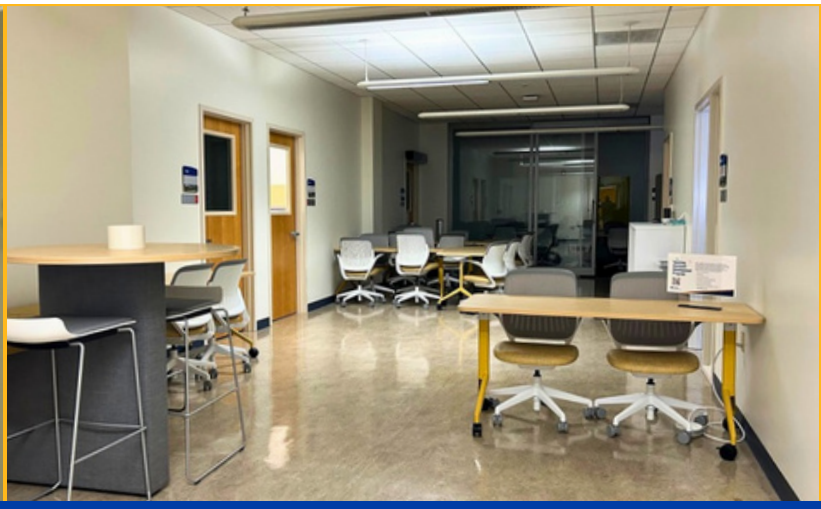
Feedback from students has been overwhelmingly positive. Students have reported feeling more confident in their ability to navigate the Library's resources and conduct research effectively.

Carrie emphasized that fostering positive relationships with students has been key. "I've built connections with several students who now recognize me at other campus events," she said. "Librarian recognition and personal relationships support a positive impression of the library which contributes to further engagement."

By meeting students early in their academic journey, the UCR Library is setting the stage for these students' continued academic growth and engagement throughout their time at UCR.

Teaching and Learning Support: Building Instructor Confidence





Inside and outside of the new GradVantage suite in Rivera Library.

The UCR Library Department of Teaching and Learning has two primary missions: to develop the library skills and information literacy (IL) of our students, and to provide support and resources for disciplinary/departmental instructors in their own work to develop the IL of their learners. Like writing, oral communication, and critical thinking, IL is essential in all disciplines; unlike these other competencies, IL pedagogy and best practices are almost entirely defined, developed, and assessed within the library field.

Research has established that instructors highly value IL, but rarely have the opportunity to engage with the constructs that define it, or the language used to write and assess IL outcomes. This year, Teaching and Learning has established several new initiatives to support IL instruction and assessment for UCR instructors.

In their roles as teaching assistants, our graduate students are essential to undergraduate student success. Often TAs are the front lines for helping their students with completing assignments, searching for quality sources of information, and navigating the resources available through the university, including libraries.

While many services in the Library support graduate students for their research, a new collaborative space in partnership with GradSuccess, GradVantage, is the first to focus on graduate students as instructors.

Located in the Rivera Library along with XCITE, this positions GradVantage as another service on the first floor in support of excellence in teaching. Two teams are housed within the GradVantage suite, which includes seven offices, a conference room, and a flexible open space for grad students to meet, collaborate, and attend professional development programming.

The first team features the specialists from Grad Success' TA Development Program, or TADP, who were seeking a central location for consulting with graduate students and offering programming to meet their needs.

The second team features librarians with expertise in instruction and instructor development, including the Educational Technologist, Assessment, and Instructional Design Librarians. Together, these teams will provide consultations, programming, and support for our graduate students as they develop their instructional practice.

For GradSuccess, this collaboration provides the opportunity to not only support grad student success during their time at UCR, but contribute to their job readiness and future career goals. For the UCR Library, working with graduate student instructors develops a larger network of educators familiar with IL concepts, and prepares the next generation of academics with teaching skills in an essential competency.

An example of the outcomes possible when librarians work closely with TAs, and another instructor development initiative completed this year, is the roll-out of a new University Writing Program (UWP) IL curriculum.

UWP and the Library have been close collaborators for years, so they were a natural partner when prior Instructional Design Librarian Andrea Decker identified WRIT 10 and 20 (formerly, ENGL 1A and 1B) as critical touchpoints in the undergraduate degree progression for IL instruction.

Formerly a UWP TA herself while completing her PhD in Ethnomusicology at UCR, Andrea's insight into the experience of being a UWP instructor informed every aspect of redesigning the curriculum to:

1. Scaffold IL outcomes from WRIT 10 to WRIT 20, based on the UWP learning outcomes for each course.
2. Make explicit the IL learning outcomes, and how they align with UWP outcomes.
3. Integrate ready-made learning objects into WRIT 10, to ensure that all instructors feel confident introducing essential IL concepts, regardless of prior experience.

Andrea worked closely with the UWP Mentor team, which trains graduate TAs for instruction, to communicate these changes and how they would support instructors' goals for their learners. As a result, Teaching and Learning saw an increase in engagement with IL instruction, perhaps most notably a jump in WRIT 20. In AY 23/24, 40% of WRIT 20 sections included a library information session; in AY 24/25, this jumped to more than 60% of all WRIT 20 sections.

Scalability for library skills and IL instruction is one of the biggest challenges for effective IL development, along with the siloing of IL pedagogy in librarianship. Truly successful IL teaching and learning should occur instead in an ecosystem of librarians, instructors, and researchers lending their expertise to support students as they develop the needed IL skills at each stage of their academic, professional, and personal lives, rather than relying solely on librarian instruction. Towards that goal, Teaching and Learning launched the Information Literacy Toolkit in fall of 2024, with plans for expansion and marketing of the tools in AY 25/26.

The IL Toolkit, available at Library Teaching and Learning's website, consists of three components:

1. *Teaching Information Literacy at UCR*, which brings together the universe of library instruction at UCR, including digital modules and tutorials that can be accessed directly from the site, or uploaded into a Canvas course, along with core documents such as rubrics and research on IL instruction.
2. *IL Tools for Teaching*, which provides lesson plans and suggestions on how to integrate IL learning into existing instruction, from quick wins to larger-scale interventions such as term-length projects.
3. *Information Literacy Outcomes and Assessment*, which provides outcomes and objectives for students at UCR aligned with national standards, along with guidance and resources on assessing these outcomes.

These outcomes and the affiliated rubric were used to assess IL across hundreds of classes at UCR in 2025, and the results of this assessment will help identify future directions for IL development and instructor support from UCR Library.

Student Success



Keeping the Library Safe and Secure



Security Services Lead Steve Casarez



Library Safety Officer Christopher Locklin

The UCR Library is more than a place for study, discovery, and collaboration, it's also a place where students, staff, faculty, and community members can feel safe.

That sense of security comes from the dedicated work of our Security Services Lead Steve Casarez and Library Safety Officer Christopher Locklin, along with a team of Library Safety Monitors, the student workers who support Steve and Christopher every day. Together, they ensure that the Library remains welcoming and safe for all.

Steve and Christopher bring years of security and emergency response expertise to their roles, overseeing daily patrols, responding to incidents, and actively looking for and addressing issues before they become problems. Their approach is rooted in both professionalism and customer service, making sure that the security team is always approachable. Both are also deeply connected to campus-wide safety efforts, aligning protocols and working closely with partners such as UCR Police/Campus Safety, the Highlander Student Safety Team, Campus Safety Escort Service, and the Office of Emergency Management.

Steve also provides safety orientations and training for new UCR Library staff and departments and he has completed the Mental Health Allies Certificate Program, further enhancing the team's ability to respond to sensitive situations with care.

Equally vital are our Library Safety Monitors. These student workers are more than extra sets of eyes and ears. They monitor entrances, provide guidance to patrons, conduct interior and exterior monitoring, and contribute to a safer environment by building rapport with Library patrons.

Steve and Christopher also champion infrastructure improvements that directly enhance the safety of our spaces. At the Tomás Rivera Library, upgrades have included new interior motion sensors, motion-activated lighting at the loading dock, improved stairwell lighting for an exterior stairwell, and additional security cameras. These behind-the-scenes improvements should provide added peace of mind to all who use our buildings.

Through their leadership, vigilance, and collaboration, Library Security Services ensures that the UCR Library is a place where everyone feels safe.

Level Up: Gaming and Media Rooms Revamp



A student sits in the newly updated Xbox Gaming Room.



Students sit in the newly updated Media Viewing Room.

This academic year, the UCR Library upgraded its gaming and media viewing rooms to better serve both recreational and academic purposes. Each space now features enhanced technology and refreshed interiors to help meet the needs of students and faculty alike.

Students can now access dedicated platforms in each gaming room. One room is equipped with an Xbox Series X and an Xbox 360 while the other gaming room has a PlayStation 5 Pro, a Playstation 3, and a Playstation 2. A Nintendo Switch has also been added to the lineup and is available for checkout and use in the gaming rooms.

Upgrades included the installation of larger 4K TVs which support the latest format media, new carpet, and fresh paint, creating a more inviting environment. New furniture was selected for comfort, usability, and durability, accommodating both individuals and small groups, with flexibility for quick breaks, extended sessions, or collaborative assignments.

Our two media viewing rooms received similar enhancements (new larger 4K TVs, new furniture, new carpet, and fresh paint), offering updated spaces where students and faculty can watch films, analyze media for coursework, or host small group screenings. Together, these updates ensure equitable access to technology that many may not have at home while also supporting diverse teaching and learning needs.

We hope these enhancements will become an even greater attraction for teaching and collaboration. These enhanced spaces and upgraded technology create more opportunities to integrate gaming or media into coursework, support group projects, and explore different approaches to learning.





Archives Fair 2024: Expanding the Celebration of Archives



A Library student assistant chats with Archives Fair attendees.



UCR Library's Sandy Enriquez and Andrew Lippert introduce an Archives Fair discussion.



Staff from Cal Baptist University Library pose for a photo at the Archives Fair.

On October 8, 2024, the UCR Library's Special Collections & University Archives (SCUA) hosted its second annual Archives Fair in front of the Tomás Rivera Library as part of National Archives Month.

Building on the success of the inaugural event held in 2023, this year's fair expanded in both scope and participation, drawing a larger audience and showcasing more partners from across the Inland Empire.

The fair invited students, faculty, staff, and the public to explore the region's history and learn more about archival resources available to them. Attendees were able to meet archivists and curators, view unique materials from local collections, and had opportunities to engage with archival research.

Archives Fair 2024 featured a diverse group of participating institutions, including:

- California Baptist University
- Riverside Public Library
- Mission Inn Museum
- Malki Museum
- Museum of Riverside
- Riverside Community College Center for Social Justice & Civil Liberties
- National Archives and Records Administration, Riverside
- A.K. Smiley Library
- San Bernardino County Museum

Alongside the information tables, the fair also highlighted our Special Collections & University Archives with tours that included two exhibits on display. Attendees of the fair also learned about student research conducted in the archives and could attend the presentation *Many Stories & Many Ways: How & Where to Document Inland Empire History*.

Building on the momentum of 2023, Archives Fair 2024 represented a clear step forward. With more institutions involved, more programming offered, and increased engagement from students and the community, the event reinforced the value of archives as living resources for scholarship, identity, and cultural memory.

The growth of the Archives Fair demonstrates the Library's commitment to collaboration, outreach, and connecting people to the histories that shape the Inland Empire and beyond.



Mariah Green, Deborah Wong, and Meiko Inaba pictured at their discussion *Many Stories & Many Ways: How & Where to Document Inland Empire History*.

Exhibitions and Display: 2024- 2025



Unexpected Artifacts *highlighted some of our most unique holdings.*



Political Campaign Buttons *featured political buttons related to presidential elections.*



First in the Nation: A History of the Costo Library *documented the history of the Rupert Costo Library of the American Indian, located on the 4th floor of the Tomás Rivera Library.*



3rd Annual Semana de la Mujer Exhibit *was a collective memory exhibit in partnership with Chicano Student Programs.*



Dedication of the Carlos Cortés Papers *celebrated the career and contributions of Dr. Carlos E. Cortés, Professor Emeritus of History at UC Riverside.*



Neon in the Gutters: Cyberpunk Visions of the Future *features cyberpunk materials from our collection.*



ESPARiTU presents Corazón Abierto *was curated by the Encuentros Student Participatory Action Research y Testimonios research team and highlighted Chicanx/Latinx experiences at UCR.*

Dedication of the Carlos Cortés Papers



Dr. Carlos E. Cortés' daughter and wife are pictured with University Librarian Steven Mandeville-Gamble and Dr. Cortés at the Dedication of the Carlos E. Cortés Papers reception.

On April 11, 2025, the UCR Library hosted a special event: The Dedication of the Carlos E. Cortés Papers, celebrating the donation of Dr. Cortés' professional archive to the UCR Library's Special Collections & University Archives. Featured in a *Press-Enterprise* article, the dedication honored Dr. Cortés' long, influential career as a historian, diversity consultant, media specialist, and writer.

The dedication served as the official announcement that Cortés' papers will be preserved at UCR, allowing scholars, students, and community members to explore his drafts, correspondence, research files, and other materials. This preservation marks an expansion of the Library's archival holdings in ethnic studies and media history. The dedication was also accompanied by an exhibit of selections of Dr. Cortés' works that ran from April 11 – 22, 2025.



Neon in the Gutters: Cyberpunk Visions of the Future



Image of the *Neon in the Gutters: Cyberpunk Visions* of the Future poster board installation with the damaged wall adding to the cyberpunk theme.

In spring 2025, the UCR Library presented *Neon in the Gutters: Cyberpunk Visions of the Future*, an exhibit exploring the aesthetics, literature, and cultural influence of cyberpunk. Curated by Special Collections Processing Archivist Andrew Lippert with support from Conservator Christina Bean, the exhibit highlighted the history of Cyberpunk and how it has changed.

The team envisioned an immersive experience with a new wall cling to set the tone for the exhibit. However, when the existing wall cling was removed, the wall surface was unexpectedly damaged, preventing the installation of a replacement. Faced with this challenge, Andrew and Christina quickly pivoted, embracing a different creative solution—a multi-foamboard poster display. Christina installed the new display, using the damaged wall surface as a backdrop.

Neon in the Gutters reflects the Library's commitment to presenting imaginative exhibitions and demonstrates the ingenuity of staff like Andrew and Christina, whose collaborative problem-solving brought the cyberpunk vision to life in unexpected and memorable ways.

Finals Week Stress Relief at the UCR Library



A student pets a dog at a Finals Week Stress Relief Therapy Fluffies event in Orbach Library.



An undergraduate student poses with his $20 Amazon gift card won at a Finals Week Stress Relief Bingo event.

During Week 10 and Finals Week of every quarter, the UCR Library provided a wide range of stress-relieving activities to help students recharge and stay focused during one of their most stressful times of the year. From snacks to creative outlets, these programs offered meaningful breaks that supported both wellness and academic success.

Over the course of the year, the Library hosted an average of 15 Finals Week Stress Relief events per quarter. Popular activities included Therapy Fluffies (therapy dogs and cats in collaboration with The Well's Active Minds), hands-on arts and crafts, and food-based programs that gave students a boost of energy during long study days.

The Library also partnered with the Academic Resource Center to host quarterly Study Jams in Orbach Library, providing free tutoring and structured study support on the Sunday before finals week.

In addition to these scheduled events, students had access to study break corners across Library buildings, as well as online stress activities available at library.ucr.edu/activities. These options gave students the flexibility to recharge whenever they needed a quick reset.

Food support played an important role. With many students balancing tight schedules and some experiencing food insecurity, the Library made sure snacks and simple meals were available during Finals Week Stress Relief. Bagels, tacos, esquites, and other food giveaways provided both nourishment and a sense of care for the students.

Across the year, more than 4,000 students participated in our Finals Week Stress Relief events. With an average of more than 100 students at each event, the programming demonstrated both the strong demand for stress relief and the Library's impact on student well-being.



Two students pose with the tote bags they decorated for a Finals Week Stress Relief Tote Bag Painting event. Tote bags were provided for free.

Experiential Learning

Maker Week 2025: Technology Meets Creativity



Two students experiment with sound and music tools at the Maker Week *Scan to Sound* event.

The Creat'R Lab's Maker Week, held in April, showcased how technology and creativity intersect at the UCR Library, with events designed to give students hands-on experiences that blend innovation, experimentation, and fun. Among the highlights were two programs supported by Lead Software Developer Scott Metoyer, *Scan to Sound* and *Creating Melodies with Ableton*.

Scan to Sound, a drop-in event at Orbach Library, invited participants to bring everyday barcoded items like student IDs, books, or even product packaging, and transform them into digital soundscapes. Scott guided the technical setup, helping students adjust tones, and more. The result was an accessible, engaging way for students to experiment with sound, regardless of musical background. In the *Creating Melodies with Ableton* workshop, Scott introduced students to professional music software, showing how simple beats could grow into complex compositions. By lowering the barrier to entry, he encouraged participants to explore music production as a creative outlet.

These workshops highlighted the Library's commitment to active learning, where students not only consume information but actively create in a welcoming environment.

Open Research and Creative Activities Forum



ORCA Forum winners Mst Shamima Hossain and Angeliz Vargas Casillas pictured after being announced as our first ORCA Forum winners.

In May 2025, the UCR Library hosted the inaugural Open Research and Creative Activities (ORCA) Forum at Orbach Library. What began as a Maker Week competition evolved into a presentation-based forum that celebrated graduate student research, creative projects, and open scholarship across disciplines.

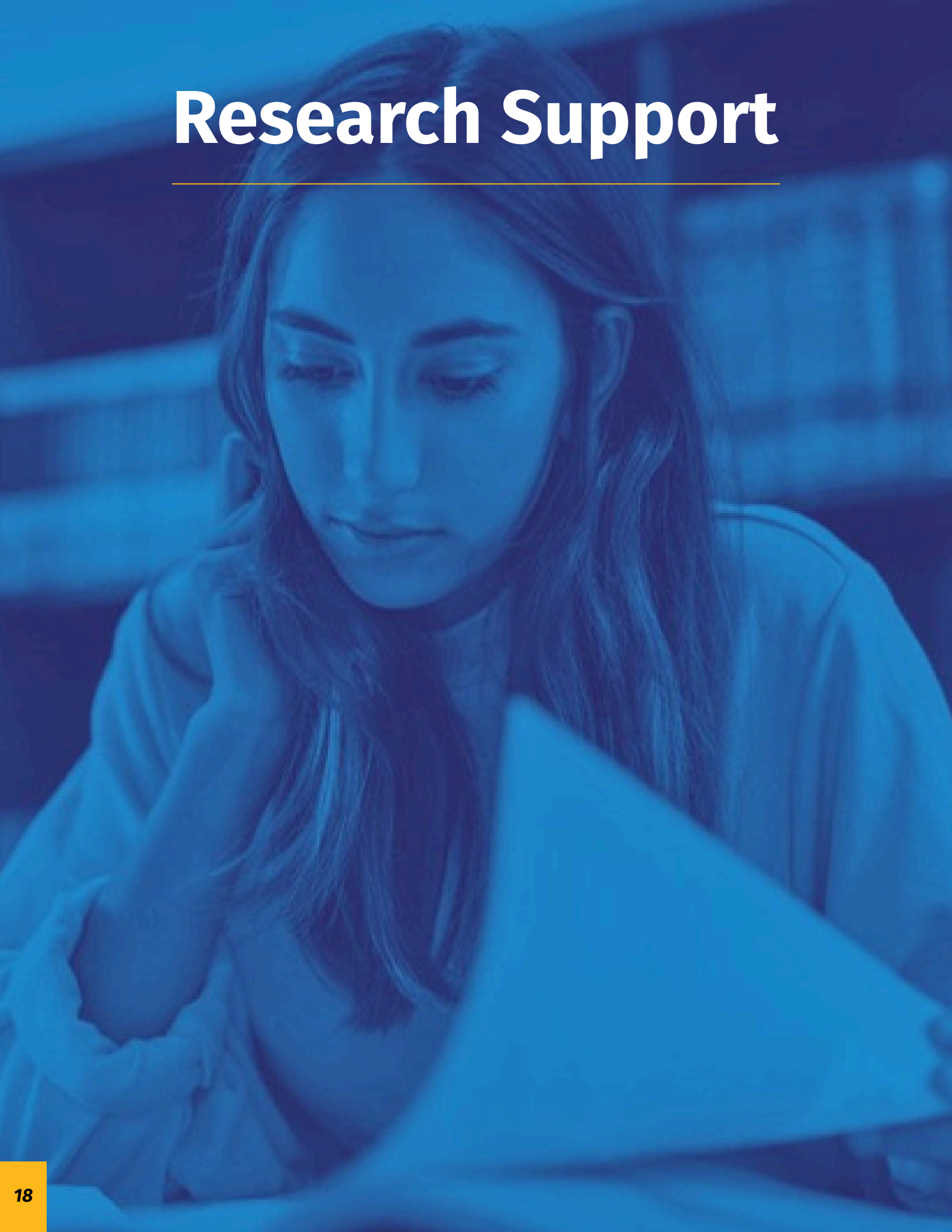
Led by Digital Scholarship Librarian Dr. Jing Han, the forum shifted the focus toward engagement through presentation rather than competition.

Students from fields ranging from mathematics to visual poetry presented their research, with PhD candidates Angeliz Vargas Casillas and Mst Shamima Hossain tying for first place, Vargas Casillas for modeling keloid scar expansion, and Hossain for her system to protect honeybee populations.

The ORCA Forum also served as a pilot for integrating Janeway, an open-source platform, into UCR's infrastructure for managing student submissions and publishing via eScholarship.

The forum captured the energy and creativity of UCR's graduate student community, showcasing the ways they are shaping research at UCR that address real-world problems and serve the public good.

Research Support



Interlibrary Loan System Update



Throughout 2024–2025, the University of California Libraries collaborated on a major upgrade to our interlibrary loan (ILL) service. Together, the campuses prepared for the transition to Tipasa, a modern platform designed to streamline workflows and improve efficiency.

Tipasa officially launched on July 1, 2025. For UCR patrons, the way ILL requests are placed through UC Library Search did not change, ensuring a smooth experience.

The improvements focused on behind-the-scenes operations, enabling staff to process requests more effectively and deliver electronic documents seamlessly.

This UC-wide transition demonstrates a shared commitment to strengthening resource sharing and ensuring students, faculty, and researchers across all campuses have timely access to materials worldwide.

From Lottery to Library: State Funds Strengthen UCR Collections for Teaching and Research



When Californians purchase lottery tickets and scratchers, a portion of the proceeds go towards public education. In 2024, the UCR Library continued to benefit from locally awarded funding through the California State Lottery, a one-time allocation distributed by university leadership to support teaching and learning across campus.

As a result of this funding, the Library was able to strengthen areas of our collection most critical to student learning and faculty research and to fill known content needs. Through purchasing databases, rare archival materials, electronic primary resource databases, and digitized newspapers, many programs' access to resources was enhanced.

“Careful thought went into identifying areas where one-time investments would have lasting value for our students and faculty,” said Tiffany Moxham, Deputy University Librarian. “These resources directly strengthen instruction and research by giving students access to materials that were previously unavailable at UCR.”

In consultation with our teaching and research teams, some of the more immediate, initial priorities identified fell into three areas:

- Support for program initiatives such as the Latino and Latin American Studies Research Center, the AMMP Designated Emphasis (Archives, Museum, Manuscript, and Print Studies), and information literacy instruction.
- Primary sources for research and teaching, including newspapers, archival databases, and digital collections.
- Specialized growing subject areas with specific gaps or instruction needs, such as Latin American and Native cultures, Asian American history and literature, medieval manuscripts, and the global history of print.

Resources purchased with these funds are being used in courses and research projects across campus, giving students new opportunities to engage with original voices, rare materials, and global perspectives.

Purchases included:

- Latin American and Asian American newspapers.
- Databases documenting the People of the Historical Slave Trade.
- Specialized collections on medieval manuscripts and early print culture.
- New monographs and primary sources supporting UCR’s interdisciplinary research programs.



Discovery

OpenAthens: Easier Access to Library Resources

In December 2024, the UCR Library launched OpenAthens, a new identity management platform that makes it easier, faster, and more secure for students, faculty, and researchers to access licensed library resources from off campus. OpenAthens was introduced alongside the existing GlobalProtect VPN, providing the campus community with greater flexibility in how they connect to library materials.

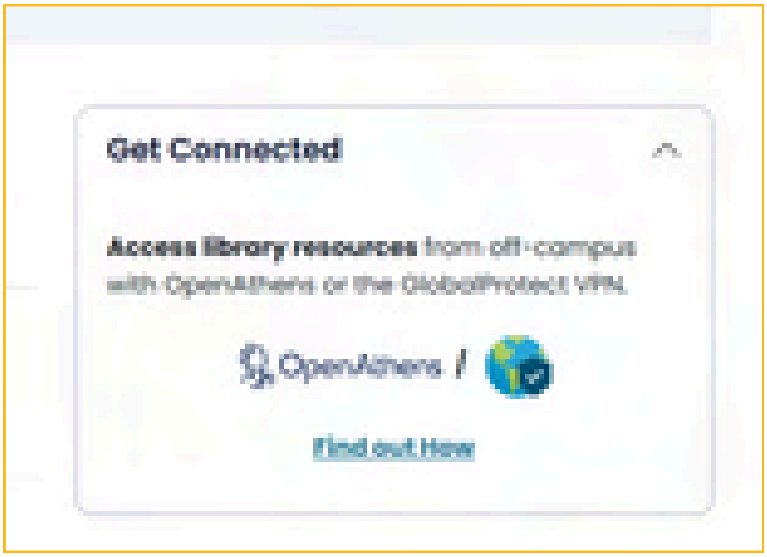
The transition to OpenAthens was the result of extensive collaboration between the Library's Cyberinfrastructure and Collection Strategies teams, who worked together to test integrations and implement the system. They ensured a smooth rollout that addressed both technical requirements and the diverse needs of the campus community.

With OpenAthens, users can log in with their UCR NetID and password to start a browser session that provides uninterrupted access to resources. Unlike VPN connections, which may drop or require repeated logins, OpenAthens offers one-time authentication, a single login that remains active for the duration of the session. The system also delivers faster browsing and improved load times, streamlining the research process for users on and off campus.

OpenAthens integrates seamlessly with UC Library Search, the Databases A–Z list, and LibGuides, making access intuitive and familiar.

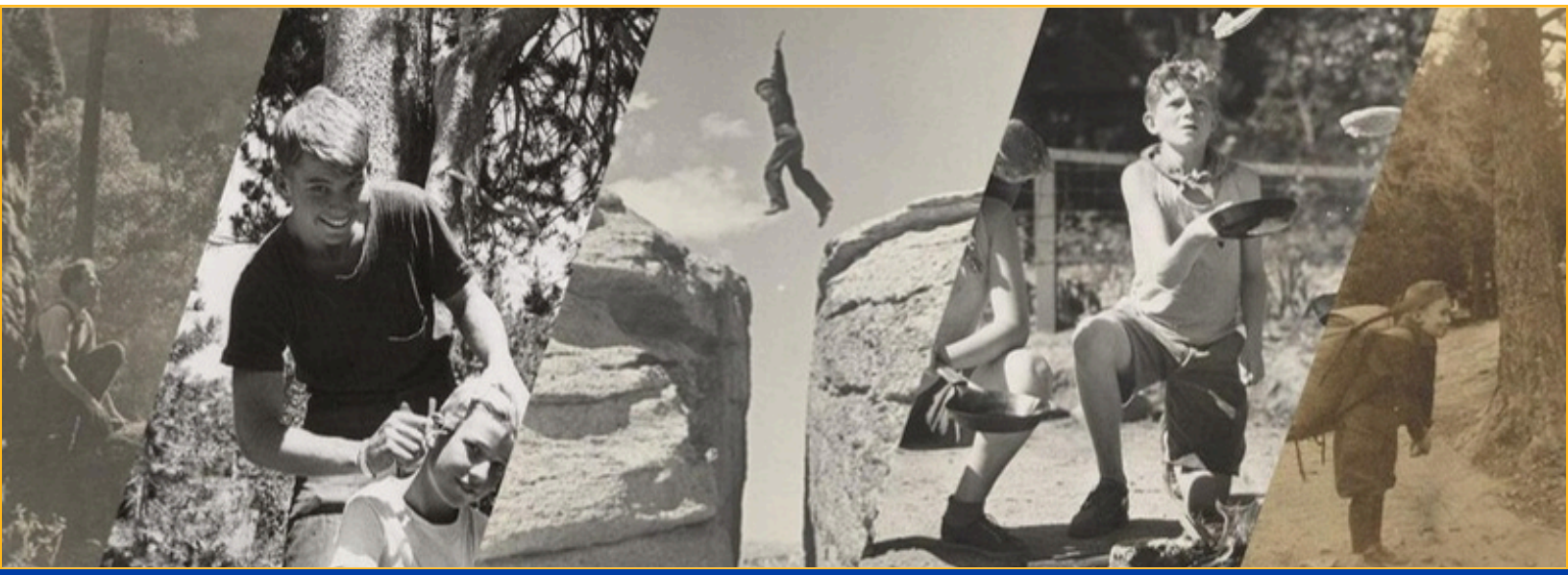
Since its launch, the Library has successfully expanded OpenAthens across additional resource providers, ensuring that more of UCR's licensed content is readily available through this simplified system.

This implementation reflects UCR Library's ongoing commitment to adopting innovative technologies that support teaching, learning, and research.





Preserving History Through Digitization for Researchers at UCR and Beyond



Various images from our digitized *Trailfinders Collection*.

At the UCR Library, making unique historical resources accessible to researchers, students, and the wider community is a shared priority.

Digitization requires close collaboration across library departments, from our digitization experts to Special Collections to metadata catalogers and more, our staff ensure that once-fragile items can be discovered, studied, and used far into the future.

This past year, we're proud to highlight three collections that have been fully digitized and are now available online.

Allison V. Armour Expedition to Yucatán, Mexico Photograph Album

This collection showcases the 1895 research expedition led by curators from the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago. The album captures striking views of Mayan ruins, local scenery, and the expedition group itself. These photographs provide scholars with valuable insights into both archaeological history and late 19th-century fieldwork practices. The collection is now accessible online through Calisphere, expanding its reach well beyond the Library's walls.

Pico Rivera News

Pico Rivera News chronicles everyday life in Pico Rivera, California, and surrounding communities during 1931 and 1932. Published mainly in English, but with some pages in Spanish, the newspaper offers a rare lens into Southern California journalism and Hispanic culture during the early 20th century. Thanks to digitization, UCR affiliates can now explore this important regional resource through UC Library Search, preserving a vital snapshot of community history.

Trailfinders Collection

This collection documents the legacy of Harry C. James and his private school for boys and wilderness program, founded in Hollywood in 1915. Digitized materials include organizational records, scrapbooks, photographs, correspondence, and even 16mm silent films capturing outdoor adventures and camp traditions. From snapshots of mountain hikes to logbooks of campfire contests, the collection opens a window into early and mid-20th century outdoor education in Southern California. Researchers, educators, and anyone interested in the history of outdoor recreation can now access the collection online through Calisphere.

Facilities and Infrastructure Enhancements



Building Improvements



A photo of the completed Orbach Library roof project.

During the 2024–2025 academic year, the UCR Library advanced several important facilities projects at both the Tomás Rivera Library and Orbach Science Library, aimed at improving infrastructure, study spaces, and long-term preservation of collections.

At the **Rivera Library**, construction projects included preparing the second floor's north end for the future installation of the Graduate Study Wing. The space was cleared of old shelving, and shelving from the basement was brought in to maintain collection capacity while making room for the focused graduate study area.

Work also began on creating a Digitization Lab on the second floor, with upgraded windows providing UV protection, heat resistance, and improved durability. In the Rivera basement, we expanded our collection storage capacity, ensuring long-term stewardship of Library materials.

At the **Orbach Science Library**, a major roof replacement project was successfully completed in November 2024. The old roof, which had holes that caused leaks into the third floor during storms, was removed and replaced with a durable fiberglass material designed to last more than 40 years.

This upgrade ensures better protection for Library spaces and collections. While the third floor remains closed due to follow-up work and remediation, planned improvements include new flooring, fresh paint, and repairs to damaged ceiling tiles. Books affected by prior water damage are also being treated and restored.

Together, these projects reflect the Library's ongoing investment in safe, functional, and welcoming facilities. By modernizing spaces and improving building systems, the UCR Library is enhancing the campus research environment and preparing for future needs.



A system was created before an incoming storm to catch rain water before it impacted materials and flooring in Orbach Library.

Building AI Skills and Exploring AI

Artificial intelligence is becoming integral to both society and libraries, shaping how we support research and learning as well as how we provide services and manage operations. At the UCR Library, we are taking a leadership role in building AI capacity that meets the evolving needs of our campus community. We are teaching and collaborating with students and faculty on both the ethical and effective use of generative AI through workshops, instruction, and tool development while also applying AI tools in our cataloging and metadata work. To further advance this effort, the Library initiated a search this year for AI Research Librarians in the Research Services Department and an Educational Technologist in the Teaching and Learning Department, reflecting our commitment to expanding AI expertise. Together, these initiatives are strengthening services and ensuring the UCR Library remains at the forefront of AI at UCR.

Research Services Department

During fall 2024, the UCR Library presented AI Literacy workshops introducing students and faculty to generative AI for academic research, benchmarking various models against graduate-level disciplines. Spring 2025 workshops examined leading-edge AI deep research and reasoning models, exploring research possibilities with AI models while addressing challenges like model hallucination and mitigation strategies.

The Library's Geospatial Services unit organized a spring colloquium on integrating AI with ArcGIS and Planet Imagery geospatial data. UCR PhD candidates presented their AI research for California's billion-dollar agricultural industry, demonstrating early detection systems for crop diseases to prevent blight spread and AI-powered GIS monitoring of moisture levels in agricultural and recreational landscapes. The UCR Library's Creat'R and Robotics Labs hosted a successful robotics summer camp in 2025, integrating AI methods by teaching students to train robot neural networks. Participants built robot cars using convolutional neural networks to recognize green, yellow, and red colors, combining hands-on robotics with practical AI applications.

Textual analysis and subject clustering workshops introduced faculty to AI-powered qualitative text analysis, helping researchers extract insights from large sets of textual data using artificial intelligence methods for ground up categorization and taxonomy development with new Digital Scholarship Librarian, Dr. Jing Han. To expand research support capabilities, the Library completed a search for a research data scientist to assist faculty and students with research data analysis.

This position will provide expertise in data visualization, data management, and facilitate AI-related workshops in the upcoming year.

These initiatives demonstrate the UCR Library's comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach to AI integration across disciplines, from foundational AI literacy to advanced AI research applications in agriculture, engineering robotics, geospatial analysis, humanities and social sciences textual research. The programs successfully bridge theoretical knowledge with practical implementation, preparing the larger university community for AI-enhanced research methodologies.

Teaching and Learning Department

As higher education grapples with the implications of AI for both our mission to prepare students for their future professional and personal success, while maintaining high standards of rigor and academic integrity, librarians are leveraging their expertise in teaching critical, ethical, and effective use of information. In partnership with XCITE, this includes organizing a workshop series, *AI TeachTalks*, for instructor development in using AI as a tool for their teaching work, developing metacognition in students, and thoughtful integration of AI into lesson plans. In fall 2025, the Library will launch an AI Literacy course in Canvas that reflects the needs we have heard from our instructors and students in these conversations.

Supporting student development of AI literacy has also been incorporated into the suite of information literacies the Library develops through instruction

and programming, alongside media, data, primary source, digital, and visual literacies. With the integration of AI-powered tools and methods becoming an important part of research, we have worked closely with undergraduate research programs across several schools and colleges to introduce the foundations of AI to these emerging researchers. Carrie Cruce, along with former colleague Kat Koziar, has developed a two-part workshop, *AI for the Rest of Us*, which provides a deep dive into the fundamentals of generative AI, so that students can make their own informed decisions about the use of AI for their professional and academic needs. Early adopters on campus include TRIO, McNair Scholars, and the Highlander Early Start Academy, with plans for additional instruction in AI foundations for research in development.





Acquisitions, Description, and Discovery Department

Metadata creation for the description of bibliographic resources is widely considered an area that could benefit from the implementation of generative AI tools. One of the difficulties in implementing AI for cataloging and metadata creation is the combination of multiple sets of instructions that metadata creators use to structure their data with human judgment and interpretation.

Sompratana Creighton, a UCR Library Metadata Cataloger, has been exploring the viability of AI tools for very specific metadata tasks. She has evaluated several tools designed to convert Thai script into Roman characters, assessing how well they perform in three key areas: diacritic accuracy, word segmentation, and compliance with ALA-LC (American Library Association – Library of Congress) Romanization standards.

Transliteration represents words written in one script in the script used by another language to facilitate pronunciation of those words by speakers who do not read the original script. The most promising AI transliteration tool developed so far for Thai script was produced by a Thai academic institution.

Sompratana has also investigated AI tools used to generate Library of Congress Subject Headings and call numbers, using unique Thai-language content as her testing material. Focused applications of generative AI such as these use cases are a more likely route to successful implementation than training an AI tool on the available corpus of bibliographic data, which tends to be of variable quality and has been produced over time using a range of changing standards, and expecting the tool to produce full, standards-compliant metadata records.



Community Engagement



Image courtesy of UCR University Relations



Image courtesy of UCR University Relations/UCR Magazine

The Eaton Collection of Science Fiction & Fantasy Beyond the Stacks

The Eaton Collection of Science Fiction and Fantasy continues to thrive as a bridge between scholarship and the wider cultural community. Over the past year, the collection has been showcased through high-profile events, media features, and collaborations that highlight its global significance and lasting impact.

Lights, Camera, Eaton!
In September 2024, the UCR Alumni Association hosted *Lights, Camera, Action: A Night at the Academy Museum with UCR* in Los Angeles. The Eaton Collection took center stage with displays of rare comic books, model starships, and vintage science fiction magazines. Jay Kay and Doris Klein Science Fiction Librarian Dr. Phoenix Alexander engaged guests in conversation about the treasures of the collection, while a panel discussion highlighted UCR alumni thriving in entertainment. The event celebrated Highlanders in Hollywood and introduced the Eaton Collection to a broader cultural audience.

Virtual Eaton Symposium
On January 8, 2025, the Eaton Collection launched a new chapter with the *Virtual Eaton Symposium: Celebrating the Past, Present, and Future of Science Fiction*. Coordinated by Phoenix and colleagues in Special Collections & University Archives, the online symposium welcomed scholars, editors, and fans to reflect on the Eaton's history while exploring the future of the genre. With keynote talks and interactive panels, the symposium broadened participation beyond academia, connecting the Eaton's legacy with today's creators and communities.

Reviving the Eaton Conference
After more than a decade-long hiatus, the *Eaton Conference* returned in April 2025. With the theme Reimagining the Archive, the in-person gathering at UCR brought together scholars and writers for two days of panels, readings and presentations. Organized in partnership with UCR's Speculative Fictions and Cultures of Science program, the conference emphasized emerging voices and redefined the role of science fiction studies in addressing disparities and imagining the future. The conference's revival underscored UCR's leadership in science fiction scholarship.



Dr. Phoenix Alexander chats with an attendee at *Lights, Camera, Action: A Night at the Academy Museum with UCR.* Image courtesy of UCR University Relations.

Eaton in the Media
The Eaton Collection's influence reached national audiences through PBS and KQED features. *American Masters: Judy-Lynn del Rey: The Galaxy Gal* showcased materials from the collection to tell the story of a pioneering sci-fi editor. Meanwhile, KQED highlighted the Eaton's acquisition of the Leo and Diane Dillon painting that became the cover for Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Left Hand of Darkness*. These features affirmed the collection's role in preserving and interpreting science fiction's cultural heritage.

Eaton in UCR Magazine
The winter 2025 issue of UCR Magazine highlighted the Eaton Collection as a central theme, celebrating its global reputation. Stories highlighted its role as a research destination, its community impact, and its contributions to shaping the field of science fiction studies. The coverage reinforced how the Eaton Collection connects UCR to broader conversations in literature, media, and culture.

Faces of the Library



New Faces, New Expertise: Strengthening Our Team



Virginia Wakim
Evening Services Coordinator



Maxwell Nelson
Metadata Cataloger



Natalie Anderson
Metadata Cataloger



Carlos Zamora
Circulation/Reserves Services Supervisor



Mary Rodríguez-Sweeney
Area and Interdisciplinary Studies Teaching Librarian



Jing Han
Digital Scholarship Librarian



Christopher Locklin
Library Safety Officer



Ted Conable
Acquisitions, Description, and Discovery Supervisor

R'Pedagogy: Supporting Librarians as Educators

Launched in winter 2025, R'Pedagogy established a community of practice across the UCR Library for librarians that teach in some aspect, including staff training and development, patron reference and support, workshops, and other instructional spaces outside of the traditional classroom.

A total of 12 Library staff members participated in the training, along with three facilitators who rotated hosting the monthly sessions. Focused on the unique challenges and joys of instruction in information work, participants attended six sessions that ranged from developing teacher identity as a librarian, to handling the "uh-oh" moments that can arise when teaching.

"My favorite aspect of this experience was learning from librarians in diverse roles what teaching and learning looks like for their work," says Director of Teaching and Learning Britt Foster. "Identifying commonalities and differences allowed us to share and grow from each other's experiences as well as our own."

As a capstone to R'Pedagogy, participants will have the opportunity to engage in a peer teaching observation program in the coming academic year.

Celebrating our Student Employees

Each year, the UCR Library recognizes the contributions of our student employees who play an essential role in keeping Library services running smoothly. From staffing the circulation/reserves desks, supporting research help desks, assisting with digitization projects to providing behind-the-scenes support and more, student workers touch nearly every aspect of the Library's operations.

The UCR Library is proud to be one of the largest employers of student workers on campus. By providing meaningful job opportunities, the Library helps students build transferable skills in customer service, research support, project management, and technology—skills they will carry into their future careers.

Every spring, we celebrate our students at our annual Student Appreciation Picnic, organized by our Internal Events Committee (IEC). IEC decorates the Rivera Library lower courtyard, purchases food and drinks, and coordinates with UCR Library Facilities and other library groups to ensure the picnic goes smoothly.

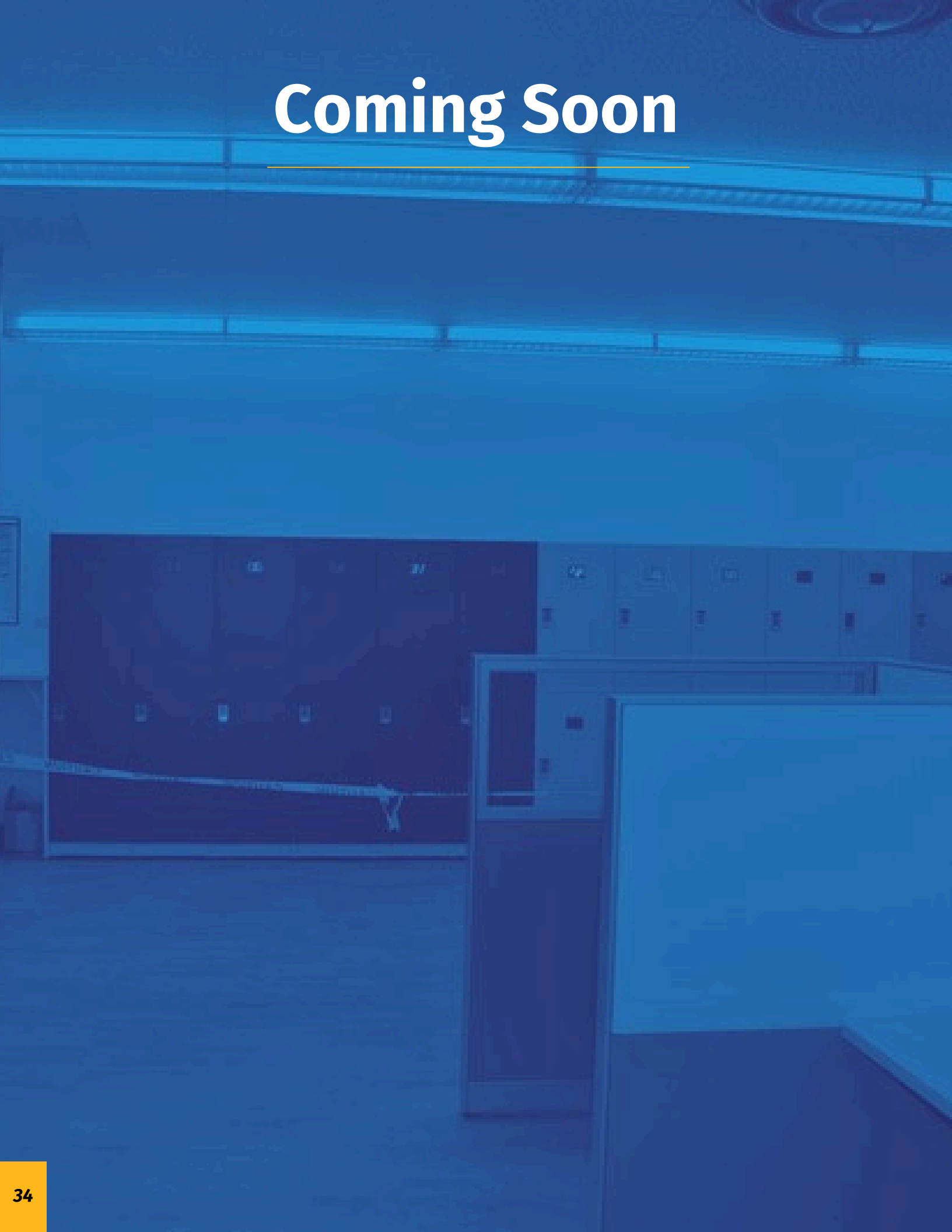
The picnic brings together student workers and staff for an afternoon of gratitude and community. A highlight of the event is honoring our graduating student employees. Each graduate receives a certificate and Library swag as a token of appreciation for their service and dedication.

Their energy, creativity, and hard work leave a lasting mark on the Library, and we are proud to congratulate them as they move forward into the next chapter of their journeys.





Coming Soon



The UCR Library continues to evolve its spaces and services to meet the needs of students, faculty, and researchers. Several new initiatives and facility improvements are underway that will expand access, enhance the learning environment, and strengthen support for scholarship.



A photo of lockers in the upcoming Graduate Study Wing in Rivera Library.

Opening Fall 2025

Digitization Lab

The upcoming Digitization Lab will create a more optimized environment to digitize our collections compared to its current location in Orbach Library. This lab will be located in Rivera Library on the 2nd floor, bringing digitization services closer to our Special Collections & University Archives and will help streamline digitization workflows.

Graduate Study Wing

As part of ongoing improvements at Rivera Library, we are moving our 2nd floor Graduate Study Carrels to a new and updated space called the Graduate Study Wing.

GradVantage

A new space in the Rivera Library will open in the 2025/2026 academic year called GradVantage. This is a collaboration between our Teaching and Learning Department and Graduate Division's Teaching Assistant Development Program/GradSuccess and will offer graduate student instructional support.

Opening 2026

Orbach 3rd Floor Reopening

Following the roof replacement, the Orbach Library's third floor will undergo additional renovations before it reopens in 2026. Planned improvements include new flooring, fresh paint, and updated finishes.

Neurodiverse Rooms

The UCR Library will introduce designated spaces designed to support neurodiverse students. These spaces will provide inclusive environments tailored to those with sensory needs.

The Studio at Rivera Library

The Library is developing an enhanced learning space that will integrate flexible seating, updated technology, and collaborative work areas. This space will expand opportunities for group learning, peer engagement, and student success programming.

Conservation Lab

Plans are in development for a Conservation Lab, where Library staff will be able to better preserve fragile and damaged materials in-house.

