

LIBRARY STATISTICS AND HIGHLIGHTS, FY2017-18

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Collection

The collection continues to grow, but it is important to distinguish between permanent and temporary collection. A resource is permanent if we own a physical copy (e.g., a book) or have legally guaranteed rights to perpetual online access (e.g. an e-book). An online resource is temporary if we subscribe to access for a year.

On 6/30/18 the permanent physical collection consisted of 269K print volumes plus 38K microforms & AV items. The permanent online collection consisted of 63K e-books and 9K e-journals (titles, not volume equivalents).

Resource Type	7/1/2017	Added in FY	DFEC ¹ in FY	7/1/2018
Print volumes (books and journals)	264,116	6,047	-231	269,932
Microforms, AV, other physical pieces	39,361	50	-1,079	38,332
Subtotal physical resources	303,477	6,097	-1,310	308,264
E-books ²	62,667	428	-4,721	58,374
E-journals (titles)	8,875	357	-1	9,231
Subtotal permanent online resources	71,542	785	-4,722	67,605
Total	375,019	6,833	-6,032	375,869

We added 6,833 items to the permanent collection in FY2017-18. Many of the print volumes added during the year were duplicate volumes (i.e., content at the Dallas campus was duplicated in the Houston or Washington DC campus). Many hundreds were gift books. We discarded most of our VHS tapes this year. The reduction in e-books for 2017-18 corrects a tabulation error from the previous year; we did not actually discard e-books.

Table 2 (below) tabulates many but not all online resources for which we have temporary access rights. Two parts in the table need special explanation. First, we subscribe to a database of over one million dissertations. Don't be misled by the size. It covers the entire range of humanities and social sciences; religion is just a small part of the whole. Second, we subscribe to a large package of databases selected by TexShare to support public libraries, K-12 schools, and colleges. Again, don't be misled; particularly don't

¹ DFEC means discarded(-) or found(+) or error corrected(+ or -). Since 2007 we have entirely eliminated some AV formats (e.g. slides) and are working to eliminate others (reel to reel tapes, audio cassettes, VHS). We have weeded microforms, books and journals a little; much more needs to be done.

² Counts of ebooks and ejournals owned are based on WMS Knowledge Base collections that contain an unknown number of duplicates (same title appears in more than one collection).

be misled by the 14 million “media” items. TexShare includes a lot of material that does not support our curriculum. For this reason, Table 2 lists Texshare separately.

Table 2: Temporary collection.		
Resource Type	7/1/2017	7/1/2018
E-books ³	166,236	182,436
HSS dissertations ⁴	1,020,160	1,074,951
E-journals ⁵	2,189	4,112
Subtotal not including TexShare	1,188,585	1,261,499
E-books TexShare package	104,578	151,297
E-journals TexShare package	?	25,595
E-media TexShare package	?	13,996,713
Subtotal TexShare package⁶	?	14,173,605
Total	?	15,435,104

Use of Collection

In spite of free content available via the internet, students are still using library search engines and collection. Collection use totaled 116,850 in FY2017-18. Given a student Fall 2017 FTE of 1221.4, this averages 95.7 uses per FTE student. So each FTE student used about 100 items during the year. See Table 3 below for historical context.

	Table 3: Total Use of Collection							
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Total use ⁷	106,114	110,652	113,222	105,705	98,112	98,177	115,887	116,850
DTS Fall FTE	1,201.0	1,146.5	1,137.7	1,178.6	1,148.9	1,123.4	1,215.2	1221.4
Use/FTE	88.4	96.5	99.5	89.7	85.4	87.4	95.4	95.7

For the past 8 years, total use has fluctuated between 85 and 100 uses per FTE student per year. This is just the natural ebb and flow, and the overall pattern suggests stability. See below chart “Use/FTE/Year.”

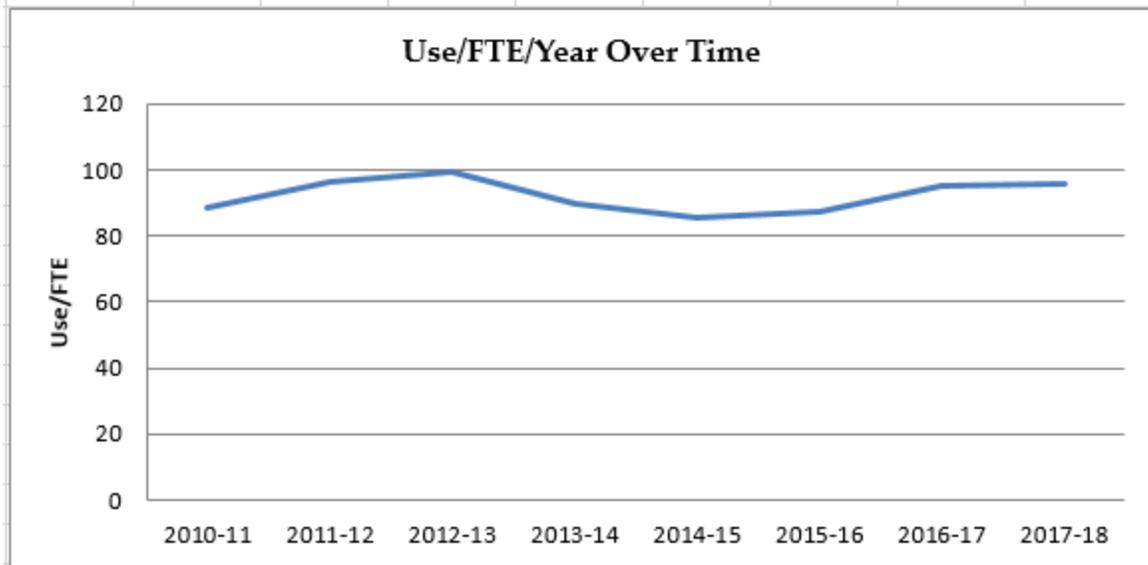
³ EBSCO ebook Academic Collection and Religion Collection according to WMS KB count.

⁴ Based on search for “the” limited to full-text in ProQuest Dissertation database.

⁵ ATLAS, ProQuest Religion, BAR, Airiti according to KB count.

⁶ For TexShare see <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/texshare/databasecountfy2018.html>. The TexShare numbers conform to IPEDS reporting standards.

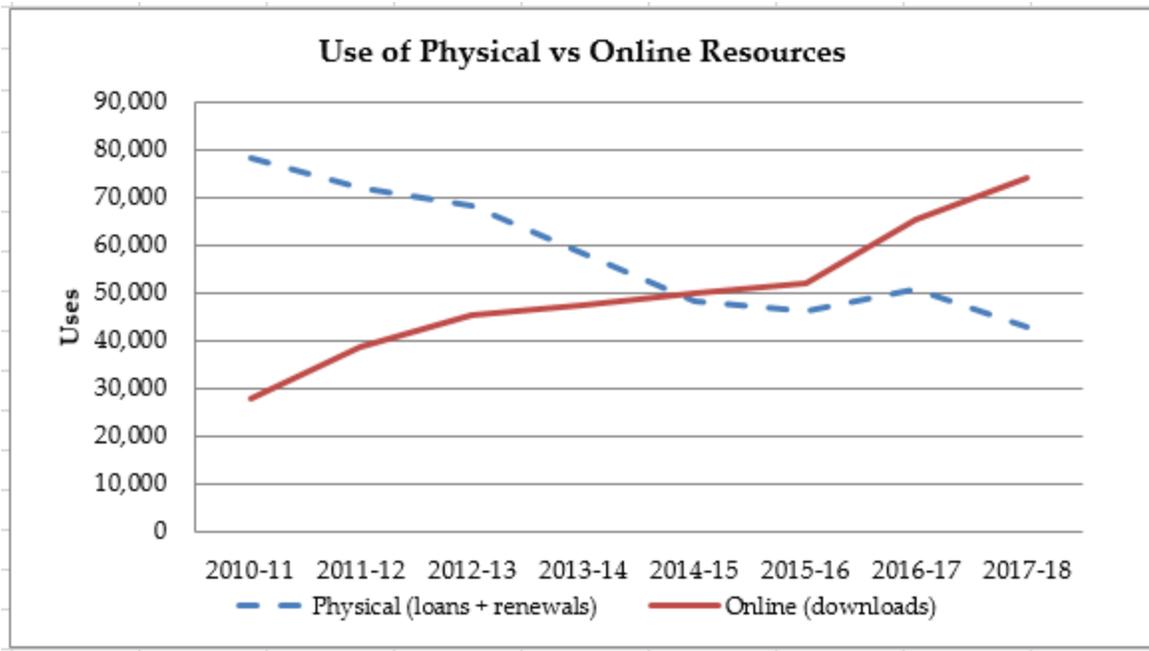
⁷ We don't measure ALL use of the collection. For example, we don't have a practical way to gather statistics on use of some of our online resources or on print books that are used in the building but are not checked out. We report readily available statistics for circulation of physical collection plus downloads of online resources.



For decades we have been expecting a decline in use of library resources because students have convenient access to free non-library resources through Google and other search engines. Why are they still using library resources? Library staff have repeatedly analyzed works cited by students in their theses or other capstone assignments; these studies show students are using academic/scholarly items available in/through the library. Many of these good resources are indexed by Google, but many of the online resources are sequestered behind paywalls, and many of the print resources still have no digital counterparts. The library search engines are not as slick and smart as Google, but library systems, print and online, do a better job of delivering access to the key resources. And the library offers specialized theological features Google lacks (dedicated bible passage indexes, for example.) So students continue to use the library collection.

Of course, use of physical resources continues to decline as use of online resources increases. See below Table 4 and chart "Use of Physical vs Online Resources."

	Table 4: Use of Physical and Online Resources Compared							
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Physical	78,136	72,119	68,029	58,280	48,072	45,997	50,719	42,924
Online	27,978	38,533	45,293	47,425	50,040	52,180	65,168	73,926



Many factors contribute to the long term increase in use of online resources and decrease in use of physical resources.

- increase in online enrollment
- increase in the size of our online collection
- greater visibility of online resources (e.g., links in WorldCat Discovery)
- decrease in Dallas campus FTE, especially the ThM program. Students in Dallas are much more likely to use print resources than non-Dallas students. On an FTE basis, ThM students use library resources twice as much as other master's students. (We tracked ThM vs MA use for 20 years; the 2:1 use ratio is rock solid certain.)

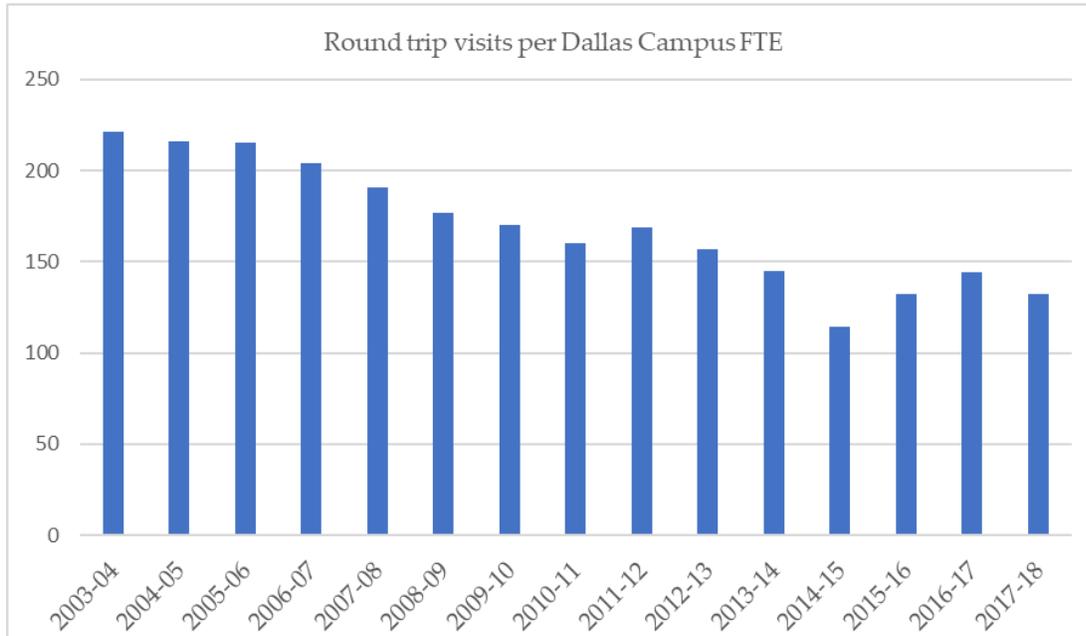
However, physical loans are still significant. At this time, students are still dependent on the physical collection.

Use of Facilities

Only the Dallas campus library collects statistics on facility use. Foot traffic is the most general indicator of facility use. In FY2017-18, the photocell recorded 88,107 round trip visits to the Dallas campus library. That is equivalent to 303 round trip visits per day open. In addition, 468,638 pages were scanned, printed, or photocopied, and the media center recorded 5,585 sign-ins. Distance programs (online and extension campus programs) have not eliminated use of the Dallas library building, and personal laptops have not eliminated use of the media center. We still need a library building open long hours and furnished with a wide range of resources and services.

However library foot traffic has declined approximately 50% during the past fifteen years and only recently bottomed out. The main reason for reduced foot traffic is that Dallas campus FTE enrollment has

declined. However, that does not fully explain the decline in foot traffic. Even if we calculate visits per Dallas campus FTE we still see a decline. See below chart “Round trip visits per FTE.”



Many factors contribute to the long term decline in foot traffic.

- decline in Dallas campus FTE
- online resources often eliminate the need to visit the building
- students spend less time on campus and leave immediately after class
- library building is less attractive and less comfortable than it was 10 years ago; renovation of other student facilities on campus may have attracted students away from the library

We are not alone. Many seminaries discover students use online resources for information, use the coffee shop for group work, and don't visit the library building. Some libraries have responded by renovating portions of the library to serve as a “learning commons.”⁸ This is usually followed by increased use of library services and resources. We need to investigate this option. However, the planned Student Services building may include some features often associated with a learning commons. So we will need to assess needs after construction of that building.

⁸ A learning commons provides services, facilities and resources for learning and research, usually with an emphasis on collaborative learning and technology. To some degree it is just an updating and repackaging of traditional library + media offerings. A learning commons might include collaborative study space (e.g., group study rooms, equipped with monitors, white boards; open pods for group work); personal study space (e.g., open quiet individual study spaces; reserved or restricted quiet personal carrels/offices); library research assistance; books; writing assistance; tutoring; computer and software support; computer labs; media suites (sound studio; video recording studio); sermon practice rooms; printing, scanning, photocopying; equipment that can be rented (laptops computers; sound systems; cameras; etc.) A learning commons is not a recreation area (ping pong, café, music and TV). It is a learning area.

Changes and Challenges

Many years ago we had only one campus; all courses were taught in English; nearly all students were in the same degree program; most of the library collection consisted of print volumes; and library staff helped students face-to-face. Now we have three campuses and a large online program; courses are taught in English, Chinese, and Spanish; there are many degree programs with specialized needs; much of the collection is online; and library staff must help students located all over the world. These changes have created wonderful new opportunities but also significant challenges.

Collection

Because of online and branch campus programs, we are aggressively expanding the online collection. However, many theological works, both old and new, are not available for purchase in a multi-user online format. So we must continue to purchase print resources.

Because of Chinese and Spanish programs, we are collecting in those languages. But there is a dearth of theological material in Chinese and Spanish compared to English. Online theological resources are especially hard to identify.

Because of the proliferation of campuses and languages, we are buying multiple copies of the same thing. (Here is an extreme example. In the case of a very high-demand book available only in print, we could purchase five copies: one copy for each of three campuses, plus Chinese and Spanish translations if available.) More money spent on duplicates means less money available to purchase specialized works with unique content.

Computing Systems

For nearly three decades the library locally hosted, upgraded, configured, supported and administered all library software. This required a fair amount of time and technical expertise. We are gradually adopting vendor hosted and supported systems. This allows library staff to focus on delivering content and services to our users. We took the first step in this plan in 2015 when we migrated from Sirsi Symphony to OCLC WMS and Discovery. In 2016 we migrated to a hosted version of EZProxy. In 2018 we implemented OneLogin single sign-on.

The library website is not current. It needs to be pruned, updated, and adapted to Chinese and Spanish users. We may move library website content to WordPress so staff with no knowledge of html/css will be able to add and edit content. In 2016-17 we experimented briefly with WordPress. Website revision plans have been delayed as we think about how to support multi-lingual portions of the website and as we think about how to deal with limitations in WordPress.

Chinese and Spanish Students

Staff must deal with language barriers. Library research assignments and documentation must be produced in three languages. Some portions of the website should be in three languages (but are not). Fortunately, reference email is easy to handle through Google Translate.

Students must deal with the English language though instruction is in Chinese or Spanish. Because relatively little scholarly theological literature exists in the Chinese and Spanish languages, students who use those languages must search databases that mostly cover English books and articles.

1. How can they select good English-language search terms?
2. How can they recognize relevant English resources?
3. How can they obtain translations of English resources?

We recommend Google Translate as a solution for #3. We recommend abstracts as a solution to #2. (Students execute a broad search in OTA, NTA or RTA, run all the abstracts through translation software, then pick relevant works based on the abstracts.) We recommend faculty-provided search terms as a possible solution to #1. (All students in a course have the exact same assignments, and for those assignments that involve library research, faculty and library staff will suggest English language search terms as part of the assignments.) An alternative solution to #1 is repeated searches (First the student executes an initial search of an abstract database in English. Once a couple of relevant articles have been identified, English words from the abstract, article, or ATLA metadata record can be used for a second or third search.)

We anxiously await improvements in automatic computer translation so non-English reading students will have reliable and convenient translations of our English books and journals. This is probably our most needed software function.

All Distance Students (Online and Branch Campuses)

It is notoriously difficult to provide good library services for distance students, especially online students who rarely if ever visit a campus. We provide reference service by phone, email, and regular mail. RS101 is offered online nearly every semester. We continue to build the online collection, and databases are proxied for off-campus access. Books are mailed from Dallas at no cost, and articles are scanned and emailed for fast delivery. We advertise TexShare cards to TX residents. Beginning with the 2013-14 school year, all students own a Logos personal library.

We are considering the following steps to improve services.

- Shift more money from print to online resources. Continue to make e-resources from many different platforms available in a single database: WorldCat discovery
- Provide library orientation in Canvas for new distance students and find a way to insure students read/view the orientation materials
- Use Zoom for *ad hoc* reference support and training. Maintain more web pages for distance students.
- Increase reference and instruction opportunities. Most students take RS101 online, but we need to reach other students in other ways. MABC and MACE students do not take RS101 and they have distinct topic and database needs that differ from most other degree programs. They are the biggest block of non-RS101 students. How can we reach them? We need to experiment. Some

training can be accomplished with ad hoc online sessions for small groups interested in specific areas. Some may need to be coordinated with campus-wide orientation sessions.

Houston and Washington DC Campuses

We are considering the following steps to improve services for students at branch campuses.

- Continue to build local collections at branches and maintain contractual agreements with partner libraries at or near extension sites. Continue non-professional part-time staffing on site. Continue easy remote access to professional staff (Zoom, email, phone). Continue credit (RS101) and non-credit (orientation) online instruction.
- Be more regular about sending professionals to branches to provide oversight, interview faculty and students, inspect facilities and collection, train part-time staff, cultivate relations with area libraries, etc. Identify local needs.

Washington DC has special needs. We need more space for library collection, study areas, and staff areas. We need to investigate books security. All volumes in the Wash collection have RFID tags for circulation and security. We need regular staffing to circulate books, to connect students with the right professional librarian when needed, and to process new books (e.g., attach labels) or perform other tasks. Special funding in FY2018-19 is expected to allow us to expand the collection, but it is unclear how we will get the required space.

Dallas Campus

Turpin and Mosher buildings in Dallas are aging. We continue to suffer equipment failures (e.g., HVAC failure) which create an undesirable study environment. Furniture needs to be replaced. Special collections area has been plagued with temperature, humidity and roof leak problems since the 2010 renovation and relocation. Book security needs to be modernized and improved. We need compact storage. We have funding for shelving units, but no space. We need to plan for renovation of Mosher and Turpin.

Staffing

Since July 2007, full time library staff size, exclusive of media center⁹, has declined from 11 to 8. Staff shrunk by one FTE in 2007 when the director retired, and by another FTE in 2008 when a circulation assistant was laid off during a budget crisis, and by another FTE in 2013 when we combined serials and acquisitions positions into one position. Since 2007 we have also reduced part-time hours and reduced hours the Dallas library is open. Recent computing changes (described above) have reduced staff time needed for technical support. We need to think about how to best staff for support of online and branch campus students. Branches seem to need staffing only when classes are scheduled. At some point we may provide self-checkout equipment that students at branch campuses can use when a library employee is not available.

⁹ Staffing dedicated to the Media center has been constant at two full time people since 2007.