DEAR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES,

We are fast approaching the anniversary of Río Hondo College’s switch to online learning in response to COVID-19, and while we continue to observe the recommendations of public health officials—and to grieve the pandemic-informed disruptions to our status quo, to say nothing of the millions of people who have been affected personally by COVID—we also know that there is light at the end of the tunnel. As I write this brief message in the twenty-first hour of the twenty-first day of the twenty-first year of the twenty-first century, more and more folks are receiving the vaccine that will immunize them against the disease, and reasonably we can begin to consider life returning to normal before too much longer.

For now, I hope you are continuing to stay safe and healthy. On behalf of the team at RHC Library, I want to take this opportunity to share important information about Library resources and services during Spring 2021.

This is issue #5 of the official RHC Library newsletter—The Library Checkout—created and edited by Librarian Brian Young, with contributions written by Library team members, and published at the start of every semester to let you know about important Library news.

Remember: This publication augments news Librarian Claudia Rivas already shares on RHC Library social media sites, and which we encourage everyone to follow on Facebook and Instagram if you don’t already—https://www.facebook.com/riohondolibrary and https://www.instagram.com/riohondolibrary. Indeed, as folks who follow us on the usual social media platforms already know, RHC Library followers are eligible to win pretty great prizes as part of a brand-new giveaway promotion we launched in Fall 2020—something we intend to undertake at the end of each semester.

In this issue, we highlight things we’re doing to the physical spaces in RHC Library to make them even more comfortable and useful to RHC students when they return to campus; feature two amazing Library team members; discuss what open educational resources (OER) are, and how you can learn more about the subject thanks to a new librarian-created research guide about OER; outline a new initiative where librarians liaise with academic divisions; and take up RHC Library services for students and faculty during the Spring 2021 semester.

As I noted in the last Checkout this is important: Although learning remains online this semester, and study spaces in the Library remain closed, RHC Library is still the best way to discover electronic resources to support research and learning, and to seek assistance from helpful, professional librarians and staff members who are available to assist you with your research and resource needs. If you are a faculty or staff member, now is a great time to collaborate with us to think about solutions like e-books and OER, LibGuides, and remote orientations and tutorials. If you are a student, now is a great time to connect with librarians remotely to learn how to do online research, tell the difference between good and bad information, and discover all the e-books, e-journal articles, and online documentary films available to RHC Library patrons using our great new catalog.

In short, the RHC Library team remains committed to helping you whenever you need us—don’t hesitate to ask! Now, as ever, thank you for your time and help: we hope you enjoy this issue of The Library Checkout and to connect with you online, and we’ll look forward to a time, not so long from now, when we get to see you at RHC Library in person.

Sincerely,
Mike Garabedian
Dean, Library and Instructional Support
IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR SPRING 2021

This semester, the physical library is open for essential services such as borrowing technology (e.g., Chromebooks, hotspots, calculators, etc.), borrowing reserve books, scanning and use of the Copy Center, and borrowing circulating books so long as you know the CALL NUMBER. Study spaces and the Computer Commons area remain CLOSED. All visitors are required to wear a mask and adhere to CDC and LACDH guidelines when entering the library. A time limit and visitor occupancy limit are also in effect. As always, be sure to check our website and follow our social media channels for the most up-to-date information regarding RHC Library hours and services.

LIBRARY SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

Get Help from a Librarian
If you need help finding resources (like books, e-books and articles), focusing a research question, or using citation styles, friendly librarians are here to assist you through text, chat, email, or Zoom. Please note, we have extended our hours of availability this semester: Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 9 p.m., and Friday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. You can also send us an email at any time (riohondocollegelibrary@gmail.com) and we will respond as soon as possible. Go to the RHC Library website at https://www.riohondo.edu/library to connect with a librarian today!

Technology Checkout
Chromebooks, mobile hotspots, and graphic calculators are available for checkout! Currently registered RHC students, faculty or staff must first fill out a Technology Reservation Form at https://www.riohondo.edu/library/technology-request/. Once submitted, you will be placed on a waiting list and contacted when your item is ready for pick-up. For questions regarding technology items, call the Circulation Desk at (562) 908-3416.

Library Resources
This semester, library patrons are (once again) able to borrow books from our circulating book collection, and check out reserve textbooks to scan or photocopy. Before visiting the Library in person to check out physical books, go to the Library Catalog (accessible through the "Books & eBooks" tab at www.riohondo.edu/library) to check that your book is available. Once verified, please call the Circulation Desk at (562) 908-3416 (with the book title and call number) to have the item readied for pick-up. Please note: study spaces and the Computer Commons area are closed at this time.

RHC Library provides access to hundreds of thousands of online, electronic resources—including e-books, scholarly and popular articles, videos, and datasets—all of which are accessible through the RHC Library website at: https://www.riohondo.edu/library/. For help finding sources for your assignments, contact a librarian—we are here for you!

LIBRARY SERVICES FOR FACULTY

Division Liaison Librarians
Did you know that each academic division has its own liaison librarian? Liaison librarians are available to serve as a primary library contact, and provide specialized information, instruction and resources to their selected divisions. In addition, we also take purchase requests and recommendations for library materials, can work with you on extended projects and even offer one-on-one research consultations for your students.

To get to know your liaison librarian, visit https://www.riohondo.edu/library/about/division-liaisons.

Library Instruction
Librarians work directly with faculty to teach information literacy to students through library orientations. This can happen “live” via Zoom, or in some cases, with asynchronous librarian-created videos. To request library instruction, fill out a Faculty Request for Library Instruction form at http://bit.ly/RioLibRequest. Orientations typically cover both general library information (library services and resources, digital scavenger hunts, etc.) and more specialized topics (such as using specific databases, narrowing a research topic, citation styles, etc.). Whatever your needs, we can design an orientation that will be beneficial to you and your students!

Research Guides (LibGuides)
Librarians can create an online research guide (LibGuide) for your specific course, subject area, and/or assignment. LibGuides can also be embedded in your course Canvas page or easily shared on your syllabus. With the Library’s recent addition of the application LibWizard, we are also developing new ways to embed tutorials and quizzes directly into LibGuides to promote assessment and active learning.

Video Tutorials
RHC Librarians have created a series of video tutorials to help students find resources through the library catalog and subscription databases. These tutorials can be found on our “Library Resources During COVID-19” LibGuide at https://libguides.riohondo.edu/libresourcesC19/tutorials. Additional video tutorials are also being produced on a regular basis and added throughout the semester.
Online Library Workshops

During the Fall 2020 semester, RHC librarians introduced a new series of online library workshops! Due to the campus closure, our in-person workshops have been cancelled since Spring 2020, so we are happy to be offering important information literacy and research lessons to RHC students once again. Workshop topics include: evaluating websites, finding articles and books/ebooks, MLA citations, and refining research topics.

For the first week of workshops, students registered for a live Zoom session, where they were able to interact synchronously with a librarian instructor. The following week, recordings of each workshop became available asynchronously through the end of the semester. Each participant was asked to complete an activity or assessment quiz on the workshop material, and received a digital badge upon completion. These digital badges (made available through the app Badgr) served as a certificate of completion for students and were especially useful to faculty instructors offering extra credit.

Overall, we had a great turnout to these workshops and many students expressed how they found them extremely useful for college work and helpful to their research needs. Online library workshops will be available later in the Spring 2021 semester. Librarians will send a campus-wide notification once the schedule has been finalized.

FEATURED LIBGUIDES

One of the many services that RHC librarians provide is the creation of LibGuides, which are online research and subject guides dedicated to a specific topic, course, or assignment. For the Spring 2021 semester, we are featuring the following new or updated LibGuides:

OER
To support RHC’s campus-wide Open Educational Resources (OER) initiative, a helpful new LibGuide is now available at https://libguides.riohondo.edu/oer. This LibGuide provides vital information and resources, and is meant to serve as a valuable tool for faculty instructors who are interested in adopting, adapting, or authoring OER materials for their courses. To learn more, visit the guide, or contact Librarian Brian Young at byoung@riohondo.edu with any questions.

Black History Month
February is Black History Month! To celebrate, Librarian Claudia Rivas has created an updated LibGuide at https://libguides.riohondo.edu/blackhistorymonth. This guide provides an extensive array of library and online resources (ebooks, articles, videos, etc.) to educate and inform on the subject of Black History. Have a resource that you would like to see added? Contact Claudia at crivas@riohondo.edu.

Library Resources During COVID-19
Introduced in spring 2020, this LibGuide was created to inform the RHC community about available online resources for students and educators, as well as changes within the library itself (such as updated hours and services). This semester, we will continue to update this guide regularly. Find it at https://libguides.riohondo.edu/libresourcesC19.

PLANTS AT THE LIBRARY!

While our community works, teaches, and learns remotely, the RHC Library team is thinking about ways to make the Library a more comfortable and welcoming place for when students are able to return to campus. One small change the team hopes will have a big impact is the installation of real, living plants in the Library. Originally begun as an initiative to “green” the Library administration office, last year the team decided plants around the Library itself (and eventually the entire LRC) would benefit students, staff, and faculty. And living plants don’t just look nice: Peer-reviewed studies have demonstrated that real plants can have a calming effect—helping to reduce stress and elevate a person’s mood—and they also help purify environments by removing toxins from the air. Currently, the Library is acquiring snake plants (Sansevieria trifasciata) and actually cultivating pothos (Epipremnum aureum) from cuttings of existing plants while developing processes to prevent pests like fungus gnats and other critters from invading. Eventually, the team hopes to have real plants in every area and study room in the Library, and hopes to partner with the Ceramics program so the new, indoor flora can live in equally beautiful, one-of-a-kind planters created by RHC students!
During a season in which good news has sometimes been hard to come by, we are especially excited to share the great news that RHC Librarian Claudia Rivas and her partner Matt Schwarz are expecting their first child!

A school teacher for many years and since 2018 a full-time librarian at RHC, Claudia is one of the Library team’s most valuable players: She is responsible for all graphics and announcements on the Library’s social media accounts, the brains behind the Library’s new graphic novels collection and “Read Across America” poster program, zine workshop creator and teacher, featured book display organizer, prolific author of online research guides, and for over a year chair of the Library’s Policies, Procedures, and Processes work group.

Claudia will go on maternity leave following spring break, when her many, varied duties will be split up and undertaken by several adjunct librarians until her return—just before 2022! Congratulations, Claudia!

READ ACROSS AMERICA 2021

Read Across America, sponsored by the National Education Association, will be held on March 2, 2021. For this year’s observance of the annual event, we’ve decided to do things a bit differently. Due to the RHC campus closure, the Library is inviting ALL students, faculty and staff to take safe-at-home “selfies” with their favorite books. All submissions or questions should be sent to Librarian Claudia Rivas (crivas@riohondo.edu) by February 26, 2021. READ posters, created from your photos, will be featured on the RHC Library website and social media later in the Spring 2021 semester.

Library Profiles

Irene Truong
Librarian

Tell us about yourself.
I was born in LA and raised in the city of Alhambra as the youngest of four children. Before I was born, my parents immigrated from Vietnam to the United States for a chance of a better future for my siblings and me. I was second in my family to attend and graduate from college but instead of pursuing a career in law or medicine (which is typical among Vietnamese/Chinese families), I ended up with a Bachelor’s in English Creative Writing from CSULB and a Master’s in Library and Information Science from UCLA. I grew up loving libraries and knew I wanted to be a librarian since I was 14 years old so I just stuck and ran with it! I worked at ELAC and PCC Libraries before finding my home here at Rio Hondo Library.

How long have you worked at Rio Hondo College?
I’ve been working at Rio since Fall 2014.

What does your job consist of in the Library?
I dabble in a number of areas but my main duties consist of scheduling and teaching library orientations and workshops, maintaining the Rio Hondo Library website, selecting and purchasing books and ebooks for the Library collection, and collecting instructional statistics. Pre-COVID, I also helped to staff the Library Reference Desk and provided research help for students. With the switch to online/remote learning, we’ve been able to provide our same services via our online chat, Zoom, email, etc.

What do you like best about working at RHC?
I would say the students! Rio students who come for research help at the Library genuinely want to learn and are willing to put in the work, and they do it so nicely. My Library colleagues are also great since we work hard and party hard (but responsibly) for birthdays and holidays.

What is one interesting thing people might not know about you?
I keep a pretty active lifestyle with my favorite hobby: powerlifting. My current personal records for the three powerlifts are 270 lbs for the back squat, 160 lbs for the bench press, and 370 lbs for the sumo deadlift. When furniture or heavy books need to be moved around in the library, I’m ready for the job!

David Johnson
Library Computer Systems & Operations

Tell us about yourself.
I’m an aging science fiction and alternate history fan, married these last 16 years to my wife who I’ve known for close to 43 years, living in Pasadena, surrounded by two cats and too many books. I like history, comics, hiking, and dressing up for steampunk events.

How long have you worked at Rio Hondo College?
I’ve worked here since November of 1988.

What does your job consist of in the Library?
I am basically the computer department for the Library, setting up and keeping running all the computers from student workstations to the new Alma system that checks the books out. I also double at the Circulation Desk and—over the years—have been known to fill in every position here at the Library except for reference.

What do you like best about working at RHC?
It’s cliché, but the people. Also, as a big-time reader, having a whole library as your job isn’t a bad thing.

What is one interesting thing people might not know about you?
That I am entirely too interested in trolleys and the history of the L.A. area for my own good.

Library ADMIN + FACULTY

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