

## DTS LIBRARIES, FY2024-25

Each year the library issues a brief annual report to our constituency. Part one provides basic statistics. Part two briefly describes some challenges and changes. We encourage suggestions and recommendations.

### Part One: Statistical/Descriptive Summary<sup>1</sup>

#### Collection

We distinguish between permanent and temporary collections. A resource is considered permanent if we own a physical copy (e.g., a book or DVD) or have legally guaranteed rights to perpetual online access (e.g., an e-book or streaming video). A resource is considered temporary if we subscribe to access for a specified period of time.

Table 1 summarizes the permanent collection. The bulk of our permanent collection consists of print books, and most of these print books are not marketed as ebooks for libraries, so we can't purchase ebooks to replace the older print books. Further, the library price of an ebook is often more expensive than the print format of the same work. So we will continue to buy new print, and we will continue to be dependent on print for years to come. However, each year we spend more on digital online resources than we spend on physical resources. That will continue.

<b>Table 1: Permanent collection, title count, not volume count that we used before 2023-24</b>					
Resource Type	6/30/2024	6/30/2025	6/30/2026	6/30/2027	6/30/2028
Print book titles	238,348	216,998			
Print journal titles	2,140	1,835			
Microforms, AV, other	34,225	7,529			
<i>SUBTOTAL physical resources</i>	<i>274,713</i>	<i>226,362</i>			
Ebooks	82,896	114,694			
Ejournals	17,813	22,816			
<i>SUBTOTAL online resources</i>	<i>100,709</i>	<i>137,510</i>			
<b>TOTAL permanent collection</b>	<b>375,422</b>	<b>363,872</b>			

We cannot supply title counts for the physical collection before 6/30/2024. Older versions of this report counted volumes, not titles. Big changes in 2025 include ebooks replacing Atla microfiche.

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<sup>1</sup> ATS (an accreditor) specifies statistical standards that determine what we count and how we count when we report to them. Annual reports we posted to the library website before 2023-24 used somewhat different standards (such as counting volumes rather than counting titles). Comparison with older website reports would be misleading.

<b>Fiscal year</b>	<b>Physical items/vols added</b>	<b>Physical items/vols discarded</b>	Note the very large number of physical items discarded in 2025 (in conjunction with building renovation). This is a count of items (e.g., vols, fiche), not titles.
2020-21	3,875	-4,014	
2021-22	2,587	-5,301	
2022-23	2,658	-11,412	
2023-24	2,473	-984	
2024-25	2,257	-31,356	
2025-26			
2026-27			

Table 3 (below) summarizes the temporary collection. The following issues merit special explanation. First, there is some duplication or overlap between various collections we have selected in the OCLC Knowledge Base. So it is possible to count the same resource twice. Second, we subscribe to a large package of over 19 million resources selected by the TexShare consortium of academic, school and public libraries. That package includes much that does not support our curriculum.<sup>2</sup> We only count the portion we think might possibly support the curriculum (less than three percent). Third, following ATS, we only count titles cataloged in our Discovery system.

Resource Type (titles)	6/30/2021	6/30/2022	6/30/2023	6/30/2024	6/30/2025
TexShare Ebooks	219,631	161,143	252,328	403,101	409,046
TexShare Ejournal	28,931	32,306	54,837	40,031	30,449
TexShare Streaming Videos				83,761	86,153
<i>SUBTOTAL TexShare</i>	<i>248,562</i>	<i>193,449</i>	<i>307,165</i>	<i>526,893</i>	<i>525,648</i>
DTS selected Ebooks	227,966	262,270	274,311	287,251	296,353
DTS selected Ejournal	4,509	7,676	9,537	12,105	13,243
DTS selected Streaming Videos				6,168	6,160
<i>SUBTOTAL DTS selected</i>	<i>232,475</i>	<i>269,946</i>	<i>283,848</i>	<i>305,524</i>	<i>315,756</i>
<b>TOTAL temporary collection</b>	<b>481,037</b>	<b>463,395</b>	<b>591,013</b>	<b>832,417</b>	<b>841,404</b>

2023 shows a large number of TexShare ejournal. That was the year the consortium transitioned from eBSCO to ProQuest and had many resources from both sources.

<sup>2</sup> The TexShare package <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/texshare/databasecounty2025.html> contains math errors from Excel numbers stored as text. It actually totals about 19 million titles when all are converted to numbers. But we only include about 3% of that, including ebooks (ProQuest Academic Complete; ProQuest Health & Medicine; ProQuest Reference; ProQuest Science & Technology; ProQuest elibro Premium and other ebooks; Gale eBooks; Gale In Context) and ejournal (Gale Academic OneFile; Gale General OneFile; Gale OneFile Psychology; Gale OneFile Religion and Philosophy; ProQuest Health Research; ProQuest SciTech Premium) and videos (ProQuest Academic Video/AVON).

Tables one and three tabulate items we pay for. Table 4 also covers a third category of resources: free (no cost) open-access (OA) resources. Our Discovery links to millions of OA resources. ATS/IPEDS says libraries may consider an OA resource to be part of the library collection if the catalog has a record that links to the resource. But it also instructs libraries to exclude HathiTrust and Internet Archive. So Table 4 shows ATS-compliant OA resources, and Table 5 shows some resources that ATS excludes even though our students have access to them. The large OA total is accurate but perhaps misleading. We have to select from predefined collections created by other libraries and organizations. Most of the OA collections are not about religious topics. But they are useful scholarly collections in the humanities and social sciences that we picked, and students do sometimes (rarely) use them. These OA resources are a boon for theological studies.

<b>Table 4: Total resources, permanent, temporary, and open access</b>					
	6/30/2024	6/30/2025	6/30/2026	6/30/2027	6/30/2028
Permanent collection	375,422	363,872			
Temporary collection	832,417	841,404			
Open Access collection	1,466,919	1,448,433			
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>2,674,758</b>	<b>2,653,709</b>			

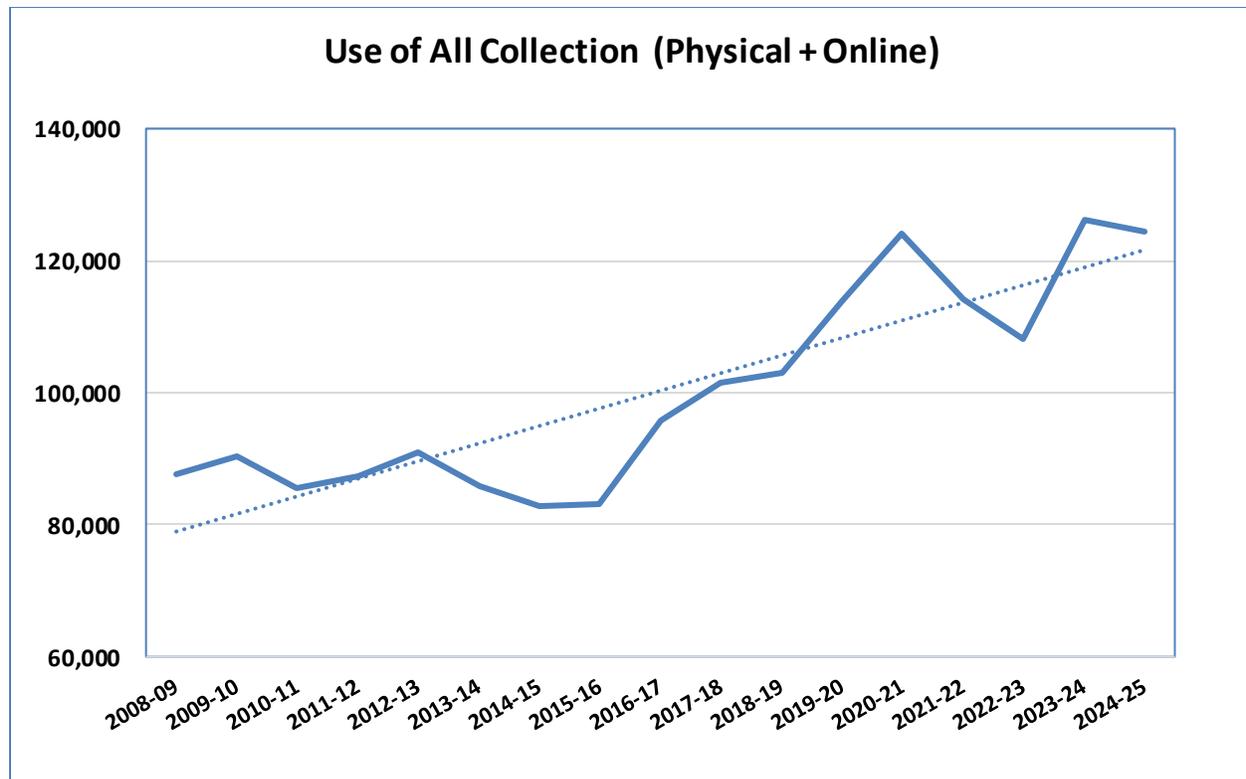
In 2025 we were late counting open access resources and we excluded some KB collections. Students had access to more than is shown here.

<b>Table 5: Some resources not included in other tables</b>					
	6/30/2024	6/30/2025	6/30/2026	6/30/2027	6/30/2028
ProQuest Dissertations (HSS) (estimate)	1,735,000	1,878,000			
HathiTrust (US + World no restrictions)	3,822,108	3,994,129			
Internet Archive Free to Read (not Free to Lend)	2,069,505	2,070,967			

### Use of Collection

We define collection use as follows: downloading or viewing an online resource, or borrowing a physical item. We don't count renewals or in-house use. The tabulation of online use is never totally complete, and some years are more complete than others. In table 5 below, circulation totals have been revised to exclude renewals that were included in reports before 2023-24.

<b>Table 5: Total Use of Collection</b>										
2010-11	85,683		2015-16	83,170		2020-21	124,097		2025-26	
2011-12	87,448		2016-17	95,787		2021-22	114,127		2026-27	
2012-13	90,865		2017-18	101,426		2022-23	108,176		2027-28	
2013-14	85,985		2018-19	103,103		2023-24	126,178		2028-29	
2014-15	82,817		2019-20	113,751		2024-25	124,391		2029-30	

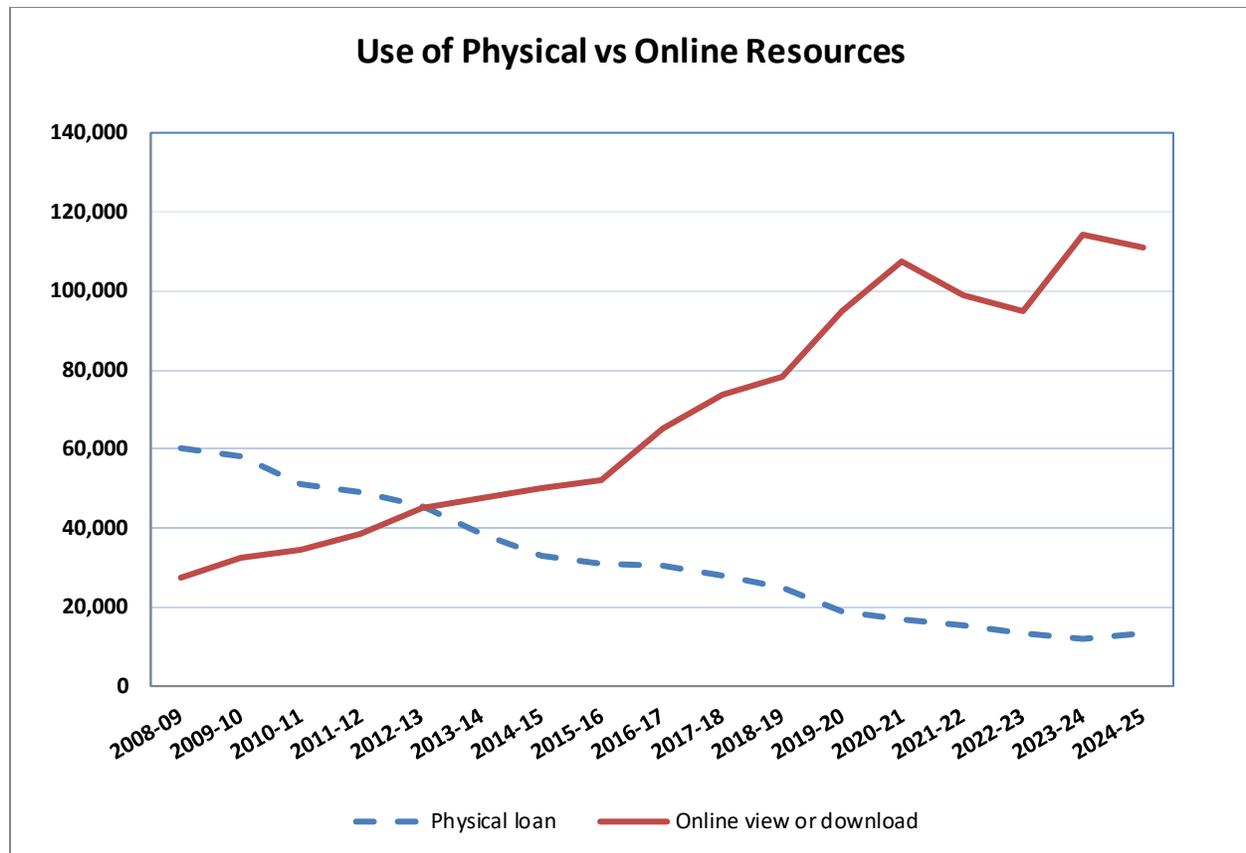


As the chart indicates, students are using the library collection extensively. High collection use indicates the collection is relevant and useful to students. It also indicates students are able to use the discovery systems (search engines) to identify materials. It therefore justifies collection and discovery expenditures.

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 mostly using academic/scholarly items available in/through the library. Some of these resources exist only in print and are not available on the internet. Other resources exist in electronic format and are on the internet, but are sequestered behind paywalls. Access is available only through the library. These are some reasons students continue to use the library systems.

While total use seems to be trending upward, this masks an important transition. Use of physical resources is declining as use of online resources increases.<sup>3</sup> See following chart.

<sup>3</sup> The tabulation of online uses comes with some caveats. Only recently have we been able to count uses for nearly all our online vendors. So older tabulations undercounted actual use.

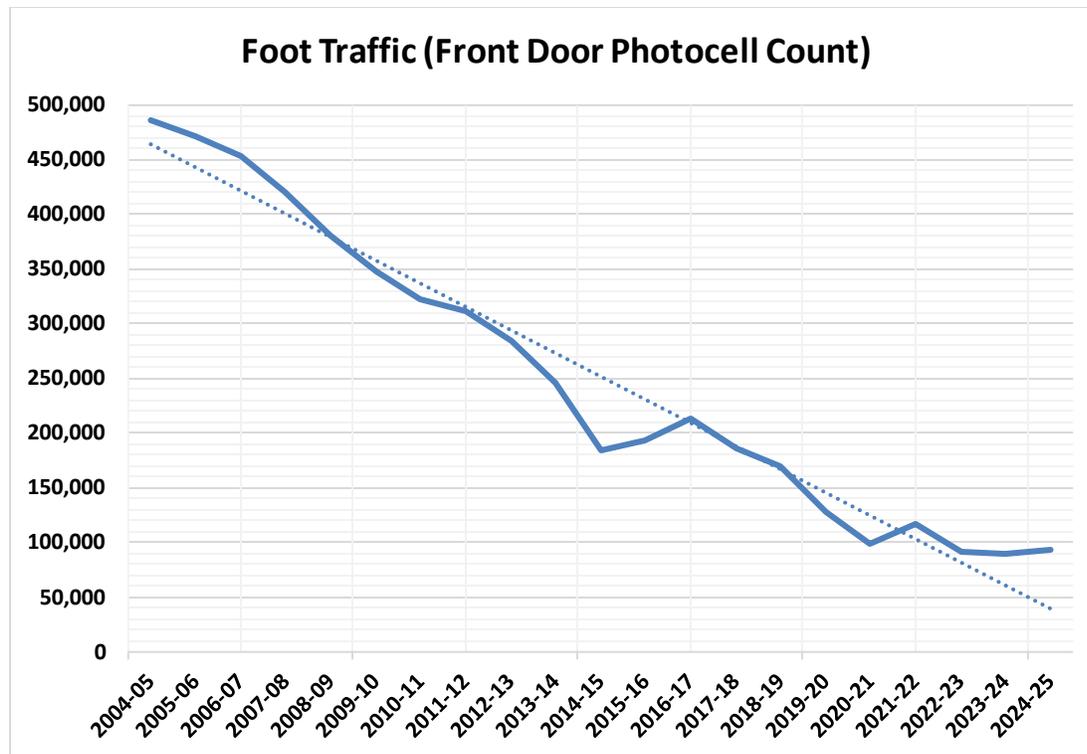


Many factors contribute to this transition from physical to online resources.

- increase in online enrollment
- increase in the size of online collection
- greater visibility of online resources (e.g., links in WorldCat Discovery beginning late 2015)
- decrease in Dallas campus enrollment, especially the ThM program.
- student culture and preferences

### Use of Facilities

For two decades, foot traffic has declined as measured by the front door photocell. See chart below. Decline in the number of people coming to the library is primarily due to decline in enrollment at the Dallas campus, but there are many other factors. Availability of library resources online reduces the need for a special trip to the library. Commuter students enrolled at the Dallas campus take some courses online, so they are on campus less frequently. Many students are taking a lighter course load. They leave campus as soon as class is over rather than going to the library between courses. Housing on campus encourages students to return home between classes rather than going to the library. Many students study in the Bailey Student Center.



## Part Two: Challenges and Opportunities

### Artificial Intelligence Software

All-knowing AI chatbots became readily available and easy to use in 2023-24. While AI presently generates serious errors (“hallucinations”), it will soon revolutionize database searching, book summarizing, translation, literature reviews, and aspects of note-taking. Students and library staff will have to wait for commercial database vendors to provide AI features to access content behind paywalls. As we wait, we need to study AI to understand its strengths and weaknesses when used for various purposes and tasks.

### Library Website

The library website needs attention. Content needs to be pruned and updated. Interface needs to be redesigned and made responsive to small devices/phones. We may switch to WordPress so staff with no knowledge of html/css will be able to add and edit content.

### Collections

We will continue to prioritize purchase of online resources when available and affordable. And we will continue to assess when expensive perpetual access to online resources is better than economical temporary access.

**Non-English Language Resources**

We need to improve support for the Chinese, Spanish, and Arabic language students. Some portions of the website should be available in these languages. Database searching tutorials need to be translated and adapted with language-appropriate examples (because database searching examples that work well in one language may be poor examples for another language). There is a dearth of scholarly theological material in Chinese, Spanish and especially Arabic compared to English. Of course, some good content does exist. But Spanish language seminaries, Chinese language seminaries, and Arabic language seminaries all over the globe rely on English language resources. We are monitoring improvements in automatic translation by computer software. AI powered translation of English into these languages will be exceedingly important.

**The Text Book Crisis**

Some students struggle to afford textbooks. Some international students do not have reliable mail delivery of textbooks. All students would benefit if textbooks were included as part of the Logos package all students receive. The library continues to advocate for this possible solution to the textbook problem.

**Information Literacy**

We need to improve instruction in library research methods and tools. AI will soon play an important role. We need to develop relations with the Writing Center. We need to include more library instruction in the Seminary Readiness Course.

**Marketing**

We need to do a better job of informing distance-and-online-students what the Dallas campus library will do for them. Dallas renovation is nearly complete. We need to lure students back into Turpin now that renovation is complete. Many left the noisy library during construction.

**Staffing**

As staff age, we expect turnover.