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## Partnering is such sweet sorrow: Establishing campus and community collaboration to host William Shakespeare's First Folio at Kansas State University.

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### Cover Page Footnote

The Folger Shakespeare Library, "First Folio! The Book That Gave Us Shakespeare," The Folger Shakespeare Library, <http://www.folger.edu/first-folio-tour>. Kansas State University, "See Shakespeare's Big Book in the Little Apple," K-State Libraries, <https://www.k-state.edu/shakespeare400/>. Kansas State University, "Kansas State University to host Shakespeare's First Folio exhibition in February 2016," K-State English Department, <http://www.k-state.edu/media/newsreleases/apr15/foliodate42315.html>. Foster, Samantha. "K-State hosts month long exhibition of Shakespeare's First Folio." *The Topeka Capital-Journal*, February 13, 2016. <http://cjonline.com/life/connected/2016-02-13/k-state-hosts-monthlong-exhibition-shakespeares-first-folio>. University of Notre Dame. "The Spring 2016 Actors From the London State: A Production of A Midsummer Night's Dream." Shakespeare at Notre Dame, <http://shakespeare.nd.edu/actors-from-the-london-stage/on-tour/recent-tours/spring-2016-tour-a-midsummer-nights-dream/>. Kansas State University, "A tribute to the Bard: Actors from the London State present 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' Feb.5 at McCain," McCain Auditorium, <http://www.k-state.edu/media/newsreleases/jan16/midsummer12516.html>. Kaye McIntyre, "The Book that Gave Us Shakespeare," Kansas Public Radio, <http://kansaspublishradio.org/kpr-news/book-gave-us-shakespeare>. Kansas State University, "Shakespeare in the Little Apple LibGuide," K-State Libraries, <http://guides.lib.k-state.edu/c.php?g=436392&p=3104703>. Daralyn Arata, "'The Bard at the Bar: Midsummer Night's Dream Mock Trial,'" Kansas State University, <https://www.k-state.edu/today/students/announcement.php?id=24716>. Civic Plus, "Shakesbeer – A Progressive Happy Hour," Downtown Manhattan, <http://downtownmanhattanks.com/events/shakesbeer-a-downtown-progressive-happy-hour/>. Taylor Czajkowski. "Shakespeare in Love: A Romeo and Juliet masquerade." *The Collegian*, February 12, 2016. <http://www.kstatecollegian.com/2016/02/12/shakespeare-in-love-a-romeo-and-juliet-masquerade/>. The Folger Shakespeare Library, "Gravedigger's Tale: An Interactive Retelling of Shakespeare's Hamlet," The Folger Shakespeare Library, <http://www.folger.edu/gravediggers-tale>. Manhattan Public Library, "Shakespeare Faire: an event for all ages," Manhattan Public Library, <http://www.mhklibrary.org/shakespeare-faire-an-event-for-all-ages/>. Beach Museum, "Early Release: Workshop for Children: Costume Design," Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art, <http://beach.k-state.edu/visit/calendar/?id=12703&start=2016-02-24>.

# Partnering is Such Sweet Sorrow: Establishing Campus and Community Collaboration to Host William Shakespeare's First Folio at Kansas State University

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## Abstract

Between October 2014 and February 2016, Kansas State University partnered with academic and local government and business organizations to host an exhibit displaying William Shakespeare's First Folio. University and community organizations came together to provide twenty-four programs showcasing the works of William Shakespeare, and to host educational lectures for the community regarding Shakespeare and his contemporaries. The Libraries secured funding to obtain modern Shakespeare materials, filling in critical humanities collection gaps, along with illustrating modern adaptations of Shakespeare's works to students. The exhibit was a resounding success, attracting more than 4,000 attendees and more than 2,100 participants in programs related to the folio. The exhibit, a collaborative effort to celebrate the humanities and social sciences at a university traditionally focused upon the sciences, illustrated the importance of valuing all academic disciplines, and provided students and rural community members with a well-rounded educational experience.

Keywords: William Shakespeare, First Folio, Exhibit, Collaboration

## Introduction

Kansas State University (K-State), located in Manhattan, Kansas, is a public university and a R1: Doctoral University – Highest Research Activity designated by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Historically, K-State was the first land-grant institution established under the Morrill Land-Grant Act of 1862, and the second public institution to admit men and women equally in the United States. As a land-grant institution, K-State focuses primarily upon the original subjects of the land-grant mission: agriculture, science, military science, and engineering. Since the foundation of Kansas State Agricultural College (now Kansas State University) in 1863, the curriculum has broadened to include social sciences and humanities. In a university dominated by sciences disciplines, the humanities have experienced collec-

tion gaps and less funding for program initiatives on campus. These conditions have made it difficult to demonstrate the importance of the humanities for our students and the wider-Manhattan community.

In July of 2014, the K-State Libraries were approached by the English Department to apply for a grant hosting an exhibit of William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies, now commonly referred to as the First Folio.<sup>1</sup> The touring exhibit was made possible by partnered funding through the American Library Association, The Folger Shakespeare Library, the Cincinnati Museum of Art, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Because the Libraries did not possess the exhibit space, security requirements, or controlled environmental conditions suitable to meet the stipulations for hosting the exhibit, the Libraries and English



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Department asked the campus museum, the Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art to join them in applying for the Shakespeare grant.

### Grant Application

The representative group that converged to form the grant team was comprised of a professor from the English Department specializing in Shakespeare Studies, an assistant professor and Content Development Librarian for arts, architecture, & the humanities, and the Director of the Beach Museum of Art. As rumors of the grant spread throughout the university, there was an unexpected outpouring of support from the campus and the Manhattan community.

Over twenty scholars from the English, Theatre, Dance, Music, and Philosophy departments, along with faculty and staff from the McCain Performing Arts Center, and former K-State faculty and students (now professors at other institutions) specializing in Shakespeare Studies provided programming and lecture suggestions for the grant. Enthusiasm for the grant extended to the off-campus community as well, with additional support deriving from the Kansas Humanities Council, the Manhattan Public Library, the Manhattan Arts Center, the Meadowlark Assisted Living Center, the Manhattan Public Schools, the City of Manhattan Parks and Recreation Services, the Fort Riley Army Installation, the Nelson Art Gallery, and the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce. The cultural center of Kansas is often considered to be Kansas City and Lawrence (home to the University of Kansas); as many of our undergraduate students originate from western Kansas, this exhibit was viewed as an excellent opportunity to provide a rare cultural experience for rural Kansans and their families, who often travel to Manhattan to visit their children or attend K-State sporting events.

The grant team collaborated to compile letters of support and curriculum vitae, and outline a strategy with measured outcomes for the grant. In addition to identifying an initial list of programs, the team documented environmental conditions and the security of the exhibit space to demonstrate the ability to successfully host the exhibit. The rules for the grant stipulated that only one location in each state would be selected to host the First Folio. While competing against rivals from other Kansas universities, K-State was awarded the grant. The review board commended the extensive range of partnerships and programs planned for the exhibit, citing our application as an aspirational model for other universities to emulate. K-State was officially offered the opportunity to host the grant during the month of February 2016.

### Planning Phase (2015-2016)

After the exhibit grant was awarded, it was crucial to maintain collaborative networks among initial supporters, and ensure that lectures and programs would be completed as proposed. To reasonably accommodate the multi-faceted group, we scheduled academic and public divisions to meet at regular intervals to report on the progress of scheduling and developing programs. The academic group met bi-monthly on campus during the workweek, and the community group met at a local coffee shop on Saturday mornings. Many of the academic group members attended both meetings to synchronize programs and prevent activities from interfering with one another. Brainstorming sessions produced a well-rounded and objective feedback process to generate generative innovative ideas and programs, as well as marketing strategies to provide unique experiences during the month long exhibit. Upon the development of a basic schedule, representatives returned to their departments and institutions to confirm the ability and necessary funding to complete programs and workshops as planned.



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**Confirmation of the Schedule, Funding, and Marketing**

It was understood that the majority of the scheduling, marketing, and funding of the exhibit grant would need to be provided by the university. The exhibit grant only covered the expense of travel and installation of the First Folio, but did not provide additional money toward security, docent training, programming, or lecturer speaking and travel fees. Although grants were later provided by the Folger Shakespeare Library, initial exhibit institutions like K-State were not able to take advantage of those opportunities. Primary leadership was provided by the Department Chair of the English Department, the Dean of the Libraries, the Director of the Beach Museum, and the Executive Director of the McCain (Performing Arts) Auditorium. These organizations came together to examine current programming finances of each entity, and devote a specific amount of money toward marketing and programming.

The planning group agreed to select exhibit docents from volunteers within the community, thus reducing expenses for security and training. While community organizations contributed funds and other resources, much of this could be done within their existing budget structures. The Manhattan Public Library used existing programming money to support family activities pertaining to the folio. The Manhattan Arts Center, which operates through endowments and performance fees, was able to operate in a self-sufficient manner. The City of Manhattan Parks and Recreation Division donated the use of the Amphitheater for a student Shakespeare Festival in the spring. Several community businesses within the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce also donated toward marketing and programming fees, with the agreement that businesses would be recognized as sponsored partners on marketing materials. In addition, the English Department was able to secure money through research enhancement and travel grants

offered by the K-State Office of the President, and the university administration offered general support for the campus exhibit

After the group solved the matter of money, the basic schedule of events was finalized to maximize the quality and quantity of programs throughout the month of February, lasting the duration of the exhibit. Marketing of the exhibit and programming additionally factored into the budget, as advertising avenues and high quality printed signage could easily diminish a shoe-string budget. It was agreed that each organization would contribute to marketing through a concerted effort, but the ways in which marketing would be completed would reflect the individual personalities of the entities and their target populations.

The K-State Libraries, through their Communications and Marketing Division, took the lead in reaching out to community organizations and businesses. Communications specialists and graphic designers developed a design template for posters, postcards, and banners for the campus. The Libraries and the English Department partnered to create a website for the First Folio event,<sup>2</sup> listing the schedule of events, the history of the folio, and the points of contact for questions about the exhibit. The Libraries additionally composed an announcement to be placed in *K-State Today*,<sup>3</sup> the university's daily newsletter, and printed posters advertising the exhibit to be distributed throughout campus buildings. Postcards were also developed and mailed to friends groups (library, museum, and performance halls) to promote the exhibit and to advertise the opportunity to volunteer as a docent. Furthermore, communications staff worked with the university marketing division to advertise the exhibit on the outdoor LED sign used for university events.

In addition to the maintenance of the website, the English Department organized the lecture





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series and media interviews from local newspapers and television stations.<sup>4</sup> The exhibit team also secured a much coveted advertising banner for the duration of the exhibit, to be hung over the main street in town showcasing the folio at the Beach Museum. The English Department secured funding for this advertisement from businesses through the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce.

The Manhattan Public Library offered advertising space in the new wing of their library. An expansion of the children's section was still under construction, leaving an empty window facing a prominent street in the downtown Manhattan area. The window was covered with a banner advertising the exhibit and public library programming, eliminating an ugly view of the construction project while providing valuable promotion for minimal cost.

The McCain Auditorium agreed to help out on several fronts. The Libraries' marketing templates were inserted into programs distributed at the performances. The Executive Director brought in the Actors from the London Stage<sup>5</sup> to perform *A Midsummer Night's Dream* the opening weekend of the folio exhibit.<sup>6</sup> The marketing of this event was used in combination with the folio exhibit to draw extra attention to both activities. In addition, the Executive Director used his connection with Kansas Public Radio to secure additional advertising and announce the exhibit throughout the State of Kansas.<sup>7</sup>

Each organization also contributed to purchase hanging signs that were hung on light posts visible to students and visitors alike throughout campus. The library created a large banner to be hung on the outside facade of the entrance doors, and the Beach Museum created a large banner to be displayed visibly in the Aggieville area of Manhattan, a centralized location of bars, restaurants, and specialty shops that is especially popular with college students and visitors.

Librarians passionate about the work of Shakespeare wanted to additionally partner with the group to provide access to our Shakespeare collections and educate students and the public about lesser known electronic resources and rare books. In addition to the Content Development Librarian for arts, architecture, and the humanities, other humanities librarians from the Academic Services Division partnered together to develop a Library Guide for the exhibit and classroom use.<sup>8</sup>

### Programming

The exhibition group decided to use docents as a means of providing extra security for the folio, along with meeting the educational requirements of the grant. A call for volunteers was sent out through the university and friends groups, which was met with enthusiasm and enough volunteers to fill the operating hours of the museum. Volunteers derived from students, librarians, professors, and members of the friends groups for three institutions (K-State Libraries, Beach Museum, and McCain Auditorium), and were properly trained by Beach museum staff according to the information packet provided by the Folger Shakespeare Library.

Programming was handled by a partnership between academic and community institutions. The opening lecture "What is the Folio?" was held in K-State's Hale Library; the content development librarian and the special collections librarian selected materials from the time of Shakespeare to be displayed during the lecture. Attendees were able to view the materials before and after the lecture and ask questions about the works. In addition to the performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the McCain Auditorium, the Actors from the London Stage completed their residency by meeting with students in theatre and dance courses to instruct students and speak about their craft. The English Department partnered with Kansas high schools to host



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a full day teachers' workshop on curriculum development for teaching Shakespeare in the classroom. Some of the programming funding was allocated for scholarships to enable teachers from low-income areas of Kansas to travel and participate in the workshop.

Outside of traditional educational programming, a variety of academic, community, and local business groups were able to provide unique events to highlight the exhibit. "The Bard at the Bar: A Midsummer Night's Dream Mock Trial"<sup>9</sup> partnered with K-State pre-law students, the Riley County Public Defender's Office, and the Washburn School of Law, arguing the validity of Athenian law versus the nature of true love. Local business owners and the Department of Theatre collaborated to create the "Oh Happy Hour: Shakesbeer Pub Crawl,"<sup>10</sup> a four bar tour with productions by K-State theatre students at each stop. The Libraries and the English Department developed a Valentine's Day event titled, "Shakespeare in Love: A Romeo and Juliet Masquerade Ball."<sup>11</sup> The event included music, dinner, and the performance of Romeo and Juliet's balcony scene in the K-State Libraries Great Room. In addition, the Manhattan Arts Center, the Department of Philosophy, and the Manhattan Experimental Theatre group collaborated with Louis Butelli to produce an evening of short plays, followed by Butelli's famous performance of "The Gravedigger's Tale: An Interactive Retelling of Shakespeare's Hamlet."<sup>12</sup>

The grant required that there also be programs designed specifically for families. The Manhattan Public Library hosted the "Shakespeare Faire: Shakespeare for all ages."<sup>13</sup> The event included a workshop for children, Shakespeare readings by English faculty and theatre students, live music from K-State's Collegium Musicum, and a musical instrument petting zoo put on by the K-State Music Department; the petting zoo allowed students to see and touch musical instruments used during the time of Shakespeare. The Beach Museum offered a children's

workshop on costume design,<sup>14</sup> school and community tours guided by museum staff, and a tour developed specially for the Meadowlark Assisted Living Center, guided by the exhibit director and professor of Shakespeare Studies in the English Department. These partnerships allowed the exhibit group to reach out to all areas of the community, and demonstrate the importance and relevance of William Shakespeare in the modern world.

### The First Folio Exhibit and Materials Acquisitions

Despite careful planning, complications occurred during the creation phase of the exhibit. In the grant application submitted by K-State, we stated our intent to develop a collection of modern Shakespeare materials illustrating contemporary interpretations of Shakespeare's works to be displayed near the First Folio. In addition, we explicitly expressed our desire to surround the folio with materials dating from the time of Shakespeare (from K-State Special Collections) to demonstrate the works of Shakespeare's contemporaries. However, upon communication with the Folger Shakespeare Library to obtain case dimensions for planning, the group was informed that all supplemental material would be subject to approval by the Folger Library, as they did not wish for additional items to be showcased near the folio. The K-State Libraries, the English Department, and the Beach Museum established a list of materials and were able to successfully negotiate a special collections exhibit, as well as a hands-on exhibit of modern materials to be displayed in the museum. Additional showpieces allowed K-State to customize the exhibit and create a relevant experience that resonated with our target audience, generating a deeper experience that connected Shakespeare with contemporary regional culture.

The Collection Development Librarian for arts, architecture, and the humanities was able to



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work with the Libraries' NEH Endowment committee (comprised of representatives from the Libraries, History, Philosophy, Modern Languages, English, and Music) to purchase over sixty modern Shakespeare materials, in addition to the complete Arden Shakespeare Series. This not only allowed the Libraries to fill gaps in our humanities collections, but provided opportunities for circulating and hands-on exhibits displaying the materials. The materials were divided in half, with a portion of browsing (but non-circulating materials) materials to be available at the Beach Museum, with the other half available for circulation on display at Hale Library. The modern materials exhibits were exceedingly popular, and illustrated to students how interpretations of Shakespeare (e.g. The Lion King) are still being used in modern creative works.

In addition to the modern materials collection, K-State Special Collections, the Collection development librarian for arts, architecture, and the humanities, and the English Department selected rare books to be displayed in the Beach Museum, showcasing works produced during Shakespeare's time. After collaborating with the Folger Shakespeare Library, we selected the following materials to be displayed surrounding the folio:

- *The Book of Martyrs* (1784)
- *The Herball, or Generall Historie of Plants* (1633)
- *The Geneva Bible* (1599)
- *The Queen-Like Closet, or, Rich Cabinet, Stored with all Manner of Rare Receipts for Preserving, Candyng and Cookery* (1684)

The Special Collections Librarian, the Collection Development Librarian for arts, architecture, and the humanities, the English Department, and the Beach Museum worked together to write short descriptions and histories of the materials. The books were also displayed at the "What is the Folio?" lecture, allowing visitors to interact with the materials (but not the folio)

outside of glass cases and the Special Collections' reading room.

### Results and Outcomes

The collaborative exhibit was a tremendous success. Twenty-two programs were produced during the month of February 2016 to highlight the history of the First Folio. Over 400 PreK-12 students toured the exhibit, with forty participants in the PreK-12 workshop, and 22 participants in the PreK-12 Teacher Workshop. More than 500 college students attended the exhibits, with combined attendance of 2,100 at exhibit-related programs, and a total of 4,435 viewers of the folio at the Beach Museum. The number of attendees at the Beach Museum more than tripled their numbers during the month, illustrating the success of, and interest in Shakespeare's works.

### Collaboration Applicability for Future Projects

The Shakespeare folio project was undoubtedly more complex than projects undertaken by K-State Libraries on a regular basis. However, the participation and organization of the exhibit served as a valuable model for future project management. Informal discussion of the grant application led to unconfirmed rumors of interested volunteers and programming; additionally, a disproportionate number of volunteers stemming from the English Department indicated poor communication among university departments and community organizations. To expand participation, department chairs, library subject specialists, and local organizations were contacted about the project, with a form email explaining the scope of the folio grant. Interested members were instructed to contact the grant writing group, who established a LISTSERV providing timely updates concerning announcements, task reminders, and meetings. Google Docs were used for transparent task management checklists and an events calendar. The checklist provided assigned timelines for tasks, ensuring accountability, and the calendar





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prevented competing events from occurring on the same day; this spread events evenly throughout the month of the exhibit, sustaining interest in the folio without overwhelming both coordinators and participants.

Routine meetings ensured accountability and open communication among the group. Task reports provided updates on programming, but also gave task managers the opportunity to request help in a timely fashion if support was needed. Meetings at regular intervals also maintained the momentum of the project, keeping members focused and moving forward among vying personal commitments.

Most importantly, project members learned more about the interdisciplinary nature of their scholarly interests. Scholars and community members would likely have never interacted with one another without the exhibit. This event has expanded the asset mapping among the K-State faculty and Manhattan residents, educating participants on community expertise and expanding our knowledge base beyond siloed interest groups. Librarians have become more aware of the integration of Shakespeare within course curricula, and relationships fostered from the project yielded opportunities to inform students and faculty about K-State Libraries' Shakespeare collections through embedded librarianship.

## Conclusion

The collaborative effort to host "First Folio! The Book That Gave Us Shakespeare," was a resounding success, with partners from the Beach Museum of Art, the Department of English, K-State Libraries, McCain Auditorium, the Theatre Department, the Music Department, the Manhattan Public Library, and community public schools and businesses. Although it was a time-consuming and difficult process, collaboration across departmental boundaries made the exhibit a tremendous success, with more than 4,000 attendees during the month of February 2016. This exhibit not only filled in gaps in the humanities collection, but also provided outreach to the community, and offered the opportunity to view a rare book in rural Kansas, communities that are often ignored in favor of larger city museums and cultural centers. This communal effort to celebrate the humanities at a land-grant institution traditionally focused upon the sciences provided the ability to illustrate the importance of all disciplines and provide students, the community, and the region with a well-rounded educational experience.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The Folger Shakespeare Library, "First Folio! The Book That Gave Us Shakespeare," The Folger Shakespeare Library, <http://www.folger.edu/first-folio-tour>.

<sup>2</sup> Kansas State University, "See Shakespeare's Big Book in the Little Apple," K-State Libraries, <https://www.k-state.edu/shakespeare400/>.

<sup>3</sup> Kansas State University, "Kansas State University to host Shakespeare's First Folio exhibition in February



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<sup>4</sup> Foster, Samantha. "K-State hosts month long exhibition of Shakespeare's First Folio." *The Topeka Capital-Journal*, February 13, 2016. <http://cjonline.com/life/connected/2016-02-13/k-state-hosts-monthlong-exhibition-shakespeares-first-folio>.

<sup>5</sup> University of Notre Dame. "The Spring 2016 Actors from the London State: A Production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*." Shakespeare at Notre Dame, <http://shakespeare.nd.edu/actors-from-the-london-stage/on-tour/recent-tours/spring-2016-tour-a-midsummer-nights-dream/>.

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<sup>8</sup> Kansas State University, "Shakespeare in the Little Apple LibGuide," K-State Libraries, <http://guides.lib.k-state.edu/c.php?g=436392&p=3104703>.

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<sup>12</sup> The Folger Shakespeare Library, "Gravedigger's Tale: An Interactive Retelling of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*," The Folger Shakespeare Library, <http://www.folger.edu/gravediggers-tale>.

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<sup>14</sup> Beach Museum, "Early Release: Workshop for Children: Costume Design," Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art, <http://beach.k-state.edu/visit/calendar/?id=12703&start=2016-02-24>.

