

# Cutting Through COVID-19

## Communications Overload: Which Emails Engaged Personal Librarian Students?

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**Miami University Libraries**



# Introduction and Overview

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Program Review

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Gathering Data

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COVID-19 Impact

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Findings

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Takeaways

# The Personal Librarian Program

- Personally connect students with library services
- Connect via email
- Typical year
  - 15 messages (fall)
  - 5 messages (spring)
- More messages for 2020–2021

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*Your Personal Librarian*

**Sarah Nagle**  
Creation & Innovation Services Librarian  
513-529-7205  
pricesb@MiamiOH.edu  
.....

**Welcome to Miami!**

We're so excited for you to join us!

I wanted to introduce myself. My name is Sarah and I'm your Personal Librarian. I'm here to help you take full advantage of all the Miami Libraries has to offer. I'll be reaching out to you throughout the semester, but if you have any questions please send me an email.

Looking for something to do this afternoon?

# The Personal Librarian Program

- Who are we communicating with?
- First-year and transition students
- Enrolling students
- Assigning Personal Librarians
- 2019-2020 – 4,674
- 2020-2021 – 4,844

## Remote Resources: Library Edition

Friday, Aug. 14 2-3 p.m., Zoom

The Libraries are here to help you be successful and meet you where you are! Join the Libraries for Remote Resources: Library Edition to learn about all the cool and virtual resources available to you, including but not limited to:

- the Personal Librarian Program
- online chatting with librarians
- research consultations



## Visiting a Library Location

Stop by and see us (from a distance)! Our three Oxford campus facilities are open to all students regardless of major:

**King Library**

**Wertz Art & Architecture Library** |  
7 Alumni Hall

**Amos Music Library** | 120 Center for  
Performing Arts (CPA)



Library hours for each location are subject to change and can be checked at [www.lib.miamioh.edu/about/locations/hours/](http://www.lib.miamioh.edu/about/locations/hours/).

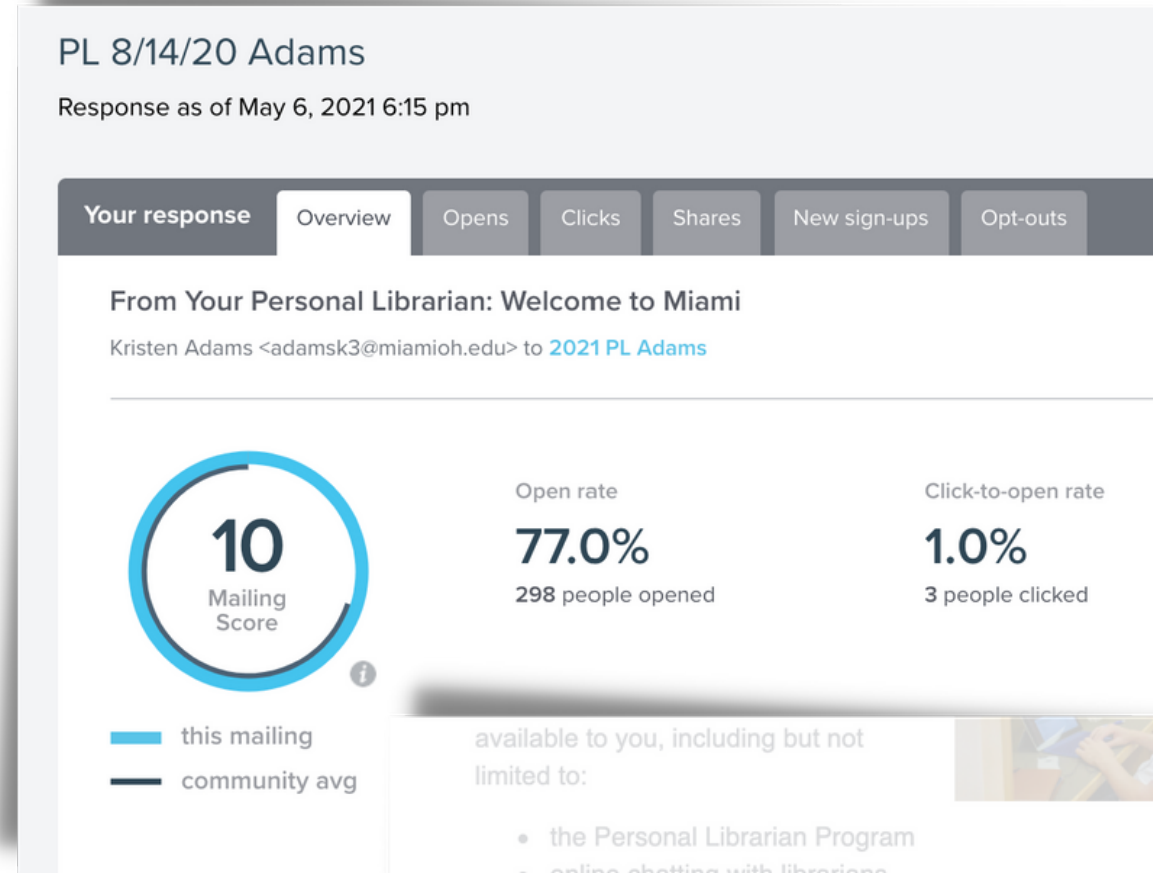
## Reserve Adobe Creative Cloud

Visit <https://muohio.libcal.com/equipment/item> to reserve Adobe Creative Cloud.

After you have checked out a license you will be able to login at [adobe.com](http://adobe.com) using your Miami credentials. You can then download any or all Adobe CC apps to your own device and get to work!

Adobe Creative Cloud includes popular products such as Photoshop, InDesign, Premiere Pro, Illustrator, Acrobat, and more. Check the [Creative Cloud](#) website for information about the full suite of products.





available to you, including but not limited to:

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- research consultations

Use the following link to access this online session:  
<https://miamioh.zoom.us/j/5295589060>

**Have a terrific weekend!**

*Kristen Adams*

Kristen Adams, Science & Engineering Librarian  
513-529-2434 / adamsk3@MiamiOH.edu  
Miami University Libraries / lib.MiamiOH.edu

# Emma Email Marketing Software

- Pros
  - Can easily recycle messages
  - Can track open rates and click counts
- Cons
  - Does not track replies
- Gathering data
  - Recorded open rates for all messages sent 2019–2021 and click counts for all messages sent 2020–2021
  - Recorded in Google Sheets
  - 51 messages, sent by 20 librarians = we reviewed and gathered data from 1,000+ messages!

# Remote learning/living at Miami in 2020–2021

- March 11, 2020
  - All courses moved to remote instruction.  
Initially planned to last through April 12
- March 20, 2020
  - Residence halls close
- September 14, 2020
  - Residence halls open
- September 21, 2020
  - F2F classes resume, though many courses continue to be entirely online or a hybrid of in-person and online learning

## The Miami Student

Established 1826 — Oldest College Newspaper West of the Alleghenies

NEWS

### Miami moves online: How the university will operate amid coronavirus concerns

By Staff Report

March 10, 2020 | 6:27pm EDT



Miami University President Greg Crawford announced Tuesday that Miami classes will be moved online effective Wednesday until at least Sunday, April 12.

Tuesday afternoon, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine asked state universities to transfer to “remote learning” due to the novel coronavirus. This comes after his administration announced there are three confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus in Cuyahoga County yesterday.

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NEWS

### Miami classes move online; students asked to leave campus

By **Ceili Doyle** Managing Editor-at-Large and **Tim Carlin** Editor-in-Chief



March 17, 2020 | 5:00am EDT

Miami University will conduct classes online through the end of spring semester and is asking students to leave campus promptly.

The news came just hours after the University of Cincinnati Health Center confirmed four cases of novel coronavirus in Butler County on Friday and hours before President Donald Trump officially declared a state of national emergency throughout the U.S.

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NEWS

### Miami offering phased reopening; undergraduate classes online for first month

By **Tim Carlin** Editor-in-Chief and **Briah Lumpkins**  
Campus & Community Editor

July 27, 2020 | 6:09pm EDT



Undergraduate classes will begin in an online-only format for the first five weeks of the fall semester for all Miami University campuses. Miami will also offer a phased return to campus plan for students.



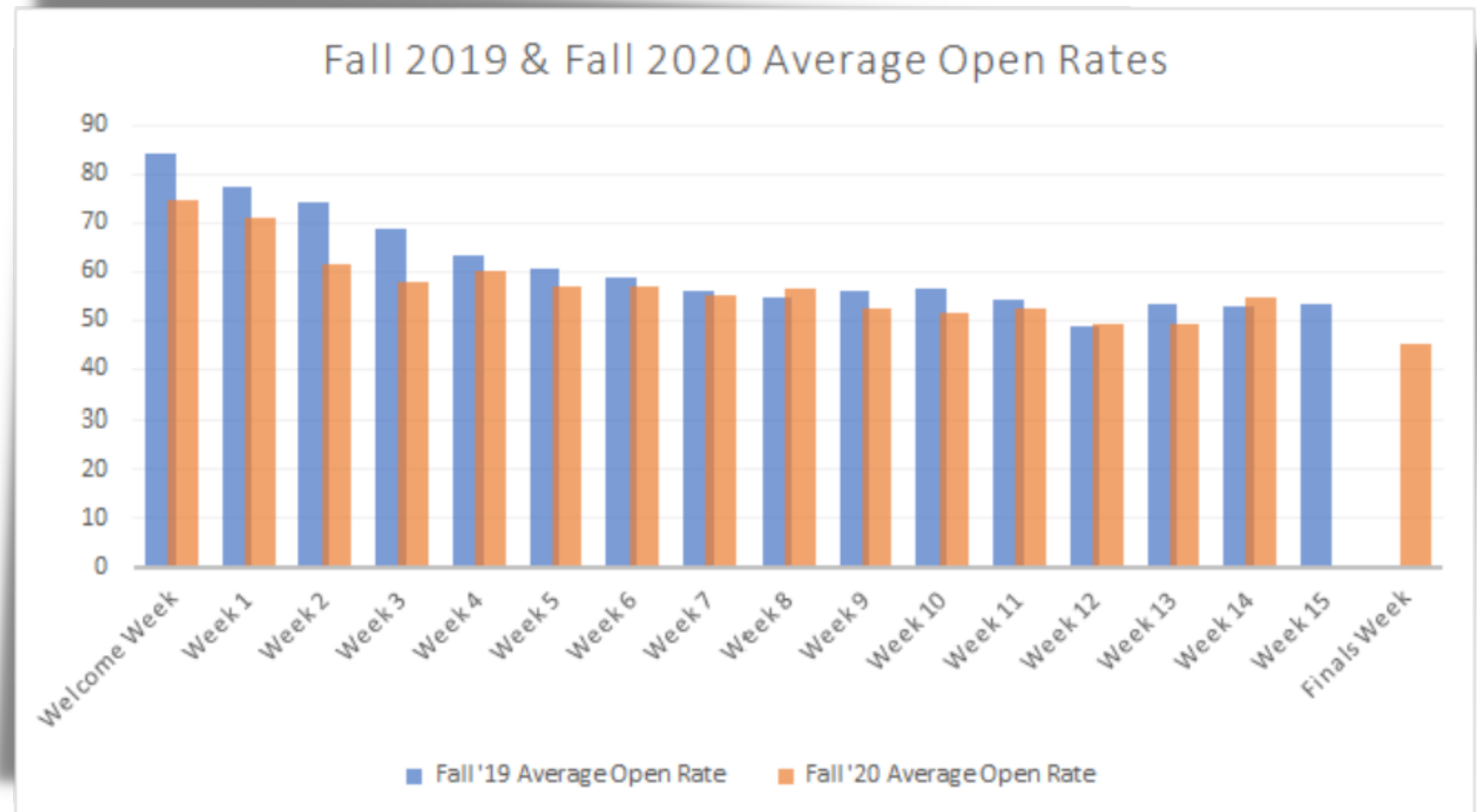
# Were students less engaged?

Short Answer: YES

Fall 2020 open rates lower compared to Fall 2019, except in few instances by only 1-2%.

10% difference in open rates of first message!

Didn't compare spring semesters because more messages sent Spring 2021.



# March 30, 2020 Email

First email after Miami University moved to remote instruction on March 11, 2020.

Average open rate: 46.24%

One of the lowest click counts of all messages reviewed!

## Libraries Homepage

[www.lib.miamioh.edu/](http://www.lib.miamioh.edu/)

## Proxy Link

Proxy prefix used to ensure access to library resources off-campus.

## Resources about COVID-19 misinformation

Links to Snopes "The Coronavirus Collection: Fact-Checking COVID-19" and the World Health Organization (WHO) landing page for misinformation about COVID-19.

# April 27, 2020 Email

The only other message sent during the spring semester.

Average open rate: 56.64%

Quite an increase in clicks since last message.

## News Resources

Links to freely subscribe as a student to *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*.

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## COVID-19 Resources LibGuide

Guide to credible resources covering COVID-19.

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## Ideas for things to do at home

Documenting the COVID-19 Pandemic & Making from Home Resources LibGuide.

# Discovering Trends

Reviewed 2020–2021 messages.

## Open Rates

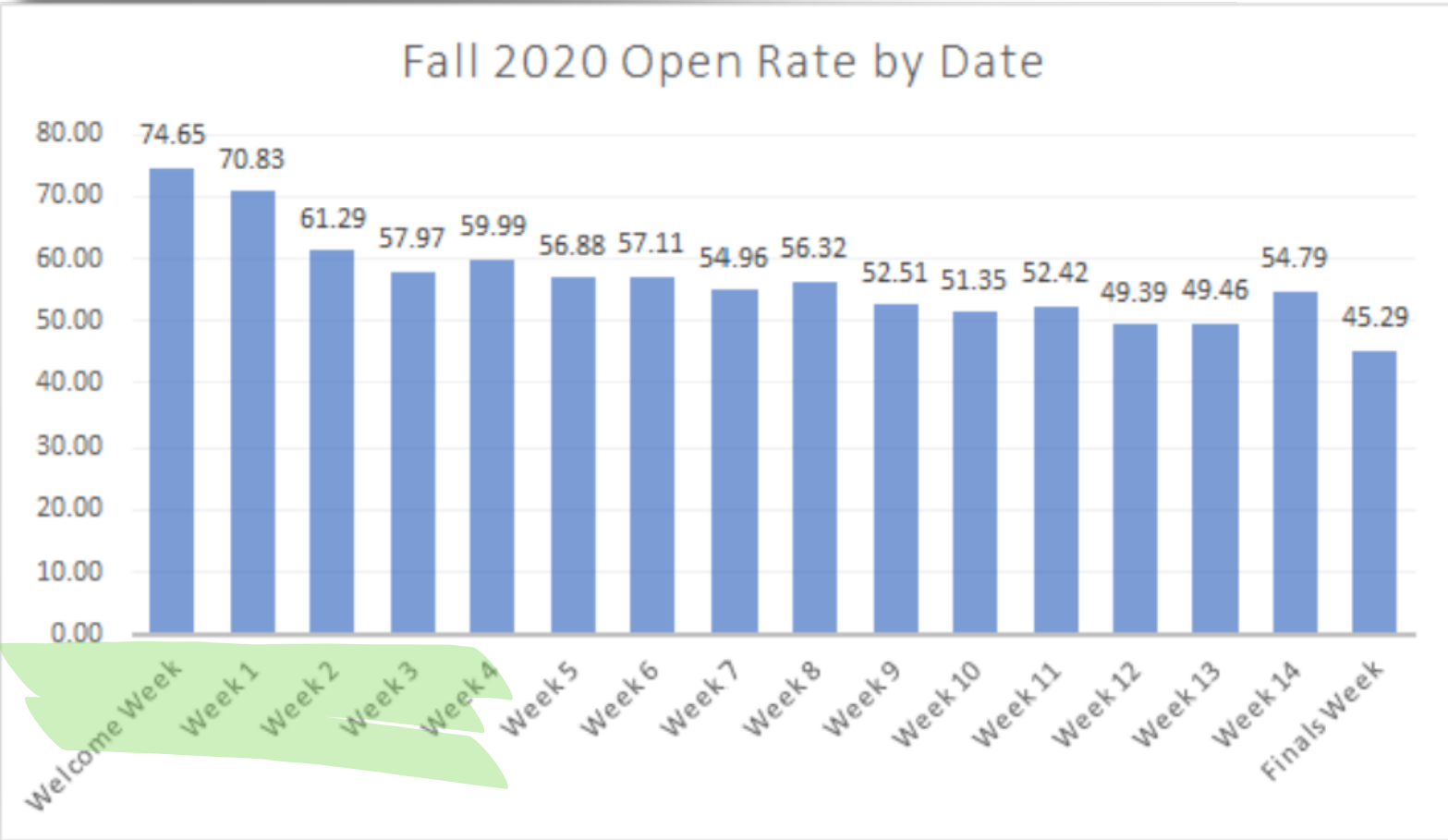
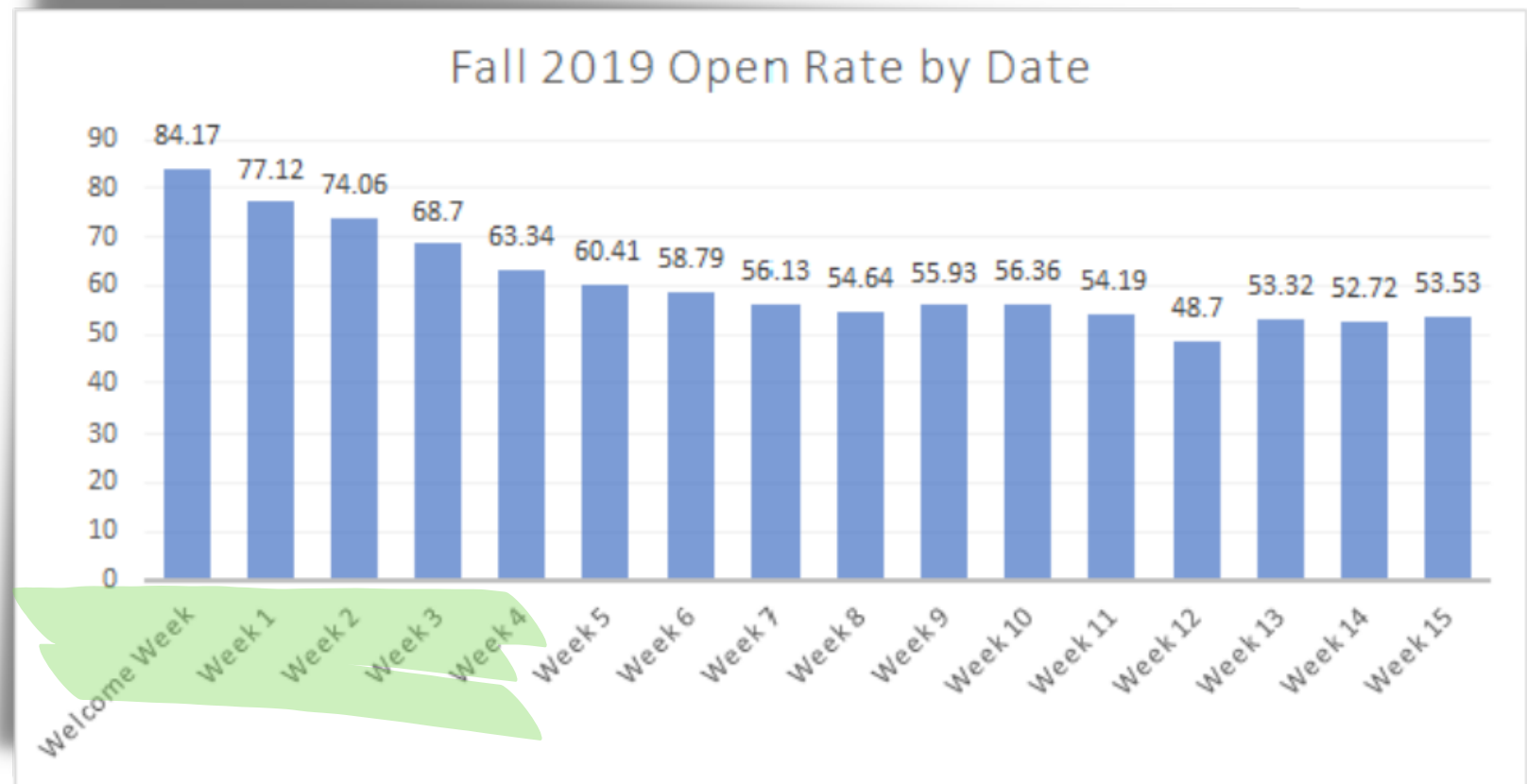
Examined open rates by date/week of the semester sent. Looked for trends in email subject lines of most opened messages.

## Click Counts

Gathered information about placement of link, type of link, and how link presented. Looked for trends in Top 25 most clicked links.

## Replies

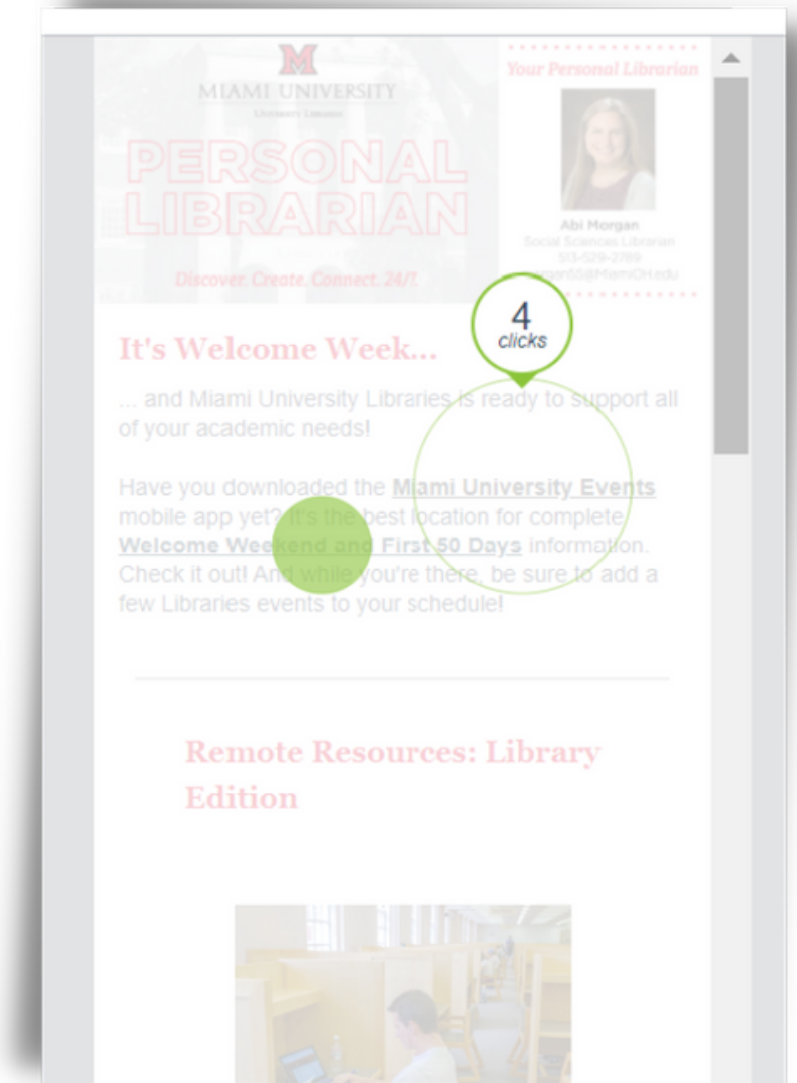
Unfortunately reliant on anecdotal and incomplete data.





## What linked resources were students most interested in?

- **Adobe Creative Cloud online checkout (109 clicks)**
- **New York Times subscription (60 clicks)**
- **Virtual library event for first year students (40 clicks)**
- **Guidebook to university events for first year students (24 clicks)**
- **Library hours landing page (20 clicks)**



# What types of links got the most clicks?

- **Library Events (4 of Top 25 links)**
- **Library Guides (4 of Top 25 links)**
- **University Links (4 of Top 25 links)**
- **Library Databases (3 of Top 25 links)**
- **External Links (2 of Top 25 links)**
- **Library Software (2 of Top 25 links)**
- **Library Videos (2 of Top 25 links)**

The screenshot shows an email marketing analytics dashboard. At the top, there are navigation tabs: "Your response", "Overview", "Opens", "Clicks", "Shares", "New sign-ups", and "Opt-outs". The "Clicks" tab is selected. Below the tabs, there is a summary box that says "6 individuals clicked the links in your mailing." and "Filtered by: All links (8 total clicks, 6 unique clicks)". Below this is a table with columns for "First Name", "Last Name", and "Email". The table shows two rows of data:

First Name	Last Name	Email
		cookr@
		xuy110@

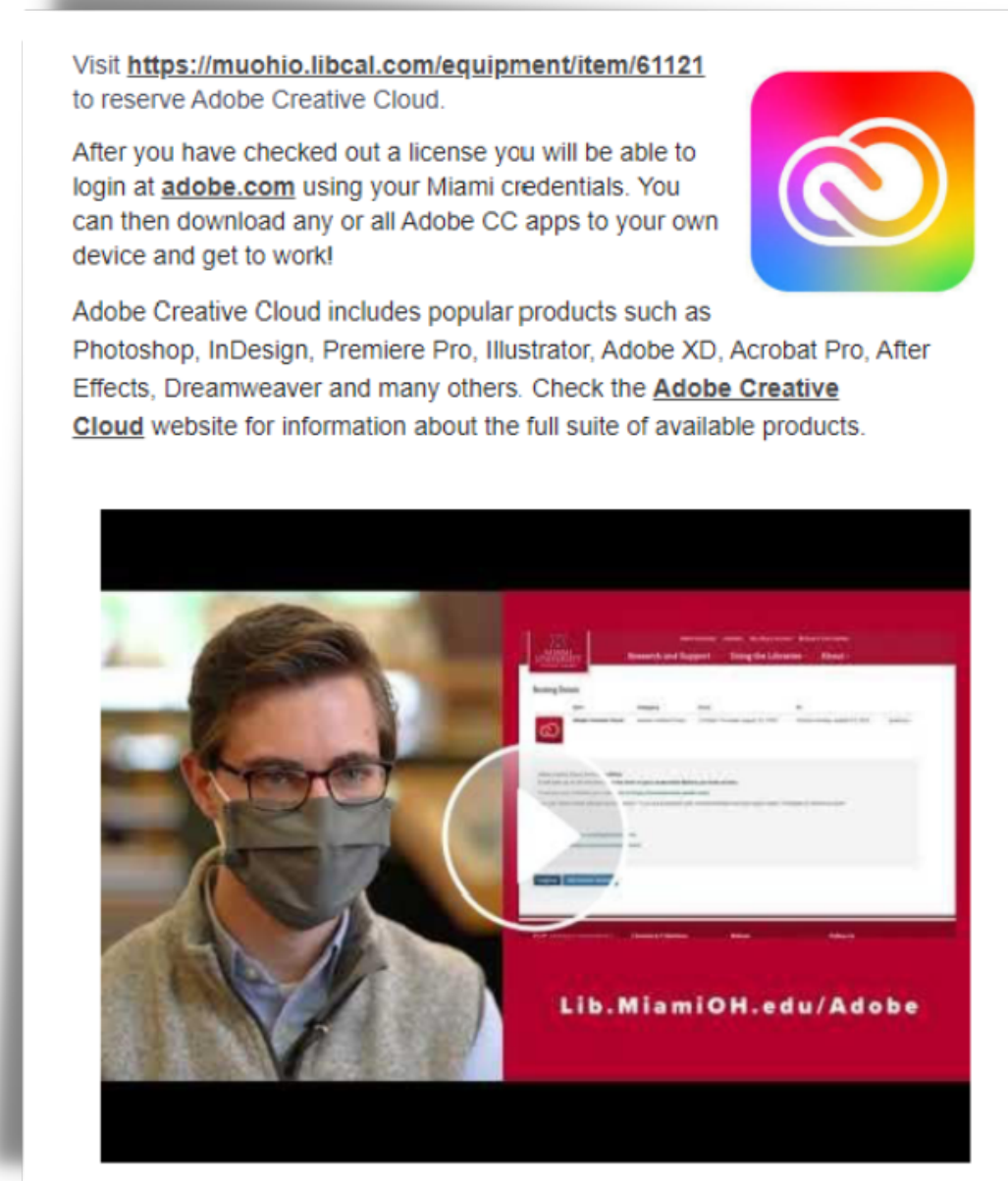
On the left side of the dashboard, there is a preview of an email campaign. The email has a header with "PERSONAL LIBRARIAN" and a sub-header "Yellow Software Features". The email content includes a paragraph of text and a colorful graphic.



# What kind of link presentation grabbed students' attention?

Among Top 25 links, most were  
**URLs, plus:**

- **Linked text (5 of Top 25 links)**
- **Linked image (3 of Top 25 links)**
- **Embedded video (2 of Top 25 links)**




# Where was it most impactful to place links?

**MIAMI UNIVERSITY**  
UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

**PERSONAL LIBRARIAN**

*Discover. Create. Connect. 24/7.*

**Your Personal Librarian**

  
**Laura Birkenhauer**  
Student Success Librarian for  
Campus Engagement  
513-529-4148  
crosbylm@MiamiOH.edu


**Career Exploration at Miami University**

The Center for Career Exploration & Success empowers undergraduate students to engage in career exploration and experiential learning to optimize their professional and personal potential through connections with employers and the Miami career community. This engagement also deepens self-knowledge, enabling students to choose meaningful career paths and excel in a diverse, global society.

Learn more:  
<https://miamioh.edu/emss/offices/career-center/index.html>

**Handshake**

Handshake is an internship/job search platform created for students to use in their career development. You can also access all Career Center events, workshops and trainings.

 **handshake**

An account was automatically created for you upon enrollment at Miami University. Log in to activate your account and select a career cluster. Handshake will then recommend

- **Section 2 (12 of Top 25 links)**
- **Section 1 (6 of Top 25 links)**
- **Section 3 (4 of Top 25 links)**
- **Section 4 (1 of Top 25 links)**
- **Section 5 (1 of Top 25 links)**
- **Signature (1 of Top 25 links)**

## Carry On

**Continued delivery of relevant information**  
re-engaged students  
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Keep consistent with  
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## Welcome

**Front-load important information!**

Welcome first-year and transfer students during **period of widest reach in first weeks** of the semester.

## Evaluate

Involved process, but gathered valuable information.

**Repeat assessments regularly!**

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## Experiment

Interested in:

- making changes based on findings
- A/B testing
- market segmentation

**Investigate options for further improvement.**

# Thank You!

[bit.ly/mialapl](https://bit.ly/mialapl)

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**Miami University Libraries**

