December 2004

Something Ventured, Something Gained: Acquiring Resources for a New Doctoral Program

Charles S.L. Marlor

Central Connecticut State University, marlorc@ccsu.edu

Lynn Johnson-Corcoran

Central Connecticut State University, corcoran@ccsu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg>

Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Marlor, Charles S.L. and Johnson-Corcoran, Lynn (2004) "Something Ventured, Something Gained: Acquiring Resources for a New Doctoral Program," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 16: Iss. 6, Article 8.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.4435>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

Analyzing The Collection

There are several steps to follow to replicate this analysis for another institution. One must determine the operational definition of a book and a time period for the analyses; identify the required data; analyze and compare these data; and interpret the findings.

When defining a book, it must be determined whether to include or exclude government documents, dissertations, microprint, non-circulating items, foreign language books, and branch libraries. The definition of a book needs to be consistent throughout the data sets. Determining the time period for the study may be influenced by the availability of the data for all three data sets. This study was limited in scope to the time period that ILL data were available.

Identifying the types of circulation data

available is critical to the development of the study. When identifying the required data for the study, it is necessary to determine if bibliographic records or item records will be used. Using item records will introduce multiple copies to the data set. The **CU Libraries'** circulation system only tracks total transactions, not the dates of each circulation instance; therefore, it was not possible to isolate the transactions that occurred before the specified study period. The ILL borrowing requests also need to be reviewed to confirm that the data set does not include requests for books that are owned by the library.

In order to analyze, compare, and interpret the data, there must be a common identifier for every book circulated, borrowed, and owned by the library. The **OCLC** number was the only field common to all three data sets in this study. The **OCLC** number was used to acquire an **LCC** number for each book owned by the library, circulated, or requested

through ILL. The data sets were combined in a database so that the **LCC** numbers could be used to classify the books into **Conspectus** and **NATC** subject areas and to analyze and compare the three data sets.

Conclusion

This comparison of holdings, circulations, and ILL borrowing requests for books can be a useful method for evaluating a collection, both for the purposes of collection development and for off-site storage decision making. As library budgets continue to decline or remain flat, it becomes increasingly important that collection decisions are based on data, not simply on intuition.

References

1. John N. Ochola, "Use of Circulation Statistics and Interlibrary Loan Data in Collection Management," *Collection Management* 27, no.1 (2002): 1-13.

Something Ventured, Something Gained: Acquiring Resources for a New Doctoral Program

by **Charles S.L. Marlor** (Head, Acquisitions & Serials Dept., Central Connecticut State University) <marlor@ccsu.edu>
and **Lynn Johnson-Corcoran** (Collection Development Librarian, Central Connecticut State Univ.) <corcoran@ccsu.edu>

One of the **Lively Lunch** programs at the **2004 Charleston Conference** dealt with the trials and tribulations experienced by the Library at **Central Connecticut State University** in purchasing materials and resources for the school's first doctoral program. Herewith is a brief history of the school and the ensuing saga.

Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) is the oldest public institution of higher education in Connecticut and one of four regional universities that comprise the **Connecticut State University** system. **CCSU** was established in 1849 as the **New Britain Normal School** with its mission being the preparation of schoolteachers. In 1933 the **Normal School** became **Teachers College of Connecticut**. In 1955 a graduate school was established and in 1959 the name changed again; this time to **Central Connecticut State College**. **Central Connecticut State College** became **Central Connecticut State University** in 1983. Its current enrollment is 9,000 FTE.

Since **CCSU** was originally founded as a school of Education, it has always been strong in providing programs for aspiring and practicing teachers. The department of Educational Leadership offers a variety of masters programs, including an MS in Educational Technology and Educational Leadership. It also awards a sixth year certificate for administrators and supervisors. The doctorate program in Educational Leadership was licensed in December 2001, after much ado with the **University of Connecticut** that, up to then, was the only public institution of higher education in the state authorized to award a doctorate. The EdD program at **CCSU** and **SCSU** is designed for educators who are working full time and can only

attend classes evenings, weekends, and summers. The program is designed to prepare professionals in the field of Education to become principals, superintendents, and curriculum and assessment specialists. Twenty-five students per year are currently accepted into the program and the first cohort will graduate in May of 2005.

We on the Collection Development and Acquisitions end of things at **Central Connecticut State University's Elihu Burritt Library** think of year one as the "Reactive/Chaotic" year. Special funds had been allocated for library materials during the first three years of the new program. Beginning in July of 2002, \$70,000 was allotted to purchase both print and electronic materials that would bring the library "up to snuff" and that would ultimately ensure the EdD program's accreditation. We learned of the existence of these special funds through our Library Director who had just returned from a meeting with the University Provost. The Provost had just remembered to tell her that the library would get \$70,000.00 per year for the next three years. She also told us that the hiring of an "Education Librarian," who would be dedicated exclusively to the provision of library services to the EdD cohort, was also under consideration. This position never materialized, but the anticipation of it helped add to an already strong sense of limbo. Having been told not to worry and being the obedient little librarians that we are, we awaited further instruction and direction from the faculty in the Educational Leadership program. Unfortunately, we gradually learned that silence and confusion were our only rewards for patiently

waiting for others to begin to express their "vision" as to how this chunk of change was to be spent. After eight months of merciless (yet futile) hounding of many for information on what to do with this money, the University budget office did what budget offices do near the end of a fiscal year. The EdD program's collection development money was redirected to the account from which the **University** pays its utility bills. After much ringing of hands, pulling of hair, and providing an extensive wish list to the University's Finance Director a portion of the money was returned. As a result of this intervention, we were able to purchase about \$5,000 worth of monographs, upgrade **Ebsco's Academic Search Elite** to **Academic Search Premier**, and subscribe to **PsychArticles**. These orders were placed at the virtual speed of light so that the small portion of money returned would be expended by the close of the fiscal year. Through our first year experience we learned that being complacent librarians waiting for direction from others was an enormous mistake. At the beginning of the second year we took the opposite approach to the issue. We let people see our proactive, creative, we're-gonna-roll side, and the results were quite satisfying.

We call year two our "Proactive/Productive" year. The **University** finally named a Director for the EdD, **Karen Beyard**. **Dr. Beyard** is a senior member of the faculty who happens to hold an **MLS**. She is also incredibly smart and has more energy and drive than most people on the planet. We realized by now that the pro-

continued on page 28

Something Ventured ... from page 26

posed "Education Librarian" position was clearly not going to happen, so we had to come up with a way to address the needs of our EdD students and beef up our collection using existing personnel. At the very beginning of the fall semester, the library assembled a team of librarians possessing expertise in a variety of functional areas who could work effectively with each other and with **Dr. Beyard**. The team was composed of the Head of Acquisitions, the Head of Collection Development, the Digital Resources Librarian (who is also a Reference Librarian) and the Systems Librarian. Working closely with **Dr. Beyard**, the team developed a plan of action that would allow us to intelligently and quickly spend this year's allotment before it was again redirected towards something like refinishing the University's planetarium ceiling.

Our first job was to identify collection strengths and weakness in three areas. First, we did a comprehensive review of our serials holdings. This endeavor resulted in our determining that the current collection of Education and interdisciplinary journals was excellent and would easily support research at the doctoral level. We then proceeded to review our monograph collection. This review revealed two major problems. First, we needed to weed some antiquated material (a.k.a. old, useless, sometimes embarrassing junk) and replace it with newer editions and more current publications. In addition, the monograph collection was determined to be severely lacking in titles that dealt with research methodology and in works published by core publishers of scholarly treatises in the field. We then began to take a hard look at our online resources. We already knew that our online journal collection easily supported research at the doctoral level. We proceeded to review the specialty database holdings of peer institutions offering an EdD. We discovered two conspicuous omissions in our holdings that we would have to purchase.

Our next task was to address the ongoing selection of monographs needed to support the program. The Collection Development Librarian worked closely with the EdD Program Director to develop a separate selection profile for the EdD program. **Central Connecticut State University** uses **Blackwell** as its primary vendor and uses their online subject profiling and new title notification system, Collection Manager. The profile was developed using the existing Educational Leadership selection profile and fine-tuned to meet the needs of doctoral level selection. Additional subject areas were added to the profile and certain publications were dropped. In addition, the Program Director was given access to the online use of Collection Manager so that she could directly request titles for purchase. To date, she is the only non-Librarian on campus who is accorded this privilege.

We then proceeded to set up trials to those specialty databases that peer institutions had that we did not. Input was solicited from the entire **University** including the EdD cohort. Database content was compared with the content of those

to which we already subscribed to ensure that we would not be duplicating, to any significant degree, content that we currently owned. An enormous amount of "comparison shopping" was done to obtain the best pricing for the databases, including investigation of consortia, direct orders from publishers, and vendors in every combination and permutation of simultaneous user. Having determined that the specialty databases were indeed valuable additions to the program, as well as of benefit to the entire University community, we bought them. By the end of year two, the EdD program had funded the purchase of more than 700 scholarly monographs and had added significantly to the online research capabilities at the **University**.

Well, we're in year three now and so far we could call it the "Clear sailing/Pragmatic" year. Both the Collection Development Librarian and the EdD Program Director have reported that the EdD Selection profile is working famously. A new liaison librarian has been assigned to Program Director. Databases are meeting research needs and trials for potential new database additions have already been scheduled. The working relationship between the EdD Program Director is streamlined and efficient. In fact the University's July 2004 report to the Connecticut Department of Higher Education and the Board of Governors for Higher Education touts significant improvements to library support of the new EdD program.

The thrust of our efforts during this last year

of supplemental funding will be towards developing a plan for maintaining our progress and continuing to add essential resources as needed. The current state of our regular acquisitions budget precludes any hope of being able to absorb the ongoing costs of the already existing EdD materials, not to mention further collection development. We need to develop a plan that will ensure continued funding for resources that are now considered essential or core and to which our patrons have grown accustomed. We plan to produce a detailed and comprehensive report that will explain what each new database is, what it does, its current usage statistics, and its cost. The report will be finished by the beginning of the spring semester and the Library Director will distribute it to the **Connecticut State University** central office, the **CCSU** administration, and the **CCSU Council of Deans**. We will also establish a system of planned communication with the faculty in the EdD Department and others on campus who have benefited directly from access to the new online resources. We will explain the issue in detail and urge them to lobby for renewed funding for the library. We plan a no holds barred approach to this endeavor and, should our efforts result in no new funding, it most certainly won't be because those with the power to allocate funds did not have all the information needed to make a well informed decision.

Being the optimistic glass is half full kind of librarians that we are, we think we'll be able to call year four "Hope springs eternal." 🍀

The Iceberg Problem — Is the Investment in Our Collections Visible to Patrons?

by **Ezra Schwartz** (Founder, Art & Tech, Inc.: The User Interface Practice; Phone: 773-256-1418)
<ezra@artandtech.com> www.artandtech.com

"For every complex problem, there is a solution that is simple, neat, and wrong"

— **H. L. Mencken**

A collection is a potential, a discovery waiting to happen. Since digital collections are only accessible through their user interfaces, the role of the user interface as a facilitator of discovery cannot be underestimated. It appears, however, that while academic electronic collections have grown exponentially—and often as a result of significant institutional investment, the utilization rates for many of these collections remain lower than expected. Computers and broadband networks are ubiquitous, patrons are computer savvy, and researchers are excited about the potential of electronic resources—what then stands in the way of greater utilization of electronic scholarly collections?

Driven by substantial industry investment, significant advances in e-commerce over the last few years dramatically changed users' expectations for usability and quick gratification during online sessions. Many libraries, on the other hand, are facing shrinking budgets and diminishing resources just as the rising popularity of commercial research tools makes the success of academic collections increasingly contingent on enabling quick and easy access to the wealth of resources they offer. For collection developers, this situation suggests the need to take a closer look at the user interfaces that provide access to their collections.

continued on page 30