

December 2010

Collection Development and Sustainability at the University of Florida

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Recommended Citation

Burke, Merliyn (2010) "Collection Development and Sustainability at the University of Florida," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 22: Iss. 6, Article 9.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.5687>

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THE TALLOIRES DECLARATION

We, the presidents, rectors, and vice chancellors of universities from all regions of the world are deeply concerned about the unprecedented scale and speed of environmental pollution and degradation, and the depletion of natural resources.

Local, regional, and global air and water pollution; accumulation and distribution of toxic wastes; destruction and depletion of forests, soil, and water; depletion of the ozone layer and emission of "green house" gases threaten the survival of humans and thousands of other living species, the integrity of the earth and its biodiversity, the security of nations, and the heritage of future generations. These environmental changes are caused by inequitable and unsustainable production and consumption patterns that aggravate poverty in many regions of the world.

We believe that urgent actions are needed to address these fundamental problems and reverse the trends. Stabilization of human population, adoption of environmentally sound industrial and agricultural technologies, reforestation, and ecological restoration are crucial elements in creating an equitable and sustainable future for all humankind in harmony with nature.

Universities have a major role in the education, research, policy formation, and information exchange necessary to make these goals possible. Thus, university leaders must initiate and support mobilization of internal and external resources so that their institutions respond to this urgent challenge.

We, therefore, agree to take the following actions:

1. Increase Awareness of Environmentally Sustainable Development. Use every opportunity to raise public, government, industry, foundation, and university awareness by openly addressing the urgent need to move toward an environmentally sustainable future.

2. Create an Institutional Culture of Sustainability. Encourage all universities to engage in education, research, policy formation, and information exchange on population, environment, and development to move toward global sustainability.

3. Educate for Environmentally Responsible Citizenship. Establish programs to produce expertise in environmental management, sustainable economic development, population, and related fields to ensure that all university graduates are environmentally literate and have the awareness and understanding to be ecologically responsible citizens.

4. Foster Environmental Literacy For All. Create programs to develop the capability of university faculty to teach environmental literacy to all undergraduate, graduate, and professional students.

5. Practice Institutional Ecology. Set an example of environmental responsibility by establishing institutional ecology policies and practices of resource conservation, recycling, waste reduction, and environmentally sound operations.

6. Involve All Stakeholders. Encourage involvement of government, foundations, and industry in supporting interdisciplinary research, education, policy formation, and information exchange in environmentally sustainable development. Expand work with community and nongovernmental organizations to assist in finding solutions to environmental problems.

7. Collaborate for Interdisciplinary Approaches. Convene university faculty and administrators with environmental practitioners to develop interdisciplinary approaches to curricula, research initiatives, operations, and outreach activities that support an environmentally sustainable future.

8. Enhance Capacity of Primary and Secondary Schools. Establish partnerships with primary and secondary schools to help develop the capacity for interdisciplinary teaching about population, environment, and sustainable development.

9. Broaden Service and Outreach Nationally and Internationally. Work with national and international organizations to promote a worldwide university effort toward a sustainable future.

10. Maintain the Movement. Establish a Secretariat and a steering committee to continue this momentum, and to inform and support each other's efforts in carrying out this declaration. 🌱

Collection Development and Sustainability at the University of South Florida

by **Merilyn Burke** (Reference Librarian, University of South Florida Tampa Library, 4202 E. Fowler Avenue, Lib 112E, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL 33620; Phone: 813-974-4561) <msburke@usf.edu>
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Sustainability, while relatively new as a collection development area, is not lacking in titles for selection. The **University of South Florida (USF)** recently created a new hybrid academic unit: the School of Global Sustainability. This is an interdisciplinary unit that is quickly becoming the norm not only on the USF campus but across the country. The concept of interdisciplinary studies can, and does, present a challenge to the collection development librarian.

In the case at the **University of South Florida**, and I am sure at other locations, the School of Global Sustainability has pulled faculty from the natural and social sciences, engineering, business, the humanities, the arts, education, and health. With this kind of mix, collection development can end up covering the LC range from A to Z. Global warming, environmental

issues such as the recent oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, greenhouse gases, and alternative energy sources have made these programs front and center for educational institutions. With these initiatives, plus the creation of an on-campus Office of Sustainability, the collection must support not only the curriculum but the projects that the sustainability office initiates.

In my collection development (CD) role, anthropology was already part of my assignment, and when the School of Global Sustainability was announced as a new program, I requested that sustainability be given to me as well. While this may appear to be unrelated at first blush, there are a number of anthropology faculty members assigned to this new program. As background, the anthropology department at my university is an applied anthropology department and has a diverse collection development profile; thus sustainability was not a stretch. In fact, I did not need to radically change my profile in our **WorldCat Selection** profile since I was covering a large range of material with anthropology.

The challenges in selecting materials for sustainability have to do with the diverse topics that are covered under the school's newest program. Since the program is a master's level program, materials must reflect the level of the students. Using tools like **WorldCat Selection** and **Gobi**, to which our library subscribes, is helpful in listing the level of the materials available through those services. In addition, I review *Choice* on a monthly basis, and yes, I go through the entire collection with a few exceptions because the reviews list the level of the materials, which aid in my selection process. Another useful tool is the Best of Reference published in the *Library Journal*, which is published yearly and covers a broad spectrum of topics. It is important to look at as many relevant subject areas as possible since sustainability is interdisciplinary, and to bypass an area might mean missing an important resource.

In addition to using these sources, I need to know what is being taught — this goes for all of my collection development subjects.

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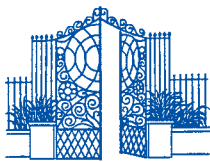
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At the beginning of each semester, I go to the program's Website to see what current courses are being taught. For example, this semester, the Masters in Global Sustainability will include public health issues, green infrastructure for sustainable communities, economic and management issues that affect sustainability in developed and developing nations, and water-related issues. The diversity of topics can be a challenge, although the anthropology collection-development assignment has also covered a large portion of these topics in the past, so the addition of the new assignment has not been as difficult as it might have been. I work within the framework of the courses taught, relevancy to courses, and the needs and interests of both the faculty and the students since collection development cannot work well without the outreach of the CD librarian to his or her constituencies. In addition to the immediate needs, I look to the future: what will be next on the horizon for sustainability? In the case of sustainability, it means reaching past the library walls and keeping up with local, national, and world news,

because it seems that the daily news can impact the direction of sustainability.

WorldCat Analysis as an Option

As the CD librarian for applied anthropology and now sustainability, I discovered that while traditional topics were covered quite well in the **WorldCat Analysis Program**, interdisciplinary topics did not fare well at all. When there is an interdisciplinary area with wide-ranging subject matter, it is difficult to almost impossible to assess the collection with this tool. This tool works better with specific subject areas; it only causes confusion with areas that cover a large range of topics like interdisciplinary subjects do. Sustainability is one of those subject areas that cover such a wide range of issues that I was able to select a few areas, but I was not able to get as good a grasp in **WorldCat Analysis** for comparison as I would have preferred. The environment may be covered, but when dealing with environment as a part of global health, the information is not sufficient enough.

So How Do I Measure, Compare, and Select?

One of my methods is to gather information concerning sustainability; this includes

checking other libraries' holdings, including ones that have LibGuides for sustainability, checking such sources as *Choice* and **Google Scholar-Books** with a myriad of topics including sustainability, water resources, and other terms that are inherent in the field. I look at the courses being taught at my institution to see the direction of the program and to make sure I am aware of any new course being offered. And I communicate with my faculty because each one of them comes with a personal agenda of what they want to teach and what tools they consider important. Each faculty member who teaches a course has a goal in mind for his or her students. Sending that professor a choice of titles in his or her area allows me to see what they select. Their selections and their rejections help me develop a profile and purchase materials that are more appropriate for their classes.

It is important to remember that books are not the only materials that need to be purchased. In my LibGuide, I make sure that I list both paper and electronic journals; I include databases along with audio-visual materials and pertinent websites of interest. The LibGuide allows the library to let the faculty and students know what we have in that subject.

While the creation of a library guide does not appear to be a tool for selection, it can help in the process of evaluation and review of materials that have been selected. I try to involve the faculty and students in the specific programs to review the LibGuide, to send me titles that they feel are important — including media materials, book titles, journals and Websites. The inclusion of students and faculty can provide insight into the direction that the collection should be going. In addition, the creation of such a guide forces one to organize the concepts of sustainability and to identify the main principles that are the basis of sustainability as a subject area. The basic concepts that have to be considered include the welfare of society; the interdependence of human economies and natural ecosystems, with an emphasis of human impact upon these systems; and the availability of resources and their preservation and use — sustainable development and the transition to achieve sustainability.

While there is no one simple way to select materials for sustainability, there are tools that will help the collection development librarian make the appropriate choices. Tools such as *Choice*, *Library Journal*, **WorldCat Selection**, and the journals with book reviews that cover the topics involving sustainability and the environment are all useful in this multidisciplinary subject. In addition, involvement with the faculty — making sure their needs are met and the materials reflect the courses being offered — is critical. Review the literature, see what is out there, and keep current. 🌱

Merilyn Burke has worked as a Collection Development Librarian at **Syracuse University**, a Serials Librarian at the **University of Connecticut Health Sciences Library** in Farmington, Connecticut, and as an Access Services Librarian at the **University of South Florida**. Currently she is a Reference Librarian doing collection development for Sustainability, Anthropology, Africana Studies, and Religious Studies. In addition, she is responsible for copyright issues for the library. 🌱

Resources

Choice: Current reviews for Academic Libraries
Library Journal: Best of 2009 Reference (yearly)
 Resources for the School of Global Sustainability (my sustainability guide): <http://guides.lib.usf.edu/sustainability>.