Against the Grain

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Allyson Rodriguez Profile

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effectively communicate with the liaisons, and the various academic departments, options for a plan of action.

The liaisons reviewed the spreadsheet, which allowed them to see how resources ranked, plus key information about the resources. Resources were identified as irrevocably cancelled, planned to be cancelled (but able to be switched out), eligible to be sacrificed, modified in some way, or retained and unable to be cancelled. Liaisons were directed to share the data with their faculties with an adequate timeline to reach a collaborative decision about how to reduce their resources to reach the budget goal.

Differences in Perception of Need and Desire — As we communicated this information, it became apparent that some highly-prized resources were at risk. Some faculty were especially vocal in advocating the retention of certain subscriptions to the exclusion of other, higher-ranking titles. The data revealed a dichotomy between faculty perceptions of necessity in a research discipline and empirical evidence about what was a good value.

We countered the considerable faculty push-back as positively as possible, turning conversations with faculty into teachable moments. We encouraged the use of interlibrary loan. We informed faculty of the library's flat materials budget, the impossible inflation rates, and varied pricing structures based on "hidden" factors like potential audience size, simultaneous use, etc. We explained how our usage data was gathered, encouraging faculty to link to an article rather than uploading a PDF copy to learning management systems. We documented our decisions and set up a method to track resources when the performance data did not coincide with expectations: an "endangered species" list of sorts.

The Breaking Point: Big Deal Packages — One of the biggest challenges we faced was dismantling the library's journal packages, not all of which were up for contract renewal. We applied our same analytical methodology to the titles within our "big deals," with the additional measure of the distribution of usage across titles within the collection. Then we targeted between 80% and 90% of the titles in the three major journal packages targeted for elimination. We allowed liaisons and faculty to make a case to retain especially important titles, or to swap out other titles, but we ultimately had to excise a major portion of our journal content received via bundled deals.

The following year, 2014-15, the library's budgetary conditions required more cuts. We turned our focus to the packages up for renewal, notably **Elsevier's** ScienceDirect. While the package was not performing particularly poorly, the cost of the subscriptions was untenable. The proposed eliminations in ScienceDirect were severe, and our ability to subscribe to journals with high ratings was limited due to the comparatively high cost of many of the titles. We again made preliminary recommen-

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BORN AND LIVED: I was born and raised in Austin, Texas, but have lived in several Texas cities, a small town in Oklahoma, and now live in Denton, Texas.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: Previously, I worked at a small Air Force Base Library doing a number of tasks. I currently work in the Collection Development Department at the **University of North Texas** where I ensure the accessibility of quality Open Access resources in our discovery systems and complete investigations into over-arching or difficult collection activities. I am a member of the **Texas Library Association**, and the **American Library Association**, **Association for Library Collections and Technical Services**. I am invested in the Open Access movement, the transformation of scholarly communications, and the promise it holds for libraries now and in the future.

IN MY SPARE TIME: I love to read, bake, and spend time with my husband and our two dogs, Spartacus the dachshund and Olive the lab.

FAVORITE BOOKS: How can anyone choose?

dations to the liaisons and faculty, and allowed a period for feedback and negotiation.

When the faculty realized the impact of a second year of cuts, there was another outcry. Tensions rose leading to the faculty senate discussing the funding problems in open meetings, the local press reporting the story, and university administration becoming concerned about image. The university president intervened allocating funding to stave off the second round of cuts. He also committed to continuing the extra funding for two additional years, giving the university and library administrations time to address the shortcomings of the library's funding model in a long-term way. For the short term, though, we were able to renew our remaining big deal packages mostly intact.

Summer of Love

The infusion of funding created a different set of challenges for the collection development librarians. Partially in response to expected shortfalls in funding, the collection development department was implementing an entirely new philosophy (ABCD or access-based collection development) (**Crawford** et al., 2014) that emphasized access over ownership. After conducting so much analysis of resources, it seemed cavalier to ignore our analysis. We refused to reinstate everything we cancelled. We reinstated many titles that were in the moderate ranges, but aggressively pursued better pricing from vendors, modified arrangements with vendors reducing costs, promoted "endangered" titles, and financially and fundamentally supported interlibrary loan.

The plan to use the money as effectively as possible incorporated three elements that the department recently had developed and put in place: the ABCD group, adoption of demand-driven acquisitions programs, and an

initiative to "enhance" the collection in targeted disciplines.

ABCD Group — The ABCD group consists of key librarians who collectively oversee the use of the materials budget, investigating resources, and selecting purchases. The department's leadership and the librarians responsible for assessment, liaison communications and monographs acquisitions, strategic collections, serials, electronic resources, and media meet regularly to plan spending, identify needs and desires, report options from vendors, and make decisions. The ABCD group cohesively operates with a sense of collective purpose, and from a comfortable position of accountability for spending decisions.

DDA — DDA has become an important part of the ABCD plan. We have embraced the new model as an effective way to make a wide range of materials available to researchers without buying all of them up front; we monitor its use regularly to avoid overspending. We have implemented a variety of DDA-like programs for streaming media, some major eBook publishing firms, and through our primary monographs vendor who allowed us to consolidate management of multiple eBook platforms. With an institutional profile capturing the scope of the university's research interests and automatically loading selected discovery records into our catalog, we feel confident we're meeting a wide range of needs with reduced intervention by staff while ensuring that the eBooks purchased are ones valuable to researchers.

Targeted Subject Areas — Finally, we have devoted a substantial portion of the new monies to support selected programs or research areas. The collection assessment librarian annually evaluates the support of several specific disciplines on a ten-year, rotating basis. Using these disciplinary collection assessments