Less Is More: Origins of University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Collection Assessment Plan

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All academic libraries are undergoing changes in collections and services with an emphasis on reorganization and assessment. For the first time in decades, the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point (UWSP) Albertson Library has started a weeding and collection assessment of our entire stacks print holdings. Our seven-floor Learning Resource Center has a pending renovation project slated for 2016. Space studies and potential redesigns will impact our holdings, as the Albertson Library recently joined with other academic service units (Career Services, Academic Advising, Tutoring, Disability Services, and Assistive Technology) to form the newly anointed division of Academic Success. Dutifully, we are working to weed the collection so it occupies less space, while at the same time striving to enhance the collection so that it provides more expansive densities and is up to date—addressing campuswide curricula changes and needs associated with program growth. We are 1.5 years into a 4 year project. Momentum is picking up, but it is too early to assess our efforts. My conference paper focuses on the formation of our collection assessment plan, while my poster session highlights numerous "less is more" perspectives associated with the ramifications of our collection assessment project.

The UWSP Albertson Library serves an undergraduate and graduate student total headcount of 9,643 and FTE of 8,777 students. Students attending UWSP are primarily Wisconsin residents, with an average age of 21.5, and approximately 40% of the student body lives on campus. The University Library serves a teaching faculty population of approximately 400, with a comparable number of noninstruction staff. In addition to the campus community, the University Library serves Central Wisconsin residents and makes resources available statewide through Interlibrary Loan and Universal Borrowing. The Albertson Library is a vital instruction and information resource for the University. From the mission statement of the Library:

> The mission of the University Library is to provide users with information and access to information in support of scholarly activity and research, student learning, teaching excellence, and curricular development.

In line with our mission, our Collection Assessment Project not only involves weeding but will provide the opportunity to improve our core collection, address curricula changes and areas of academic program growth, augment unique subject niches, and identify related resource needs.

Prior to 2012, the Library had engaged in a series of "small" weeding projects to serve different space needs and changing information resource formats. Projects were created in order to move critical functions to more accessible library space and to serve patron needs for more up-to-date media resources. Limited projects include: Weeding fiche and microfilm, audio tapes, software, and videotapes, plus conversion of VHS to DVD and microfiche/film to digital. Also, reference weeding, periodicals weeding, and serial title cancellations are ongoing. For the most part, those projects were done by unit coordinators, and decision points for those collections differ significantly than those associated with the Library's print monograph collection assessment and weeding project. The monograph collection assessment project is examining monograph items use and qualities. In addition to considerations for our own collection, we are addressing our responsibilities to the One Library, One Campus initiative in the context of all University of Wisconsin System Libraries. We are involved in systemwide collection development committee discussions on how many copies of any title are needed to serve the entire system, as well

as last copy retention discussions on where last copies of publications, regardless of use, should reside. Above all, we are assessing and addressing our own unique niches and audience.

The vital component of our collection assessment project is the importance of human intervention and communication. The Collection Assessment audience, which participates in our collection analysis and the many deselection and selection considerations, includes all UWSP faculty, their academic departments, related discipline and curriculum needs, and the wider UWSP community (staff, students, and community users). Collection assessment is occurring under the auspices of the Collection Development Coordinator with full participation by all subject librarians and ultimately interaction with campus faculty, each involved with the appropriate discipline areas of library collections being assessed. All potential items to be weeded are listed publicly online for a 3-month period of review and input by appropriate faculty. We developed a Collection Assessment LibGuide (http://libraryguides.uwsp.edu/ca) for hosting these lists, and, importantly, posting a full explanation of our collection assessment project. To keep faculty involved, we use both personal communications and a periodic campus "Message of the Day."

We are assessing our collection using Library of Congress Classifications while acknowledging that such classifications sometimes overlap in various academic disciplines. Each of our subject librarians acts as a liaison to various academic departments. In turn, each campus academic department has a library representative. In a qualitative respect, these two groups are active players and assessors, who work together assessing the quality of the collection and how well the collection supports library users, thus providing the opportunity to enhance our core collection, address curricula needs/changes and areas of academic program growth, and identify other library resource needs. Liaisons and library representatives serve as a direct focus group and bridge difficult determinations, facilitating communication with the wider campus community. We have already met together and will continue to do so

periodically at brown bag lunch meetings. One of our earliest findings is that our collection assessment project is actually enhancing our liaison/library representative relations and network. Within our Collection Development/ Acquisitions Budget we established a new Collection Development budget line: the Core Collection Fund to be used by selectors as the fund line for acquiring Resources for College Libraries (RCL)core titles as such are identified and aligned with gaps or other needs as identified. The use of Core Funds is proving valuable, not only in terms of filling collection gaps, but as a public relations tool, too. Library Acquisitions staff now run all library materials requests from academic departments through RCL. If a requested item appears as a core resource, then we use Core Funds rather than the department's annual library allocation, thus providing additional funding for department's other library needs.

Our approach is primarily collection-based, with elements of use-based assessment included, recognizing the importance of human interaction and intervention. Our collection-based quantitative approach includes collection size and growth, collection size/tier standards, departmental materials/acquisitions allocations, growth needs, and expenditures by subject areas. Use-based quantitative techniques include circulation statistics (charges) and in-house use statistics (browses) for our print holdings. Quantitative and qualitative techniques in our collection-centered approach also include list checking (comparing our collection with Core Lists) and the enlisted assistance of subject experts. Additional parameters of library collection assessment and how its collections are conceptualized include: (1) the depth and breadth of the collections, using the Library's Collection Development policy and ALA identification of collection level; (2) the importance of compliance with national bibliographies, such as RCL or others; and (3) the importance of consortia shared resources and their retention.

Other key elements of our collection-centered approach are the use of several e-tools, including: ShelfLister (Voyager inventory software), Bowker Book Analysis System (BBAS), Resources for

College Libraries (RCL), and Books In Print (BooksInPrint.com). BBAS is a powerful collection analysis tool that will assist our subject librarians by electronically comparing our library collection against RCL. RCL is a regularly updated national bibliographic listing of core discipline titles. RCL replaced the print serial and CD-ROM title *Books for College Libraries*—BCL III. Bowker notes that BBAS is a "customizable, self-service analysis tool that eliminates tedious manual comparison via customized reports for data cleansing and management, and instant identification of the gaps and overlaps in your collection." By leveraging the enriched data in Books In Print, BBAS enables a comprehensive look at our collection by comparing all editions and formats of each title. In turn, our librarians will make qualitative informed selection decisions. We will employ additional quantitative techniques as librarians work together on deselection decisions. As we divide Library of Congress Classifications among liaisons/library representatives we will consider circulation statistics (charges) and in-house use statistics (browses) by using ShelfList software that incorporates our automated library system (Voyager) usage stats. We established retention criteria for this project, which set the threshold of historical publication/acquisition date—recognizing age parameter for retention may be different for various disciplines; and usage threshold, how many charges or charges and browses, last transaction, over what period of time.

Appendix

RETENTION GUIDELINES*

Using Voyager Reports, Shelf List inventory, and BBAS/RCL

1.   Consider circulations (charges) and in-house use (browses) to be one and the same. Adding them together to formulate the "*Rule of 5*." (Librarians met and determined 5 as our general guideline.)

2.   If an item has 5 or more transactions (charges and browses), retain.

3.   If less than 5 transactions, if any transactions were during or after the year 2000, retain.

4.   If less than 5 transactions but the item was added to the collection during the year 2000 or later, retain.

5.   If in BBAS/RCL (Resources for College Libraries), retain.

6.   If the item does not meet any of the above criteria, check Universal Borrowing (UB) for last copy in UW System. If last copy, prefer retention.

7.   If the item does not meet the above criteria but is particularly relevant to Central Wisconsin, UW-SP, or the curriculum, prefer retention.

8.   Prefer retention of historically significant titles.

9.   For duplicate titles, apply the Rule of 5 to each copy. If neither copy passes the Rule of 5 tests, apply the numbers aggregately to the title. If it then passes, retain one copy of the item.

10. If multiple editions, apply the Rule of 5 to each edition. If older editions pass the Rule of 5, prefer retention; if each older edition fails the Rule of 5, prefer deselection. (Exceptions as in step 8, historically significant titles, prefer retention.)

MULTIPLE COPY PROCESS

(Using spreadsheet lists, we will not post multiple copies for review by academic dept. faculty)

1. Do not remove any duplicate titles prior to July 16, 2012. (Beginning date for workflow.)

2. Apply the Rule of 5 to each copy. If both copies pass the criteria, prefer retention of both. If only one copy meets the criteria, then retain only one copy. If neither copy meets the criteria, apply the numbers aggregately to the title. If the title then passes, retain one copy of the item.

3. If retaining only one copy, retain the best copy and note on the duplicates list which is to be retained.

4. Flag (mark) duplicate titles on list which are recommended for final discard.

5. Acquisitions staff will pull deselected/duplicate titles from stacks and route to cataloging for removal from Voyager.

6. Cataloging returns removed items to acquisitions for disposition either via book sale, offering to other libraries or nonprofit organizations or disposal in an environmentally responsible manner.

*These are working guidelines only. We will continue to discuss and evolve. Librarians will exercise professional judgment and knowledge of their subject areas when making collection development and weeding decisions. Retention threshold/parameters may be different for various disciplines and units, for example, age of books used in History as compared to Business.

As noted, titles which librarians have recommended for final discard are listed/posted via access-protected online, along with any information that has been gathering about them (RCL web, UB #'s in UW Sys and use statistics) for consideration by dept. faculty in the field. Last-Copy lists are shared with all other UW's.

Potential Discards:

1) If faculty wishes to keep the title, it is considered further and likely retained in the stacks.

2) If faculty agree to discard, the title is examined by librarians and library acquisitions to determine whether it should be:

   a) Book sale: set aside on separate truck if book looks to be of general interest. It will be sent to ongoing library book sale. In turn, book sale funds support the Library's Leisure Reading collection.

      i) Discard items designated for our book sale will then be sent to cataloging for deselection, discard processing (taken off our and the OCLC databases), and returned to acquisitions for our book sale.

   b) To other libraries: Collection Development librarian will contact them if a large set might be of interest to other libraries.

      i) Discarded for other libraries, whereupon it is sent to cataloging for deselection, taken off our and the OCLC databases, and put on a cart for Red Box delivery or other shipment.

   c) Global impact on literacy discards. The Library has a partnership with Better World Books (http://www.betterworldbooks.com/) and Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners of the Americas, Inc. (http://www.wisnic.org/), whereupon designated discards are sent to cataloging for deselection, taken off our and the OCLC databases, and then boxed for storage and pickup.

d) Discards: if book is in bad condition or is on a topic that is either out of date or not of interest to the general public. Put on a cart marked "discard," for recycling or landfill.

   i) Discarded for recycling or land fill, whereupon it is sent to cataloging for deselection, taken off our and the OCLC databases, and put on a cart for proper disposal.

Goals: Assess entire print monograph collection—general stacks holdings (LC classifications) includes 450,000-plus item holdings; weeding titles and multiple copies, select/acquire core titles by subject area to enhance collection, address curricula needs and discipline growth areas.

Timeline: Complete most subject areas by 2015–2017, which is start of pending design period for renovation of Learning Resource Center—home of library and other newly located academic services. We have 2-year contract (2012–2013, 2013–2014) with Bowker Book Analysis System (BBAS), Resources for College Libraries (RCL), and Books in Print (BIP), with pending renewal for an additional 2 years.

Evaluation of Project: Will evaluate and interpret results and discuss plan "as we go." We will do so at monthly Collection Development meetings, special working group sessions, topical meetings, other consultations, while periodically communicating analysis efforts and results to focus group. Ongoing communication will occur with the Provost/Vice Chancellor, Office of Academic Affairs, and the College Deans—calling for input, feedback, and support. Beginning in 2014, we will report assessment results annually in terms of: items withdrawn, items added; curricula addressed; subject areas that still need to be addressed; also including a budgetary analysis—with subject area expenditure; possible space gained/modified/opened; and changes is services, new information formats, and more. Our Library Outreach team and Marketing Librarian will facilitate communication to the campus as whole. As we mark our timeline and reach the year 2015 we will have incorporated regular collection evaluation processes into the Library's Collection Development Policy. Final results will be put together as a full report, posted online, and included as part of the Library Annual Report 2016.

Final considerations will include: Statistics on deselection cataloging stats—spot checking—deselection versus actual number of items removed; Faculty and Department feedback, input, plus surprises for us as evaluators and selectors. How did we do? How much did we remove? Which steps in the process worked? Which steps did not work as well? Which criteria and procedures are transferable to other deselection projects?

Poster session highlighted numerous *"Less is more"* perspectives.

LESS:

- Physical stacks

- Print item numbers

- Duplicate and multiple copies

- Unused/outdated/irrelevant holdings

MORE:

- Space for other services and stakeholders!

- Communication! (http://libraryguides.uwsp.edu/ca)

- New technologies

- Student retention

- Consortia sharing, "One system, one library initiative"

- Modernized collection development policy

- Currency of collection, support curricula changes

- Added core collection allocation fund

- Added first-year program allocation

- Added growth fund

- Developed e-books project (firm & DDA—YBP)

Use of assessment tools > quantitative and qualitative

- Compliance with national bibliographies and ACRL

- Four-point e-system collection assessment

  o *Bowker Book Analysis System* (BBAS): http://www.bowkersbookanalysis.com/

  o *Resources for College Libraries* (RCL): http://www.rclweb.net/

  o *Books In Print* (BIP)

  o *ShelfLister for inventory/usage*

Library outreach and audience

- Human intervention and communication

- Liaisons <> Academic department representatives

- Potential weeded items listed online

- Faculty interaction ("just say no")

Global impact on literacy > discards

- Partnership with Better World Books (http://www.betterworldbooks.com/)

- Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners of the Americas, Inc. (http://www.wisnic.org/)

Assessment of assessment

- How did we do?

- How much did we remove?

- Library unit collaboration

- Faculty input surprises

- Which criteria/procedures are transferable to other deselection projects