White Paper: Redefining Collection Development at University of North Texas Libraries

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Current Context

Like most academic libraries, University of North Texas (UNT) Libraries’ philosophy has been traditional—building a collection for the present and future. Librarians and faculty do their best to predict the needs of the entire user group, but must select specific resources to attempt to answer these needs. However, it has been well-established that only 20% of library materials account for 80% of use (Johnson, 2009; Kent, 1979), even when considering an electronic collection (Best, 2010). Traditional workflows and fund structures (which, by design, are rigid and sluggish) don’t allow us to respond easily to new needs or emerging technologies.

The UNT Libraries have also experienced significant funding decreases in the past several years. Our funding comes directly from a library fee paid by students per credit hour. Unfortunately, databases and journals experience an average annual 7% cost inflation and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Enrollment historically has not increased commensurate to inflation rates for library materials; this disparity translates to de facto materials budget cuts. In Fiscal Year 2012, we made significant cuts to the firm order budget. In Fiscal Year 2013, we eliminated duplicate formats and “nice to have” items that tangentially supported curriculum and research. Over Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015, we will experience a[n anticipated] 20% reduction in the collections budget. Is there a way we could make better use of the funds available to us?

Liaisons, faculty, and Collection Development (CD) personnel select monographs title-by-title to spend a small fund, allocated by department. Additionally, the CD department manages a complex Demand-Driven Acquisitions (DDA) program in which a wide range of titles are added to the catalog; some of these titles are then triggered for loans and purchases by being used by the patrons. Serials, electronic resources, and standing orders are less flexible, but can be purchased by the liaison at the expense of firm order monograph funds. We are working to integrate Open Access materials, media, and data acquisitions into our overall collection development.

Our current method of title-by-title selection from individual department funds is increasingly cumbersome. Overwhelming academic output and limited resources make it impossible to accurately predict and fulfill user needs on a title-by-title basis. Selection of specific materials excludes other materials, effectively denying users access to needed items. In other words, as selectors deplete their allotted budgets on specific items, the "pool" of materials available to our researchers shrinks; eventually, the library cannot purchase needed items but must find alternate means of access such as interlibrary loan. Selector bias has also negatively influenced collection balance. Traditional subject funds create artificial barriers between increasingly interdisciplinary areas, causing gaps in the collection; likewise, they inhibit liaison relationship-building and collaboration. Increasingly technical and complex vendor models and relationships obstruct selection activities, since liaisons are not able to evaluate the added acquisitions concerns that now accompany selection (see Appendix A for a brief list of sample concerns). These new concerns include contractual and licensing obligations, usability concerns, ease of management, and flexibility. Many of these have been created or intensified by new business models and digital delivery.
Proposal: Redefine Collection Development Philosophy

Our team believes UNT Libraries should redefine the purpose of the collection, and the way we view our mission, to meet current users’ needs, take advantage of emerging models, and create a sustainable, holistic, and flexible CD plan within budget constraints.

We envision a new and innovative approach to collection development—one where we see the collection as a service rather than an assemblage of items. General collections1 are not an end unto themselves: they are a means to an end, which is an excellent user experience. We should "[c]onsider what a collection does rather than what a collection is," (Horava, 2010). The collections service, just one of many that UNT Libraries provides, can be combined with other services to serve the needs of UNT’s teaching and research. “Collection building” may no longer be a good description of what we do; instead, we provide information accessibility by matching up information content with the people who seek it (Pritchard, 2008).

To this end, we should refocus our energies on the needs of current users and away from the potential “someday” user. We recommend shifting our CD emphasis from a “just in case” collection to a “just in time” (JIT) service. UNT Libraries has made a progressive decision to implement electronic-format-preferred in order to broaden access and discoverability. The JIT model continues and complements this effort and is the most effective way for us to continue to provide our constituency with the most useful set of resources. The JIT model can also provide timely and efficient access to areas not well-served by electronic resources. Just as with previous initiatives such as offsite storage, a JIT model means the library may not be able to provide immediate access to as many physical items as in the past. However, UNT Libraries will continue to provide patrons with access to the available universe of scholarly research, and the JIT model will make the discovery of these resources vastly easier.

Additionally, we predict that agility and flexibility will become increasingly important. The long-term focus of our traditional budgeting and selecting process does not effectively serve rapidly changing user needs and new institutional directions. This leads us to conclude that we should no longer use budgeting as the primary or only method to design a balanced collection. We believe that the emerging model for academic libraries will be a Collection Development philosophy based on access rather than on budgets. Focusing on access also leads us to question whether “balancing” the collection remains a relevant approach. With the availability of new technological tools and online materials, CD is no longer a zero-sum game.

By re-creating our collections into an access-based, JIT service and using broad, flexible funds, we will be able to provide not only an excellent user experience, but also provide access to a wider scope and depth of materials. Gaps previously caused by specific selection or by selector bias will be reduced and eventually eliminated. All item types and formats will be combined into a holistic plan, so that all users will have access to what they need, when they need it.

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1 Access-based collecting may not be appropriate for special collections and comprehensive collections. At UNT currently, Music is considered a comprehensive collection; Government Documents, Special Collections and Archives are considered special collections. Access-based collecting is appropriate for units like the Discovery Park Library and the Media Library because they are functionally general collections.
Implementation

Goals of CD as a Access-Based, JIT Service
- Create a service that provides an excellent user experience
- Provide access and discoverability to collections that respond nimbly at point-of-need
- Transform librarian and faculty involvement from title selection to big-picture design
- Apply new technologies to the wise stewardship of funding
- Increase collaboration both internally and externally
- Create sustainable, flexible workflows and policies

Iterative, User-Centered Design Model
Traditionally, CD goals and their implementation were contained in the same step—annual budgeting. We propose moving to an iterative, user-centered design model of CD planning and implementation. Iterative design is a cycle wherein we design, implement changes, test the results, and then refine the design. The design would be testable and the assessment frequent and user-centered. Redesign would result in a flexible, agile collection geared toward the needs of current users.

What Does Iterative CD Design Look Like?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Implement</th>
<th>Assess</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CD statements by department</td>
<td>Purchasing and leasing new materials</td>
<td>Subjective, goal-based assessments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall CD Policy</td>
<td>Purchasing frontlist or backlist ebook packages</td>
<td>Usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New fund structure</td>
<td>Revising DDA profile</td>
<td>ILL requests</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Add/remove titles in DDA pool</td>
<td>Purchase requests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adjust DDA triggers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increasing/decreasing mediation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Set aside InterLibrary Loan (ILL) funding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marketing and Teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
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</table>

Holistic Design
We begin with a holistic design for each program that asks “What does a successful collection look like?” This would be developed in collaboration with CD personnel, liaison(s) and departmental representative(s). We will consider several criteria, such as program output, accreditation concerns, and degree level. See Appendix B for a sample document. Moreover, this question will be answered for each discipline by a mix of formats, sources, and acquisitions methods that is custom-designed to suit the needs of those specific faculty and students. Open Access, streaming media, repositories, consortial

2 Marketing and teaching could include: promotion of underused resources; library instruction; soliciting suggestions and feedback from faculty. Collection Management will have a support role in marketing and teaching.
purchases, and other non-traditional access will become fully integrated parts of our collection development, alongside purchasing and leasing. It will also include non-traditional publishing outputs, like data sets and grey literature (unpublished documents such as reports, theses and dissertations, and proceedings).

Robust, Targeted Assessment
Traditionally, the test of CD success was merely whether the funds were expended; use data was analyzed months or years later. We propose that we redefine the question we’re asking. Instead of the traditional budget- and item-focused questions “How many items did we buy?” or “How much money did we spend?,” we should ask “Does the department or subject area have access to what they need?” Answering this question will involve combining subjective and objective data to paint a picture of the extent to which users’ needs are fulfilled. Using the design and evaluation tool shown in Appendix B, we would conduct a rubric-like assessment with liaisons and patrons. Additionally, data about usage, ILL statistics, and holdings would be considered. Specific metrics, both qualitative and quantitative, will be developed. Collection assessment will be standardized and simplified such that it can be conducted frequently.

JIT as Preferred General Collection Development Model
In a JIT model, DDA will become our basic means of providing access to general collection items. When selecting from a large pool of materials with a very limited budget, traditionally it has only been possible to buy specific books. DDA allows us to open up access to a wide, appropriate selection from which the users can choose the exact materials they need. JIT models can be applied across format and item type (see chart, below). Although JIT methods would be preferred, we would still use Just-In-Case acquisition methods as appropriate.

Proposed Methods of Access to Various Types of Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Just-in-Time</th>
<th>Just-in-Case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Journal articles</strong></td>
<td>Get-It-Now</td>
<td>Subscription</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pay-Per-View</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ILL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Books</strong></td>
<td>DDA</td>
<td>Purchase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ILL</td>
<td>Lease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Short-Term Loan</td>
<td>Approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Databases</strong></td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Subscription</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Media</strong></td>
<td>Docuseek, other</td>
<td>Purchase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>potential products</td>
<td>Subscription</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ILL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data</strong></td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Purchase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Subscription</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Tools</strong></td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Purchase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Subscription</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since WorldCat is discoverable via Summon, ILL also becomes a de facto JIT mechanism. We also recommend funding a plan wherein ILL requests would trigger purchases of electronic and print items that meet certain criteria. With monographs, our goal is to re-design the profile such that most faculty requests would be preemptively and automatically offered via the catalog. We estimate that about 35% of DDA funding will be spent on access, and the rest will be used for purchasing. Adjustments to the DDA profile will be made as we assess ILL requests from students, faculty and librarians for access to specific titles. We also propose funding additional JIT models--specifically increased ILL borrowing and rapidity as needed, as well as Pay-Per-View. We will also work with vendors to create new, customized products to meet our needs.

Flexible fund structure
Good stewardship compels us to explore new technologies and models to support the needs of our patrons, even if our budget is not ideal. A JIT model will offer much wider access than traditional purchasing, while offering fine control over expenditures. In order to facilitate interdisciplinary access and to take advantage of new acquisitions models, we should revamp the existing fund structure. The existing small funds contribute to gaps in interdisciplinary access and their small size makes them difficult to manage. We need a fund structure that allows for collaboration, flexibility, and supports more than just title-by-title or piecemeal selection.

We suggest a simple fund structure that would reflect the frequency with which we can make changes to a given item (this is aside from support or operational funds for items that support the collection, such as Sierra or RefWorks).³

- Ongoing—all ongoing costs such as journals, databases, and maintenance fees that can only be changed annually. Standing orders would be included here because they are not adjustable.
- Non-ongoing—all firm costs for items which can be adjusted within the fiscal year, including monographs, DDA, contributions to ILL, packages, etc. Approval plans would be included here because they are adjustable.

Specific funding targets for monographs would be developed in the planning discussion for each discipline. Special attention will be paid to setting aside funds for further adjustments throughout the year. Rather than having to turn down professors’ requests for curricular support as the year progresses and funds become scarce, we anticipate granting access to all appropriate requests in concordance with the collection development policy.

### Examples of Other Libraries’ Models

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>UTA libraries is implementing mixed-format DDA and closer integration with ILL—see email from Peter Zhang at University of Texas Arlington to Sian Brannon at University of North Texas (Zhang, 2013)—see <a href="#">Appendix C</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Texas A&amp;M created 5 funds based on approval, firm, and larger-sized purchases (VanDuinkerken et al, 2009).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>UNC Chapel Hill created 5 funds based on broad disciplinary areas (Michalak, 2012).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>NYU has had a frustrating experience managing a complex ebook purchasing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

³ HEEF funds will be kept separate.
Benefits

Reporting
The existing fund structure also serves a reporting function. However, it is limited in that it allows documentation of only one relationship between an item and its discipline; interdisciplinary resources must be assigned to a single department. We need a structure that will support a many-to-many relationship between disciplines and materials. Additionally, the current method of indicating multiple pieces of information (format, ordering method, and discipline) via a single field (the fund code) does not adhere to database maintenance best practices. Order record fields will be used to indicate these important aspects, and Sierra’s reporting functions will be used to create complex, real-time reports.

Increased Frequency of Action
Traditional structures only allow for change on an annual basis. With this new system, we can quickly shift priorities as we assess. Actions can be taken on a more frequent basis as needed, such as adjusting the amount of money supporting a particular discipline or changing the DDA profile. We will identify assessment and implementation activities that need to take place on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis. This will allow for a nimble, evidence-based collection that can respond to needs as they are identified.

Increased Collaboration
In order to implement these ideas, it is critical that we increase collaboration and collegiality between library units. CD needs to continue to strengthen our relationship with Public Services and Special Collections personnel. Although these two groups know about and care about different aspects of library services, we need both perspectives in order to provide an excellent collection. This will require time, trust, and transparency, along with careful coordination of CD activities. Some liaisons will likely need increased support and assistance. Likewise, non-traditional formats and acquisition/collection methods should be part of the holistic plan; the Media Library and the Repositories would be likely collaborators.

Clear Communication and Transparency
Liaisons and faculty need to participate in the design and application of this philosophy. Governing documents such as the Operational Plan, overall Collection Development Policy and the Liaison Workgroup Charge will need to be edited to reflect changes.

Time Frame
Due to the complexity of this model, and the fact that we will be pioneering a model not yet well-established, we propose that FY 15 be considered a pilot year. We will gather feedback and aim to establish a more firm set of policies and procedures for FY 16.
Challenges

- **Immature products and models.** Academic libraries have reported problems with managing DDA programs and mixed-format plans. DDA best practices are still in development. We will work with our vendors to create standardized and workable solutions.

- **No one model to follow.** Although a few other academic libraries have pioneered parts of these ideas, there is no single model available for us to follow. We will step into a leadership role to create a new and customized our program to suit our particular needs.

- **Concerns about limitations of electronic format.** Electronic format brings with it concerns about accessibility, usability, preservation, and Digital Rights Management. A comprehensive and very thorough review is needed as a long-term project.

- **Print-to-electronic time lag.** Publishers do not release simultaneous electronic versions of all academic works (reported percentages vary, and publishers claim its numbers are increasing). This complicates DDA program management. We will need to create a set of policies and procedures regarding acceptable wait times and duplicates, probably by subject and publisher.

- **Changes in job duties.** The ideas contained in this paper will cause a shift in responsibilities for many employees across the library. Liaisons’ selection duties will require much more collaboration and less control over individual titles. CD personnel will have a closer, more collaborative relationship with ILL. The focus and nature of the CD work will change—more oversight, more assessment, and more collaboration. Staff members in particular would need to be flexible and take on new and different tasks.

- **Obtaining buy-in.** We should expect thorough questioning from a variety of stakeholders. Across all groups, there will be those who fundamentally disagree with this philosophy. While we appreciate the idea of library as storehouse of all information, it is a luxury we no longer can afford. This model will enable us to give access to a wider pool of content than we can afford to purchase; at the same time it will allow us to purchase those things that are critical to the support of teaching and research at UNT. We can expect disagreement from those who, rightly or wrongly, understand volume count and ownership to be critical to success for Tier One, ARL, etc. We will still be purchasing and adding to those counts as our budget allows, but we will be changing the method of how we select what is purchased. Liaisons and faculty will be concerned about not having immediate access to materials, but in actuality this plan gives more immediate access to a wider range of information than we currently provide. For those things that are not immediately accessible, we anticipate that with ever-increasing use of technology the delay in access will be even shorter and more cost effective than with our current purchasing and ILL processes. In essence, this idea removes title-level control from a group of people who have enjoyed it for many years and who have taken ownership over this portion of the library’s budget. We will work with faculty to develop an understanding of the new wider universe of access and how they will take an active role in defining that universe.
Appendix A: Examples of Added Acquisitions Concerns

- licensing and contractual terms, limitations, and obligations
- special pricing considerations, including discounts for retaining or canceling paper subscriptions, restrictions on cancellations, and discounts for consortial purchase
- completeness (if the e-version of a print resource, is the same content provided?)
- currency (the speed with which e-content is added or updated)
- ability to select and deselect individual titles or other content subsets, if offering is a package deal offered by an aggregator or publisher
- local service implications
- compatibility with link resolvers, bibliographic and citation management software, and course management software
- quality of end-user interface
- support for information transfer (output options)
- availability of data to measure use and effectiveness.
- response time
- vendor support and responsiveness
- availability of back files for genres such as e-journals
- publisher preservation arrangements
- permission to access purchased content if a subscription is canceled

(Johnson, 2009)
## Appendix B: Sample Design Goal and Evaluation Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject or program or interdisciplinary area</th>
<th>Degrees Awarded</th>
<th>Output and Graduates</th>
<th>Needs</th>
<th>Accreditation Requirements (including accrediting body and dates)</th>
<th>Peers</th>
<th>Scope or Breadth</th>
<th>Depth</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Permanence or Retention</th>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Formats Collected</th>
<th>Geographical Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discipline X</td>
<td>BS, MS, PhD</td>
<td>High level of faculty output; 100 graduates last year</td>
<td>High level of journal use by faculty; small number of textbooks used by undergraduates</td>
<td>Must demonstrate access to history of X collection</td>
<td>LSU, OSU, UNO, UC-Santa Barbara</td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Need deep historical collection</td>
<td>Keep for all time</td>
<td>English only</td>
<td>Textual, AV; tangible preferred due to images</td>
<td>Global</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline Y</td>
<td>BS</td>
<td>Low level of faculty output; 10 graduates last year</td>
<td>Mostly standard undergraduate monographs; new editions needed frequently</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>TAMU, KSU, Notre Dame</td>
<td>Call number range: S, SB</td>
<td>Gen-AC</td>
<td>Need depth only within last 5 years</td>
<td>Weed within 10 years</td>
<td>English, French, Vietnamese</td>
<td>Textual, AV, data; either tangible or online OK</td>
<td>Concentrated on USA and Vietnam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C: Email from Peter Zhang at University of Texas Arlington to Sian Brannon at University of North Texas

UTA Libraries engaged in a re-organization in July. Acquisition, Metadata, ILL, Reserves, Stacks, and retrieval services are combined into one department - Access and Discovery. Our collection development model is moving away from Librarian selection to Patron-driven acquisition. We have stopped all approval books shipments and started implementing DDA, which will later include print titles. We have shortened ILL turn-around time and instituted ILL books on-demand where we will purchase the books if we cannot fulfill them quickly through ILL.

Now all librarians and Archivists at UTA Libraries, with few exceptions, have responsibilities in knowledge management. That is changed from 5 Content Librarians plus the department head in Acquisition to around 45 liaisons plus 4 staff in Access and Discovery. We are in the process creating a new cross-departmental mechanism for resource reviews and evaluations where liaisons and staff in Access and Discovery work collaboratively in collection development. We are also implementing an ERM and an assessment software from Serials Solutions. These effort will help us in better streamlining workflow and resource management.

New Org. chart: http://libstaff.uta.edu/orgchart.htm

(P. Zhang, 2013)
Resources


http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01930820802231492

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.lcats.2009.01.001

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.lcats.2013.03.001