TSD: Collection Development Round Table Discussion

**How do you use professional judgment from faulty in collection development and weeding?**

There is often an emotional reaction to weeding from both faulty and library staff. It is helpful to talk to department chairs to determine what is being taught and compare findings against the age and breadth of that subject in the library’s collection. Often faculty do not want to make decisions regarding the library collection. PGCC chose to avoid a rigid approach and separated weeding and inventory. Weeding is done by librarians on a monthly basis. Inventory is conducted by student workers every 5-10 years. Before this new system was implemented, PGCC had not weeded in 55 years.

During Goucher’s recent weeding project, books were discovered with publication dates from the 1880s. Goucher chose to bind periodicals. Their binding has been a work in progress since 2007. They have been targeting short runs and periodicals they no longer carry. The project involved all library staff. Through this, they were able to downsize and into the new library building. From this project, Goucher suggests you can make the biggest downsizing impact in your collection by weeding periodicals and reference.

**How do you instruct staff in weeding who have never done so?**

The Chicago Seminary Library’s approach to weeding was to place all weeding candidate items on a clearly marked shelf where librarians and faculty were able to evaluate them. In addition, they created a code to mark the inside back cover to denote when the book was last reviewed as item to keep from the last weeding. The partnership of staff and faulty in the project created an “ownership” of the collection. The process was effective, but cumbersome and slow.

Academic and public library needs in weeding and collection development can very different. In academic consortiums, if your library had the last copy in OCLC you were not allowed to weed that book. Libraries in Illinois conducted routine “last book” events in an effort to re-home older last copies in state, special or archival collections.

Libraries agreed that usage improved after weeding.

Electronic collection development has been stressed more and more, meaning the print collection is sometimes neglected.

OCLC offers Bibliographic notification to subscribers. This service automatically sends libraries complete and updated records which can be ordered to library specifications.

Current staff do inherit problems from previous staff.

**How are libraries handling weeding in regards to E-books and Consortiums?**

If a library has an electronic copy of an item, do they feel the need to continue to keep the print?
In consortiums, ebooks show up in all consortiums’ catalogs, but cannot be used by all libraries. Some colleges offer the Maryland State Power Card to allow students access to these ebooks, but it does present another step for patrons trying to obtain and electric resource.

Most often, if someone in a consortium owns the print and the library has access to the ebook, the library weeds their own print copy.

The current trend is leaning toward shared catalogs and consortiums. This allows libraries to weed their own collections and use inter library loan to supplement their collection. Libraries in proximity use a courier service and bypass MILO in the interest of speed.

No one in the present group has set up a formal consortium weeding.

Some patrons search using the consortia, only to find it is not at their home library. They choose not to use that item because they would prefer instant gratification or need it for a project “due tomorrow”. Other patrons are thrilled at the at the expanded consortia offerings and overtax the system, ordering 50 items, choosing 2 for their particular project and sending the rest back. This can become expensive for the library and consortia as a whole. To reduce expense, some libraries have moved to a floating collection.

Eresources have allowed libraries to be freer. Science faculty are moving toward eresources, and now order very few books. Eresources allowed them to access thousand of materials they could never have afforded in print.

**How far should print collections be reduced? What are the risks?**

Some students/faculty only want resources in print. College libraries are working on training student body and faculty on using electronic resources.

Reducing print collections can also be risky. One library recycled a physical periodical title in favor of the electronic version. Shortly thereafter, they lost funding for electronic access to the periodical and therefore lost their entire collection of that periodical.

In weeding, it helps to create a database of each year, recording the each collection that is weeded, creating an ongoing history for the library.

Training students to participate in usage counts are important. In-house use is on the rise, but are not currently helping circ stats. Professors will often photocopy or PFD entire chapters or articles for class review and never give credit to the circulation of that item. Librarians often cancel subscriptions to periodicals without ever knowing that item was used. Photocopying is also copyright infringement, of which librarians are often caught in the middle.

Goucher offers marketing of Ebooks to students; on how to use and download electronic sources. Staff and faculty training is offered as well. The training is being well received and getting decent participation. Goucher also has professor/faculty driven acquisitions, which leaves holes in the collection.

**How do libraries handle donations/gifts?**
Donations in good condition often go to the library book sale/friends group to raise money for the library. When items are chosen to be added to the library collection cataloging and processing must be taken into consideration for “free” gifts. Often patrons who donate and expect the item to be added to library are unaware of this hidden cost. Half of gifts to the library did not circulate at all. Some libraries require that a form be filled out before items can be donated. Other libraries only accept books a few times a year. Some libraries will also choose to visit the estates of alumni to accept donations.