

# LSC 503: COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

SPRING, ~~2012~~

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**Course description:** Introduction to the process of collection building and management of resources including various formats and subjects for libraries or information centers. Community assessment, formulation of policies, procedures, and evaluation methods.

**Course dates:** January 23 – April 30, 2011

**Location:** Internet course; face-to-face meetings at URI January 29, March 12, April 30.

**Text:** Johnson, P. (2009). *Fundamentals of Collection Development and Management*. Chicago: ALA. 978-0-8389-0972-0.

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## COURSE GOALS

This course introduces and emphasizes content in support of the Information Resources section of the [GSLIS educational outcomes](#), stating that graduates of GSLIS will be prepared to create and manage collections of print, non-print, and electronic resources, and specifically will:

- 2a. Demonstrate understanding of concepts and issues related to the lifecycle of recorded information and knowledge, from creation through acquisition, storage, archiving, and disposition.
- 2b. Apply knowledge of concepts, issues, and methods of collection management flexibly to the evaluation, accession, storing, preserving, conserving, disseminating of information in all media.
- 2c. Demonstrate ability to balance user access to purchased, leased, and licensed resources, whether acquired by an individual institution or through consortial agreements.

Other outcomes will be reinforced here, including:

1. Foundations of the Profession: “Graduates will be prepared to apply professional values, ethics, and thinking to present and future information services.” (Intellectual freedom is one of the central ethical concerns to be considered in this course.)
4. Technological Knowledge and Skills: “Graduates will be prepared to apply appropriate technology to create effective interactions between recorded knowledge and its users.” (Interactions between librarians and vendors also involve technology.)
6. Research: “Graduates will be prepared to understand, enrich, and disseminate the professional knowledge base of our field.” (Collection evaluation draws on research skills.)
8. Administration and Management: “Graduates will be prepared to manage library and information services for the benefit of the communities served.” (From community analysis to the organization of technical services in different types of libraries, administration and management skills support effective collection development.)

## COURSE OBJECTIVES AND EVALUATION

Students will meet course goals through a combination of reading, participation in class discussion and exercises, and other assignments.

- [Collection Development Assignment, Part I: Policy Evaluation](#) (20)
- [Collection Development Assignment, Part II: Weeding](#) (20)
- [Collection Development Assignment, Part III: Selection](#) (20)
- [Facilitating Sakai Discussion](#) (15)
- [Sakai Discussion](#) (10)
- [Interviewing a Librarian](#) (15)

## COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT ASSIGNMENT, GENERAL

The majority of your assignments will revolve around a simulated Collection Development and Weeding project in a library of your choice. Your work will be easier if you select a real library. (You may use false names for both library and community if you wish, but please use genuine figures wherever available.)

The three parts of this assignment, taken together, will comprise a collection development portfolio. With each new section, you should resubmit previous sections. Rewriting on the basis of feedback is allowed; so is rewriting for the sake of flow between sections. Rewriting of Parts I and II may result in raised grades for those sections when they are resubmitted with Part III, assuming that you submit on time.

### COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT ASSIGNMENT, PART I: POLICY EVALUATION

20 PTS.

For the first step of this assignment, you need two things: 1) an overview of a library – focusing especially on its mission, its users, and how users are served – and 2) its collection policy. Your job is to evaluate the policy in a 4-5 page paper, assess the policy.

First, begin your paper with a quick description of your library. Include library type (public, academic, school, special, etc), size of library (sq. ft), size of collection, annual library budget, funding per capita, annual materials budget, and any other details that will give us a clear picture. Most important: the population served and the library’s mission. (Again, you do not need to identify your library, but please use actual figures. Real-life constraints

matter). You can learn much of what you need from the websites of your library and its parent organization (town, university, or corporation).

Hint: expedite. If you can't find the information you need about your own chosen library, look for quick substitutes. Possible sources:

- Public libraries: The American FactFinder at <http://www.census.gov/> is a good source for quick census data. Groups like the Annie E. Casey Foundation (<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/>) and the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation (<http://www.riedc.com/>) give more qualitative information about communities. The Institute for Museum and Library Services links to national survey data on public libraries: <http://harvester.census.gov/imls/pubs/pls/index.asp>. The RI Office for Library and Information Service administers federal grants and state aid to public libraries, and publishes at least partial budget figures at <http://www.olis.ri.gov/grants/>.
- Academic libraries: The university website should give you numbers of faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates, and will also be a help in identifying specific academic programs. If your academic library has completed a LibQUAL+ analysis, you may find it either at <http://www.libqual.org/home> or by searching the university site. The National Council for Education Statistics links to national survey data on academic libraries: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/libraries/>.
- Special libraries: No meaningful national statistics, but useful research available at the Special Libraries Association site, <http://www.sla.org/>, etc. Review LIS literature for additional resources relevant to your specific type of library (law, health sciences, etc.).

Remember to cite your sources – and feel free to discuss the lack of sources if that's an issue. Use the information you find to create a picture of how your chosen collection is actually *used*. In order to evaluate any collection, look at how it supports user service – current and potential.

Second, outline a collection development policy. Use the one for your chosen library if possible. If your library does not make its foundational documents available online, search online to find the policy for a similar library. Include the policy as an appendix to your paper.

Hint: Finding the policy of a specific library is not the main point here. Don't spend too much time searching, let alone begging reluctant librarians. One place to find substitutes is <http://www.acqweb.org/>. On the left-hand menu, click "LIS Resources"; then scroll down and click on "Collection Development"; then scroll down again to "AcqWeb's Directory of Collection Policies on the Web."

In the context of the library's community and mission, state strengths and weakness of the collection policy as written. Describe in detail changes you recommend be made to the policy; explain and support your reasons.

Finally, based on your analysis of the library's mission, its policy (as amended by you), and the needs of its users, identify which subject area of the collection you will choose to develop. This can be a collection that already exists or one that you would like to add. Why did you choose this section? What is the size of the current collection in this subject area? Why is this important to your library?

Choose carefully:

- Library: Choose one that's accessible and of genuine interest to you. Be sure you will be able to visit this library, or a similar one, to view the collection for Parts II and III of this assignment. (If you are developing a new collection, you will choose another section for Part III).
- Collection area: Again, choose a subject area that's of genuine interest to you – but make sure it's also of genuine interest to your library's clientele, and a good fit for the mission. Look for areas where there are enough resources to support a meaningful project. You'll need to nominate at least 25 items for weeding; if you can find 25 items on the repair of vintage pipe organs, for instance, you have a really unusual collection.

This paper will be returned to you with suggestions and comments so you can continue with part II.

#### COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT ASSIGNMENT, PART II: WEEDING

20 PTS.

Visit your library and review its actual resources in the area you are developing. Choose an area which includes at least 100 items for your weeding and selection projects. Consider all the library's resources on the subject (monographs, serials, DVDs, databases, e-books, etc.) even if they are not shelved together; also, try to find out what's currently in circulation.

Write a 3-5 page paper in which you:

1. Briefly recap your library's service group, as described in your policy evaluation: Who uses your library, and what are their major information needs? Who else should use your library, and why don't they?
2. Describe the collection area you've chosen to weed and develop. Describe the approximate number of items currently held, as well as estimated average age, condition, formats, coverage, appropriateness (dated info, no longer of interest, etc). Emphasize the importance of this area to
  - a. the overall collection (e.g., the Congregational Library in Boston includes New England local and town histories; how do these serve the library's mission? If they duplicate materials held by the Boston Public Library, should they be weeded?), and
  - b. the population served (e.g., a public library YA collection includes many biographies of baseball heroes from the eighties and nineties; given the interests of local teens, what percentage of the collection should be devoted to baseball? What percentage should consist of books?)
3. Outline your goal for the collection area. Overall, how could it be developed to serve your public better? Does it need to be larger? smaller? updated? transferred to newer media?
4. Explain the criteria you will use for retaining or discarding individual items in this collection, based on a) the collection development policy, b) the needs of the library's community, and c) any external criteria you consider important (e.g., discipline-specific criteria for scholarly works). Are your criteria consistent with your amended collection development policy? If not, would you recommend adjusting the policy?

To accompany your paper, you will create an Excel spreadsheet, listing at least 20 actual items collection items that you examine and assess. The items may include books, periodicals, CDs, DVDs, online resources, and any other media relevant to the specific subject area you're developing. Examine books using the CREW and MUSTIE (or MUSTY) methods from class and your textbook; adapt as needed for non-print media.

If you are not already familiar with Excel, you can learn about it from Microsoft's support pages – <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/excel-help/excel-help-and-how-to-FX101814052.aspx?CTT=97> – or from many tutorials available online. URI's Instructional Technology unit has a training CD on Excel; look under "Office Productivity" at <http://www.uri.edu/its/teaching/selfpacedtraining.html>. IT also offers Computer Short Courses: <https://sakai.uri.edu/access/content/group/b36bf01a-c621-420e-933e-947e4464ab7f/ITS-Short-Course.html>.

Excel use in this class will be simple and basic. On row 1 of your worksheet, you will list column titles. Please use all the headings in the "FORMAT" illustration below; add more if necessary. On each following row, list variables (title, author, publication date, etc.) for just one of your items. When you save your work, give it a title like **503CollDev2\_MyName**. On the tab labelled Sheet1, right click and select "Rename" from the pop-up menu; change the name of Sheet1 to "Weeding." Some features of Excel that we will use: sort, filter, spell check.

FORMAT:

Title	Author	Pub. Date	Last circ. date (if available)	Format	Condition	Action (e.g., weeding, preservation, storage, etc.)	Rationale for action [adapt from MUSTIE]

#### COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT ASSIGNMENT, PART III: SELECTION

20 PTS.

Now, imagine that you have been given a budget to purchase or license new resources for your collection development section. A reasonable budget will vary with library type, but assume that you have enough to purchase at least twenty-five books in your area. You have broad discretion as to what media you purchase, and you will need to consider whether books are the best and most cost-effective resources available.

Write a 3-5 page paper in which you:

1. State your budget. (Estimate the average price of books in your area. An important source for this is the *Bowker Annual of Library and Book Trade Information*, and a quick literature review will turn up additional information (e.g., <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/publications/choice/apr11pricestudy.pdf>). Multiply by 25 to establish your budget.)
2. List your selection criteria. These should be carefully linked to the goal you defined in your previous (Weeding) paper, and of course to the library policy. Again, if your criteria are not consistent with your amended policy, how would you revise either the policy itself or the criteria to bring them into alignment? How does your revision improve the library's capacity for good service?
3. List your review sources, and why you chose to rely on them. Compare the different sources you used for print and non-print media, for items to be purchased or leased. Evaluate how well the sources met your needs (told you what you needed to know about each item).

4. Discuss the progress you have made toward a collection that meets community needs. What has been achieved? What remains to be done?

To accompany this paper, update your Excel workbook by filling in Sheet2 (which you can rename "Selection").

FORMAT:

Title	Author	Pub. Date	ISBN	Discounted price	Format	Review source	Rationale (use selection criteria)

Be realistic in your choices – you will be graded on appropriateness for addition to the collection.

#### FACILITATING SAKAI DISCUSSION

15 PTS.

You will be responsible for helping to guide class discussion one week between Week 3 and Week 12. (If there are more than ten students, some weeks may have two facilitators; if there are more than twenty students, three.) You may use any strategy to spur and facilitate discussion in a way that enhances your classmates' (and your own) learning. Suggestions:

- locate a recent (2005-2011) article on some aspect of the week's topic, and write a *brief* critique of it for your classmates (extra points if your article is more substantive than a two-page editorial; if it is research-based; if your critique is more evaluation than summary; and/or if you can do it effectively in less than 250 words)
- report on one or more valuable tools and resources related to the week's topic
- raise a discussion-worthy question about the week's topic

Surprise is also good!

#### SAKAI DISCUSSION

10 PTS.

Because this is an online class, I have to rely on your weekly participation to know that you are present and engaged. In addition to assigned readings from the textbook and the journal literature, you'll have my weekly "lectures" on the Wiki; I'll raise questions both within the "lectures" and in the weekly forums in an effort to goad you into participation. This doesn't mean that you have to answer every question I ask, laboriously and with the painful consciousness that somebody else already said what you wanted to say. A good discussion explores ideas and weighs evidence from different sources. If you're interested in an ongoing thread, add to it; if you find something new that will advance our understanding, start a new topic. You can also ask me (or anybody) for clarification of any confusing point.

We'll have virtual "guest speakers" as well, and I hope that if we have a guest whose specialty is right up your alley, you'll take advantage of the opportunity to ask them questions, too.

Meaningful participation in each week's discussion will be worth one point, which means this is an assignment where you can pick up a little extra credit. ("Meaningful" = on topic; more than "I agree with what she said.")

#### INTERVIEW WITH A LIBRARIAN

15 PTS.

For this assignment, you may choose a librarian from the library where you're doing your major course project or elsewhere. Your interviewee may choose to be anonymous.

Before you actually do the interview, the class as a whole will agree on an interview schedule – a set of questions to ask all our interviewees. Some that occur to me:

- How has technology changed the way you order books?
- What do you like most about the way your job has evolved in the past five years?
- How do you expect your library to change in the next five years?

But we will brainstorm at our first meeting, and agree on a set of questions by spring break (which is the week of March 21 this year). One thing to remember for time management: it takes twice as long to write down an interview as it does to conduct it.

#### COURSE POLICIES

**Attendance:** Three face-to-face sessions are scheduled; if you are prevented from attending, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor. Your attendance decisions will be made ethically, in the context of all your responsibilities, not just this course. There will be no individual make-up sessions for missed face-to-face meetings. The instructor's prepared notes will be available online; for the rest, what's missed is just missed.

**Incompletes:** An "Incomplete" may be negotiated if a student has earned a B or better on work completed at the time of requesting the incomplete, and if the cause is a documented incident or condition serious enough to justify the incomplete. The instructor is responsible for writing an explanatory letter to the Dean of the Graduate School. The instructor and student will agree on a date for the completion of remaining work; the student is responsible for completing the work within one calendar year of the posted Incomplete. See [University Manual 8.53.20-21](#) and the [Graduate Manual 10.40](#).

**Codes and policies of behavior:** To protect its faculty and students, the School fully subscribes to the University's codes, policies, and procedures on academic misconduct (including plagiarism, harassment, discrimination, etc.). To familiarize yourself with both your responsibilities and your protections, one starting point is the [University Manual, Appendix G](#).

**Accommodations for students with disabilities:** Any student with a documented disability is encouraged to contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to arrange for reasonable accommodations. The [Disability Services for Students](#) office (330 Memorial Union, 401-874-2098) is a valuable resource.

## CALENDAR

Date	Topics	Readings due	Assignments
<b>Week 1</b> <b>F2F*</b>	Collections and connections: Library ownership vs. access in the context of the publishing industry.	Johnson, <i>Fundamentals of Collection Development and Management</i> , 2d ed., Chapter 1 (No, of course you're not expected to have read it before class!)	In class: 30-minute essay, "What is your ideal library collection, and why?" Brainstorm session: Interview questions for librarians
Week 2	Policies and procedures. Responsibility for acquisitions & licensing in different types of libraries. Written policies.	Johnson, Chapters 1-3	Due: Choose your library; choose your date for facilitation
Week 3	Selection processes, tools, and criteria; developing collections.	Johnson, Chapter 4	
Week 4	Managing collections: weeding, storage, preservation, electronic access.	Johnson, Chapter 5	
Week 5	Visit your library		
Week 6	Vendors, jobbers, licensing, and contracts; digital commons.	Johnson, Chapter 4	Due: CD policy evaluation
<b>Week 7</b>	Marketing, Liaison, and Outreach Activities	Johnson, Chapter 6	Due: Weeding project
Week 8	Collection Analysis: Evaluation and Assessment	Johnson, Chapter 7	
Week 9	User studies. Public Libraries: Give 'em What They Want. New media and intellectual diversity.		
Week 10	Academic Libraries: Scholarly Communication. Intellectual property and copyright law.	Johnson, Chapter 9	Due: Selection project
Week 11	Administration of technical services (acquisitions, cataloging, circulation, etc.); patterns of responsibility		Due: Librarian interview
Week 12	Cooperative Collection Management: Consortia.	Johnson, Chapter 8	
<b>Week 13</b>	Going Forward: Issues for Future Collections		

\*F2F = Face to Face