



Rethinking, Relearning, Redesigning Collection Development

by Marianne Hebert (Potsdam)

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[SUNY Potsdam College Libraries](#) have been watching with great interest [some of the changes](#) that have been happening in collection development across SUNY and other academic libraries in the US. The idea of [patron-initiated purchases](#) at point-of-need appears to have great potential for building a more user oriented research collection--so we've decided to give it try. A new library director and a newly revised governance structure provided us with the opportunity to realize our vision.



Between May and June of 2010, the College Libraries Council suspended their bylaws and embarked on a project to revamp our governance and reporting structure. One of the outcomes of that restructuring was the creation of a new "Collection Building" team. The new team integrates the Interlibrary Loan and Acquisitions departments under the leadership of Collection Development Committee Chair, Marianne Hebert. The Collection Building Team includes staff members Tammy Gore from Acquisitions, and Glen Bogardus from Interlibrary Loan along with library faculty who serve on the Collection Development Committee.

June and July were spent relocating staff offices and equipment, and identifying additional office redesign needs. Before any changes to workflow are being considered, all three members of the Collection Building Team are participating in a cross training program to learn the current procedures in each functional area. This will enable staff to become knowledgeable and proficient in [ILLiad](#), ALEPH Acquisitions, gift management and other processing tasks. Early on it was realized that in order for the merged functions to work, everyone would need to be working with both ILLiad and ALEPH Acquisitions systems on a daily basis. Staff members from what was once separate Acquisitions and Interlibrary Loan departments will not only provide backup to each other, they will actually share work responsibilities across areas of Collection Building.

One of goals of the new team is to embrace patron-initiated collection development while continuing to maintain traditional faculty and librarian-initiated selection. Policies and processes will be developed that allow the team to make purchase decisions at the point of a patron's ILL request rather than borrow the item from another library. While librarians and classroom faculty will continue to be engaged in building the collections, it is expected that the patron-initiated requests will help to build a more timely and relevant collection for users, and hopefully stretch our collection building dollars.

The Seventh Annual
Information Delivery
Services (IDS)
Summer Conference!
Oswego, NY
August 3-4, 2010
Registration is closed. [View Conference Information](#)

In the very near future, the Collection Building team will be reviewing and

implementing some or all of [GIST, the Getting It System Toolkit](#) developed at [SUNY Geneseo](#). Towards that end, Collection Building staff will be attending the [August IDS Conference in Oswego](#). The rest of the summer and early Fall, will be spent exploring features of GIST, writing policies and revising and streamlining procedures.

It is acknowledged that major changes will need to be coordinated between public services and technical services in order for the patron initiated requests to work. Some issues to be ironed out include developing processes for users to submit monographic requests (aside from ILLiad), processes for rush cataloging (or not), and processes for tracking transactions and costs. The team will also be looking at methods to maximize efficiencies. We plan to continue our participation in the activities of the SUNY Comprehensive Colleges' Cooperative Collection Development (C4D) group and build our collections accordingly. Marketing will be an important tool to realize a successful implementation. We hope that classroom faculty and administrators will embrace the new plan and that users will appreciate the new model of service. We expect to see significant improvements to our collections and user services over the course of the next year, and beyond.



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