Guest Editorial: Collection Assessment in Libraries - A Special Issue Exploration

Collection assessment is a strategic tool that helps libraries remain dynamic, responsive, and impactful in their mission to serve their communities. It helps determine the strengths and weaknesses of the collection, informs decision making, and supports institutional goals by ensuring that the library aligns with the institution's curriculum and research priorities. In response to technological advancements, changing user expectations, and the growth of digital resources, collection assessment is evolving. This special issue embarks on an exploration of various collection assessment topics, including a quantitative approach to evaluate the Big Deal, evaluation of a PDA pilot program to address equity and diversity in academic library acquisitions, strategic collaborations between area studies and special collections, transforming collection development using open repositories, and exploring institutional spending on open access by building a Power BI visualization. Each article in this special issue enhances our understanding of collection assessment with regard to collections data, methodologies, and its potential impact on collections budget.

Breaking up the Big Deal? A quantitative approach

Our first piece, by Vaillancourt and Creelman, explores the methodology used to assess the value of a "Big Deal" package during inter-institutional negotiations in 2020/21. Analysis was performed primarily with quantitative factors, including usage, cost, cost per use, and faculty citations. After identifying the highest and lowest performing journal titles in these categories, librarians were able to eliminate them easily from further deliberation. Weighted scoring was then applied to moderately performing titles. Weighting identified additional titles that could be sorted by specific factors, leaving a smaller pool for title-by-title deliberation performed by a team of librarians and a final pool of "must have" titles to be presented to library stakeholders for review and to inform decision-making. Ultimately, the analysis helped clarify evaluative values and informed the decision to retain the "Big Deal" in favor of alternative options that would have significantly reduced access to content used by our research community.

Evaluation of a PDA Pilot Program to Address Equity and Diversity in Academic Library Acquisitions

Kennedy et al. explored the methodology of transitioning acquisition workflows, the rationale behind adopting a user-centric approach, and the implications of this model on aligning library collections with the diverse needs of the campus community.Their analysis draws on data collected during the pilot to offer insights into best practices for evolving library acquisition strategies in

response to shifting user expectations and campus diversity in an environment of organizational constraints.

Unlocking the Vault: Strategic Collaborations between Area Studies and Special Collections

In this article, Mowry and Wang advocate for enhanced collaboration between special collections and area studies librarians to improve access and increase use of these resources. It examines the challenges with cataloging and utilization of Chinese materials and proposes initiatives, including enriched public programming, curated exhibitions, targeted instructional sessions, and increased promotional efforts.The article underscores the significance of these initiatives in fully leveraging special collections and area studies, fostering the collection's utilization, study, and appreciation by both local and global audiences.

The Open Access Effect: Transforming Collection Development Using Open Repositories

Oladokun et. al examine the impact of the Open Access (OA) movement on academic library collection development, focusing on open repositories. Using a systematic literature review, it highlights the growth of OA journals and their role in enhancing accessibility, democratizing knowledge, and enabling libraries to reallocate funds. While OA fosters collaboration and equitable information sharing, challenges like sustainability, quality control, and digital preservation remain. Future directions include improving interoperability, embracing new technologies, and promoting inclusivity, open science, and community engagement.

Open Secrets: Exploring Institutional Spending on Open Access

Harlin and Rigby point out that while extensive literature exists on Open Access (OA) spending within libraries, less attention has been given to assessing expenditures across institutions. Fragmented OA investments may lead to suboptimal resource use for Article Processing Charges (APCs). This article outlines how University of Oregon Libraries developed a Power BI model to visualize OA spending and guide researchers in selecting publication venues based on APCs and impact metrics.

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December 2024