

There's Nothing to Fear but Fear Itself... and Negative Faculty Feedback!

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Who are we and how did we get here?



Renovation Background

- Project began 2013; still pending when new library director was hired in 2016
- Also in 2016 new Vice President Academic Affairs and President announces retirement
- Project on hold

Laying the Groundwork

- Instituted a liaison program
- wrote a collection development policy

New President hired 2017!

- Fundraising complete; library renovation is full steam ahead!
- Blueprints created in 2013, most people who created them no longer here, so we were able to change them a little
 - When it came to the collection we still needed to remove about a third to accommodate the collaborative study space and open floor plan that we wanted.

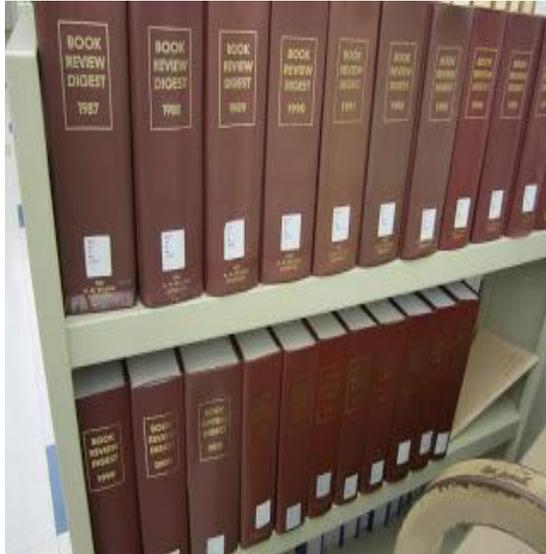
Atmosphere on campus

- HIGH anxiety from faculty
 - There had not been a deep weed or systematic weeding of our collection before
 - Faculty had not had much input into the renovation plans

We needed to proceed carefully!

If you were given this project, where
would you start?

Low-hanging Fruit?



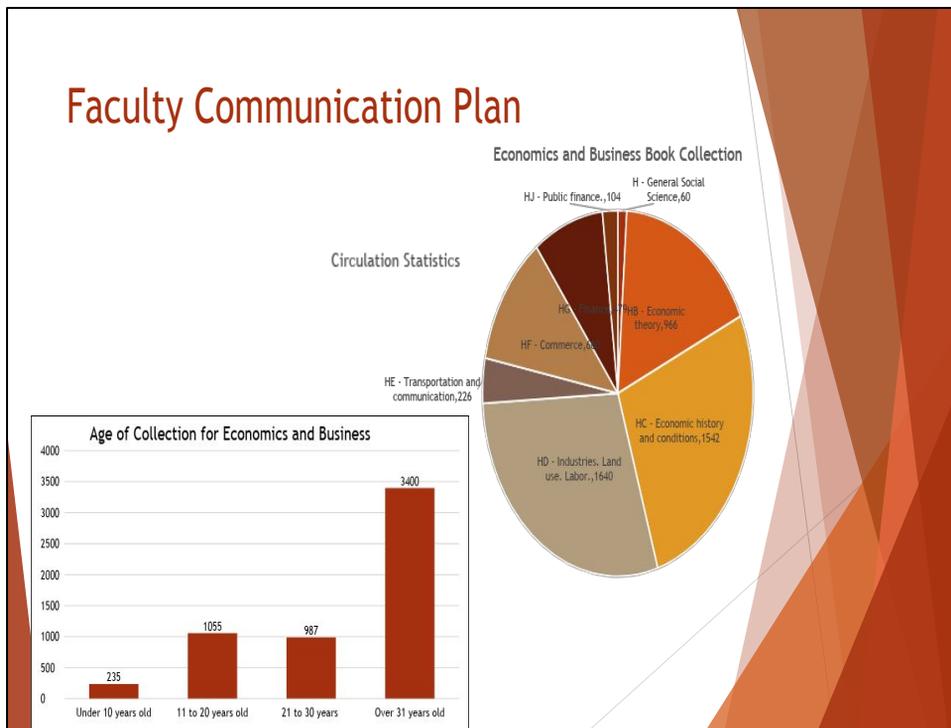
How did we start?

- Collect information
 - Bought books on weeding, attended a Carterette webinar, read journal articles about it, completed an online asynchronous class on collection assessment
- Decided to start with “low-hanging fruit”, which we defined as the following areas:
 - Vinyl records
 - Used new liaison program to talk to Music faculty they were not using and were fine with us getting rid of the entire collection
 - Jerry’s Records in Pittsburgh took the entire collection
 - VHS tapes
 - Our Acquisitions Assistant and Student Workers spent a summer taking all the VHS out of our Video Collection and determining which needed to be replaced with DVDs and which could be discarded
 - Print Reference
 - Collection Development Policy stated we were moving towards electronic reference and would avoid duplication
 - We knew anecdotally that students aren’t using the print reference section; no circ stats to back it up since they don’t circulate
- Low-Hanging Fruit turned out to be hard to harvest in Print Reference
 - No circ stats meant going through the shelves book by book looking at

- subject duplication, comparing to titles in GVRL and Credo, age, condition, curriculum relevancy, etc.
- We wanted to let faculty know so we e-mailed spreadsheets with the planned discards to departments from their corresponding LC call number range. LC Call number ranges that didn't have a corresponding department were decided by librarians. This did not go over well!
 - Without the context of what was staying or already duplicated online, faculty panicked.
 - Also many of our faculty have interdisciplinary interests they were not given a chance to weigh in on titles outside of their corresponding LC call number range.
 - Which brings us to Book Review Digest; since it was in Z and it is an index/abstract librarians made the decision to discard this title. Shortly thereafter a faculty member came in and was upset since she planned to have her students use it for an assignment the following week!!

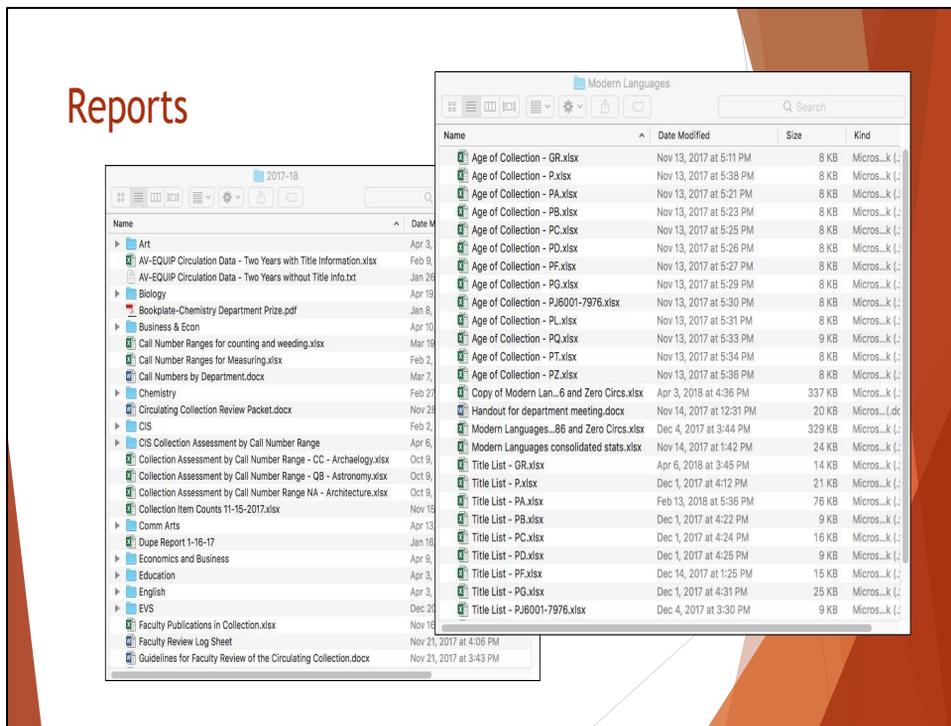
Bottom Line - Things needed to change for the bigger project of weeding the circulating collection.

What would you have changed at this point?



We decided to change things so that faculty were our partners in the decision making process - which mean LOTS of faculty communication.

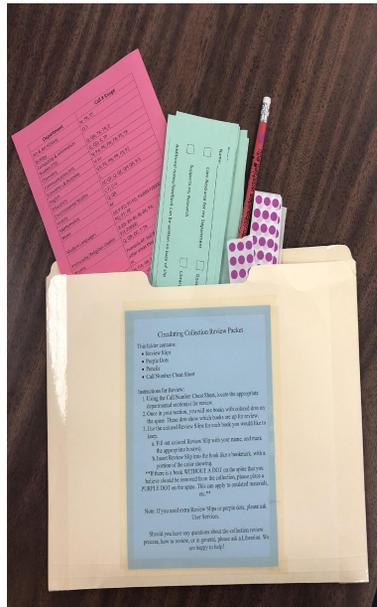
- Department liaisons and another librarian met with all departments but one.
 - Come prepared with basic information & disposal plan (this was the first question many faculty asked)
 - Our disposal plan allowed for faculty to claim books for themselves, screening for Better World Books, sending books to Africa with a faculty member who works with a library there, and lastly recycling them.
 - Allowed us to have conversations with faculty about how they use the library and ask their students to use the library in addition to letting them have their say about the renovation.
 - Determined criteria to ID items for removal from their section, with one exception which we regretted!
 - Most agreed on items that were 30 years old or older and had not circulated in the past 10 years.
- Other methods of communication
 - Constant E-mails
 - Creating a Renovation page on our website where we could post updates
 - Announcements at Faculty meetings
 - Really mentioning it any chance we got face time with faculty



The ability to run reports from our ILS was crucial to this project! Prior to this project we purchased Sirsi Dynix's more sophisticated reporting software, BlueCloud Analytics which made this MUCH easier. We would not have been able to do this using the packaged reporting features in Workflows.

- We ran age of collection & circulation reports by LC call number range for each departmental meeting
 - This showed faculty that most of our collection was over 31 years old!
- Once criteria for withdrawal were determined we ran title lists for books that met that criteria
- Problems occurred:
 - When more than one department needed to review the same LC range but had different criteria
 - For example in Q, 6 departments looked at this section. We decided to go with the most strict criteria
 - When departments corresponded to small LC ranges in multiple locations rather than for example History which was C, D, E, & F.
- We also had to track what was happening to the books after the assessment was over.
 - Measuring books that were leaving the library so that our book mover could accurately plan for how to re-shelve the remaining books in the new library
 - Keeping track of the number of books that went to faculty, Better World Books, Africa, and recycling to report out after it was all said and done.

Dots & Slips



So once we identified criteria for withdrawal and ran the reports, then what did we do? We dotted books until we were seeing dots in our sleep!

- Purchased about 30,000 purple dots and in an “all hands on deck situation” librarians, staff, and student workers dotted books based on the title list reports.
- Once an LC section was dotted the liaison librarian notified faculty that they could come and review the section.
 - Faculty came to the library and received Review Packets (as pictured). Which contained a comment slip, purple dots, an LC Call Number Outline, and a pencil.
 - Faculty could “save” a purple dotted book by completing a comment slip and inserting it into the book.
 - This slip recorded the faculty member’s name and check boxes for, “Core Resource”, “Good Resource; Needs Updated”, or “Library does not need; I want”.
 - Faculty could also purple dot books that didn’t meet their initial withdrawal criteria but still thought needed to leave the library.
- This worked well for the most part.
 - Many faculty remarked that while they had dreaded doing this review it gave them a chance to view the collection as a whole and found that we had a lot of great items they would refer their students to.
 - The Music Department specifically completed a through review and defined areas where our collection was lacking and submitted a list of items to be purchased to make it more well-rounded.

- The Psychology Department chair made it really easy on her faculty by having slips pre-printed with their names and the various options checked so all they had to do was put slips in the books without filling them out. She also sub-divided BF into each faculty's area of interest so that they only had to review their areas of expertise rather than the collection overall.
- Of course there were some problems
 - We had low participation from several departments which made more work for the librarians in reviewing the collection.
 - Two departments would not agree to any criteria for dotting and said that they would dot their own sections in accordance with out general mandate to reduce the collection by 30%. These department did not dot enough on their first pass and we had to ask them all to come back in and do it better which was awkward. We would not allow departments to take the lead on dotting in the future.
 - Some faculty wanted to just review the title list spreadsheets and not come to the library so they made comments on the spreadsheet and when then had to dot/slip the books on the shelves based on their comments. In the future we would try to limit the methods on how faculty can give feedback to make our lives easier.
 - DEADLINES- we found it very difficult to get faculty to complete tasks within given time frames and ended up pushing back deadlines multiple times which bought us faculty goodwill but made things frustrating on our end!! In the future we will be more firm with deadlines.
 - Areas where multiple faculty reviewed there were sometimes conflicting comments on what to do with a book.
 - Some departments got slightly different options on their Comment slips than others and we started out printing our Comment slips on one color paper and then quickly ran out and used any color paper. In the future we would consider standardizing options and perhaps having the color of the slip correspond to the option to make things easier.

What we had to deal with!



So once the dotting/slipping was done, what did we have to do next?

- Keep track of everything!
 - We had weekly weeding meetings to touch base and address issues
 - We had wall charts and calendars to keep track of deadlines and progress
 - Used spreadsheets to document everything
- Once the faculty review period was over we had another “all hands on deck” situation. Librarians, library staff and student workers all worked on the next steps so we could complete them before the movers showed up to start packing for our renovation:
 - The first pass to to find all the items that faculty wanted for themselves and pull them off the shelf, process them for discard, and distribute them to the faculty members
 - Then we started went through and scraped dots off books that were marked to keep.
 - We also scraped dots off items marked “Good Resource; Needs Updated” and added the titles to a “to-be ordered” list for when we return to our new library in the fall.
 - Finally, we started pulling items off the shelf, making for discard, and removing purple dotted items that were leaving the library according to our disposal plan.

Where are we now?



The library renovation has begun! The library has been totally packed up and we are in temporary office space for the summer.

- We were not able to finish removing all of the purple dotted books. The boxes in the picture represent a small number that are following us to our temporary location so we can finish this task over the summer.
 - We have 539 of these boxes that need to be processed out of our collection!
- What we learned:
 - You cannot ignore weeding!
 - We were told by a faculty member who had been at the college for a long time (over 25 years) that she does not remember a weeding project ever occurring.
 - Weeding needs to be an ongoing project to make it more manageable for the library and palatable for the community.
 - In the future we plan to develop a schedule for weeding and address small chunks of the collection each year
 - However long you think your weeding project is going to take it will take longer!!

Questions?

We're happy to discuss our weeding project or hear from others about their own projects. Feel free to e-mail us.

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