Collection Development

General Strategies and Considerations

Textbook Chapter 4
Collection Development Policy

- Written statement of how the collection will grow.
- Provides direction/guidelines for staff; Provides continuity when staff changes.
- Sets priorities for what is purchased.
- Allows formalized response to community concerns about purchases.
Policy Elements

- **Community Profile:**
  demographics, service area, mission.
  Often just one or two sentences.

- **Community Needs Assessment:**
  more details than profile; focuses on description of services and how they relate to community

- **Related to library mission**

- **Collection goals:** library priorities for various aspects of collection; often done by category.
Collection Goals - examples

Public Library (Benson Public Library, AZ)

"The Library maintains a picture book collection for pre-schoolers and fiction and non-fiction sections for elementary and high school use. A reasonable attempt is made to select according to quality and user demand. We do not select according to school curriculum, as that is covered by the school libraries."
Collection Goals – example
Academic Library (Indiana University - South Bend)

The primary goal of the collection management and development activities is to acquire and maintain the information resources necessary to support the scholarly and teaching mission of the campus ...to support the academic and professional pursuits of the faculty. A secondary goal is to provide information resources for the local community. The resources of the Schurz Library complement the public and school libraries of the area with many resources which are not available elsewhere locally.
Policy Elements continued

- Selection Responsibility – who selects
  - Subject or dept. specialists or centralized ordering

- Selection Criteria
  - e.g.: topic, reading level, cost, demand, local emphasis, date, etc.
  - Specific guidelines for purchases and gifts including:
    - prioritized categories for purchase
    - Areas *not collected*.
    - May include preferred formats.
      - e.g. Collect best selling NYT fiction titles in e-book format.

- Acquisitions procedures and policies
Policy Elements continued

- **Collection Evaluation and Assessment:**
  - circulation statistics, reference statistics, ILL fulfillment
  - Collection policy review and revision

- **Weeding procedures (de-selecting)**
  - Definition: “evaluation of existing library holdings for possible replacement, repair, updating or discarding.”
  - Depends of library mission and scope of collection
    - i.e. libraries that maintain historical collections weed less
  - Helps maintain “…relevant, appealing and timely collection”
  - Allows shelf-space for new items.
Weeding the collection: guidelines

- M.U.S.T.Y
  Misleading, Ugly, Superceded, Trivial, irrelevant for Your collection)

- CREW (Continuous Review, Evaluation & Weeding)
  www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/crew/toc.html

- Weed It! (weeding do’s and don’ts)
  www.wmrls.org/services/colldev/weed_it.html
Censorship & Collection Development

What is censorship?
“the practice of suppressing or deleting material considered to be objectionable” (textbook p. 105)

Library Bill of Rights
- usually included in collection development policy

Along with procedures for complaints and request for reconsideration

Banned Book Week – library may have displays
Selection vs. censorship

“...professional responsibility to be inclusive, not exclusive, in their collection development and to refrain from withholding topics because of their own personal stance on an issue... selection policies might include prioritized categories for purchase or areas to be omitted in the collection... because few libraries can afford to buy everything”.
Selection Tools

- **Review Journals:**
  - Booklist, Library Journal, Choice, Kirkus, Publishers Weekly
- **Core Collection Lists:** Wilson’s Library Catalog; Best Books for Young Adult Readers
- **Other Professionals**
- **Best Seller Lists**
- **ALA Lists:** YALSA
  - [http://www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklistsbook.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklistsbook.htm)
- **Books In Print**
Online Resources

- Resources for School Librarians (directory) [www.sldirectory.com/libsf/resf/coldev2.html](http://www.sldirectory.com/libsf/resf/coldev2.html)
- Sample collection development policy:
  - Tempe Public Library [www.tempe.gov/LIBRARY/admin/policies/colldev.htm](http://www.tempe.gov/LIBRARY/admin/policies/colldev.htm)
  - Pasadena Public Library [www.ci.pasadena.ca.us/library/collection.asp](http://www.ci.pasadena.ca.us/library/collection.asp)
- How the library decides what to purchase.
  Large academic library example - Cornell University: [http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/June07/bookbuyers.ws.html](http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/June07/bookbuyers.ws.html)
Selection of library materials

- Keep up-to-date on publishing trends.
  - Read a variety of review publications.
    - *e.g.* Publishers’ Weekly, Booklist, Choice, etc.
  - Trends in your selection area/discipline
- Know your collection development statement
- Know your community.
  - Every library serves a community
  - Circulation data
- Keep up-to-date on current events.
Selection Criteria (p.105+)

- **Authority**
  - Who is the author? Who is the publisher? Is the author qualified to write on the subject?

- **Accuracy**
  - Would experts generally agree this is a good source?

- **Currency**
  - How up-to-date is the information? Does it duplicate something already available?

- **Scope**
  - What subject area does the item cover? Broad or specific?

- **Interest**
  - Will the item be used?
Selection criteria, cont.

- **Organization and Format**
  - Easy to use? Indexes? Cross references? Readable print? Strongly bound?

- **Special Features**
  - Illustrations? CD? Maps?

- **Cost**
  - Are there other comparable, less expensive, sources?

- **Impartiality**
  - Fair and balanced? If not, are other viewpoints represented in collection?
Selection Resources

- Book Reviews
  - Problems: time delay; number of books reviewed; small press not well represented.
- Best Of and Recommended Lists
- Subject Lists/Bibliographies
- Publisher Sources (catalogs)
- Online Bookstores
- Books in Print – verify bibliographic information.
- Patron requests
Electronic resources

- **Database licensing**
  - Based on library service group and users
  - Fluctuating holdings
  - ‘ownership’
  - off-site access issues

- **Consortia purchasing**
  - negotiates contract and reduced rates