Weeding One STEPP at a Time

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Why Weed?

• Permit growth space
• Keep collection
  – usable
  – up to date
  – Attractive
• Reutilize critical space for other needs
Trends:

• Use of library space for services rather than collections → large-scale weeding projects
  – Internal: eg., Information Commons
  – External: eg., Writing Center, Tutoring Center

• Transition of collections, physical to digital
  – Example: withdrawing JSTOR volumes
Why Did We Have to Weed?

• ECU is short on space overall, and enrollment has grown 43% over the last 10 years
• Library is prime real estate
• Already housed gallery, info commons, tutoring, writing center, and coffee shop…..
Project **STEPP**:  
- Needed 3,000 sq. ft. for offices, meeting rooms, and study areas  
- Supporting **T**ransition and **E**ducation through **P**lanning and **P**artnerships  
- Provides academic, social, and life skills support to students who have identified learning disabilities
University Admin Support:

• People:
  – 1 FTE Librarian (Reassigned with backfill)
  – 3 FTE Temp Staff
    • Cataloging, Circulation, Collection Development

• Electronic Collections:
  – Provided funding for journal backfiles
Selecting Backfiles

• Purchased packages from 19 publishers to replace print volumes
• We had current subs from every publisher that sold us backfiles
• Univ Admin provided one-time upfront funds; Library Admin added some funds later on
Planning:

• Total space needs → total volumes “displaced”
• Journals rather than monographs
• Create a “swing space” for short term and storage for long term
• Relocated oversized materials
• Timeframe: 12 months
Principles:

• Aim: one decision per print title
• Microfilm: not our priority, but evaluate as part of title
• Current print subscriptions
  – Reevaluate our print subs for (non)renewal
  – Keep currently-received titles in the stacks
Rules:

• **Withdraw:**
  – Bound volumes in archival packages
  – Dead runs or those incomplete runs no longer received in print, especially if:
    • Last volume 1999 or earlier
    • Fewer than 10 volumes
    • Not indexed
  – Journals no longer relevant for university curricula
Package-Based Weeding

• License – post-cancellation rights?
• Print holdings
• Verify coverage dates and completeness
• Evaluate quality of scans
• Incomplete/inadequate: librarian decision to withdraw or move to storage
Rules:

- **Send to storage:**
  - Long runs of titles no longer received in print, especially if:
    - Online access is available (from any provider)
    - Subject area importance
    - Other local reason to retain
  - Poorly scanned or leftover volumes from titles in archival package (if greater than 10), if accessible online
Rules:

• **Keep in stacks:**
  – Current print subscriptions
  – Recent long runs (30 vols or more) with no electronic access
  – Subject area importance
  – Significant value to local collections
Exceptions:

• Significance for local collections
• Subject area consideration (e.g., art images)

(Consistency and the lack thereof often go together.)
Disposition of Materials

- Recycling is the answer.
- Timeliness of moving materials out was important.
- We used an outside records destruction vendor.
Project STEPP space after construction:

• Comfortable seating
• 5 offices
• 10 study rooms
• 12 study carrels
Advice:

• Take notes: you won’t remember why you did what you did.
• There is no mistake that you can make that you cannot fix.
• Once you start giving away space you never get it back.
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