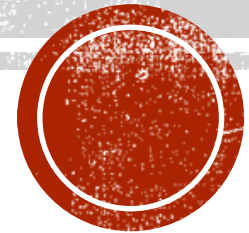


MISSING IN ACTION: A MISSION TO INVESTIGATE AND NEUTRALIZE BOOK LOSS



Marlena Barber • Roger Russell

Laupus Health Sciences Library

East Carolina University

WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?

- Investigation of book loss
- Selective inventory (*Nursing books*)
- Assessment of loss & report
- Creation of Heavy Use Collection
- Security Improvements (*gates and guards*)
- Full inventory (*all other books*)
- Follow-up assessments (*Heavy Use Collection & Nursing books*)
- Survey of Current Best Practices



BACKGROUND

- Laupus Library serves Brody School of Medicine, College of Allied Health Sciences, School of Dental Medicine, and College of Nursing
- Circulating Collection = over 27,523 items
- Annual Foot Traffic = over 150,000
- Annual Book Circulation = over 9,800 checkouts
- Average monthly print book purchases = \$4K/month
- Open 93.5 hours per week

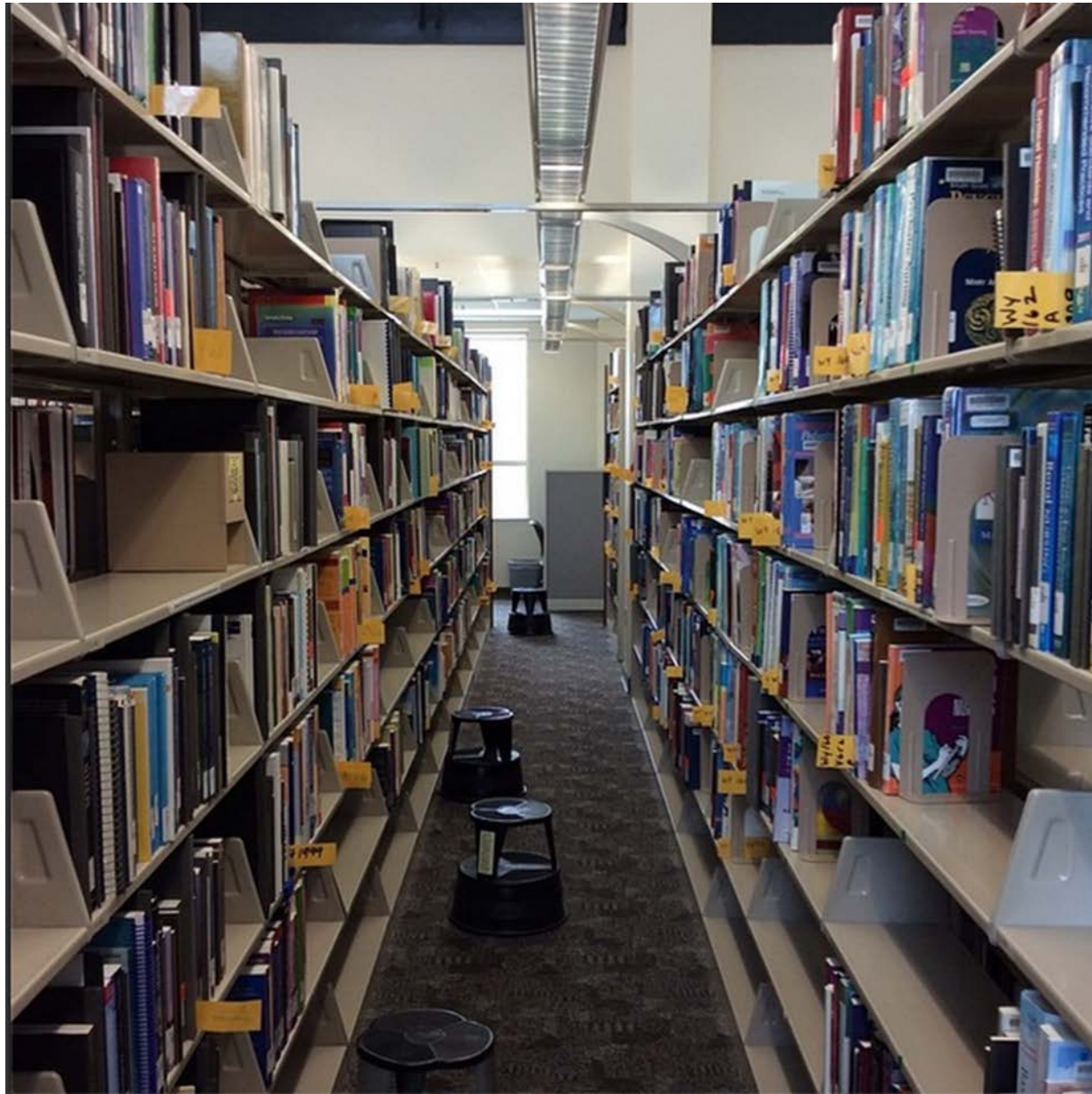




NURSING SECTION INVENTORY

- An inventory of the books in the nursing books section was conducted in July and August of 2014.
- 120 books were found to be miss-shelved, 36 books were labeled incorrectly, and 20 books needed repairs; initial intuition about loss in WYs was correct
- 138 missing books out of a total range of 3,412 nursing subject books. The cost value loss from that section alone is \$10,840.75.





COMPREHENSIVE INVENTORY OF CIRCULATING BOOKS

Inventory of the entire circulating collection deemed necessary

- Faculty and staff from the Access Services, Collection Services, and Information Services departments conducted the full inventory between July 30, 2014 and December 18, 2014.
- Reports generated on targeted areas of the collection first, based on specific areas
- Next, books ordered within the past three fiscal years
- Then reports based on the NLM classifications
- Sections assigned to staff; printed booklists distributed







CHANGES IN WORKFLOWS AND SERVICES

- Heavy Use Collection
 - “Closed” stacks area
 - Criteria: cost, copyright year, reorder of missing book
 - Shorter circulation period
- Additional identifying marks to books
- New Book List ceased
- Reduced circulation periods
- Extensive work improving library security & 3M security gate





INVESTIGATION

- Worked with campus police
- To date, no one knows where the missing books went or who has them.



THEFT AT OTHER LIBRARIES

- An Ohio State University law student was charged with selling over 200 library books, valued at over \$10,000 online
- Chicago-area janitor pled guilty to stealing thousands of reference books and materials from a public library where he had been working. The items were located in his house and his car where he was selling them on Amazon. He had been caught by leaving his ledger in the library that listed stolen books and books he planned to steal
- 2 brothers in Reading, PA were caught on videotape and arrested for stealing several books from a public library.
- The Brooklyn Public Library reported in 2012 that 70,000 books had been stolen from their system. They had 10,000 books stolen in 2011.
- A library volunteer was arrested for stealing Civil War and World War II photographs and memorabilia from the Bangor Public Library and attempting to sell them to an antique dealer.
- A patron of the San Diego County libraries stole at least 2,000 library books and DVDs.



OVERALL FINDINGS

- 634 missing books
- 436 are new books (copyright dates 2011-2016)
- 12.5% loss of the most current books in our collection
- \$44K estimated value of the missing new books



ADDITIONAL NOTES

- Inventories of our journals, models, and audiovisual materials were also/are being conducted in 2014 and in 2015.
- Student workers now conduct inventories on an ongoing basis

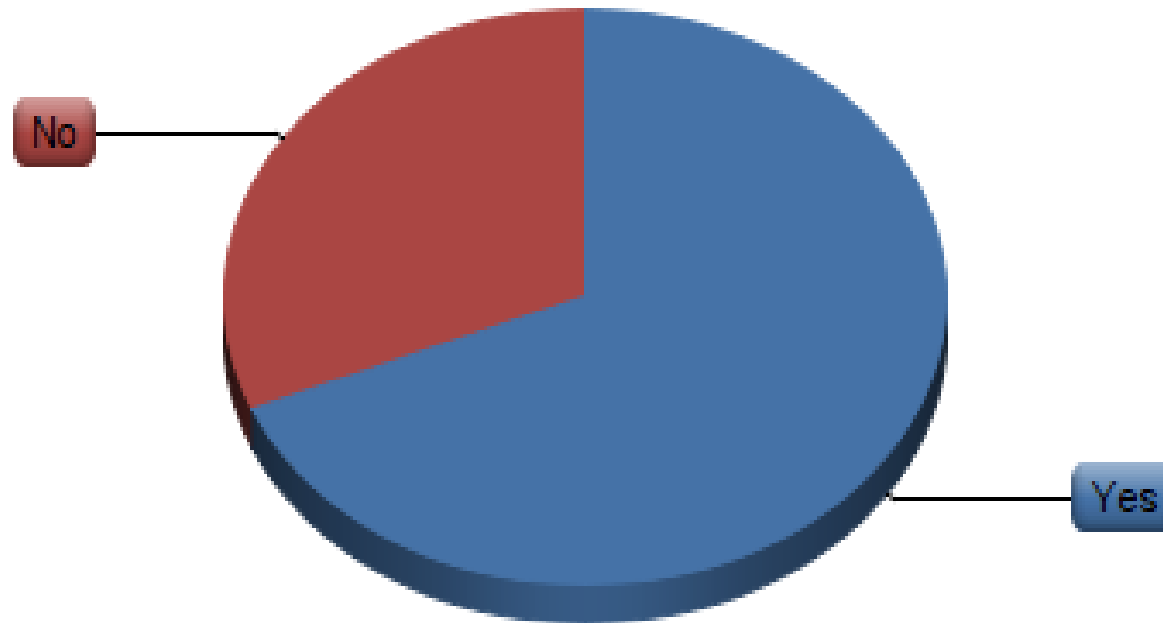


1. DOES YOUR LIBRARY HAVE A CIRCULATING PRINT BOOK COLLECTION?

Answer	Response	%
Yes	90	100%
No	0	0%
Total	90	100%



2. DOES YOUR LIBRARY CONDUCT INVENTORIES OF ITS CIRCULATING PRINT BOOK COLLECTION(S)?



Answer	Response	%
Yes	59	69%
No	27	31%
Total	86	100%



3. WHAT PERCENTAGE OF LOSS WAS DISCOVERED IN YOUR MOST RECENT INVENTORY?

Answer	Response	%
None	5	13%
1-10%	30	75%
11-25%	4	10%
26-50%	1	3%
higher than 50%	0	0%
Total	40	100%

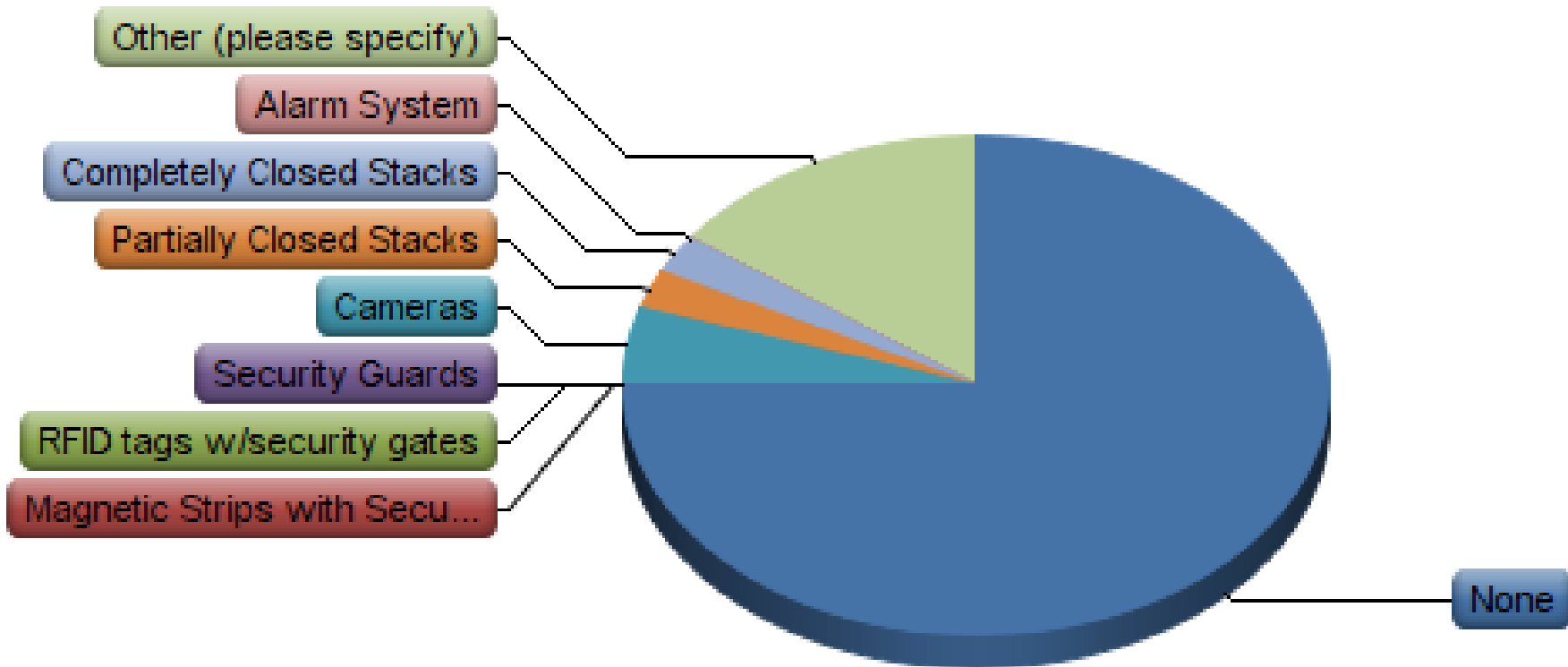


4. WHAT SECURITY OR LOSS PREVENTION MEASURES DID YOU HAVE IN PLACE PRIOR TO YOUR MOST RECENT INVENTORY?

Answer	Response	%
None	4	10%
Magnetic Strips with Security Gates	29	73%
RFID tags	2	5%
Security Guards	6	15%
Cameras	12	30%
Partial Closed Stacks	7	18%
Completely Closed Stacks	1	3%
Alarm System	5	13%
Other	3	8%



5. WHAT SECURITY OR LOSS PREVENTION MEASURES WERE ADDED AFTER YOUR MOST RECENT INVENTORY?



6. WHAT HAS(HAVE) BEEN THE MOST EFFECTIVE LOSS PREVENTION PRACTICE(S) AT YOUR CURRENT OR PAST LIBRARIES?

Answer	Response
Security Gate & Magnetic Strips	24
Closed/Partially Closed Stacks	12
Converting to Electronic Format/Moving away from Print	6
Staffing Areas Near Exits	5
Security Guards	2
Security Cameras	2
Random Bag Checks	1



7. DO YOU HAVE OTHER COMMENTS OR OBSERVATIONS TO SHARE ON THIS TOPIC?

Answer	Response
Low print circulation / Print books not as important; Moving to eBooks	4
Difficult or Impossible to Stop Theft	3
Victims of Targeted Theft	3
Security Gates (3M) Too Sensitive/False Positives and Negatives	2
“We’re an all-health sciences library, so shelf browsing tends to not be as important, and people don’t mind having closed stacks	1



WHAT WE LEARNED . . .

- ROI is difficult at best to calculate
- There will always be some % of loss
- Electro-magnetic security gates are still predominant, despite error rate;

Harwell, J. H. (2014). Library security gates: Effectiveness and current practice. *Journal of Access Services*, 11(2), 53-65. doi:10.1080/15367967.2014.884876

- Multiple layers of security – cameras, guards, closed stacks, etc.
- Changes in how library space is used are changing collection security needs (off-site storage, automated retrieval systems)
- E-collections making a big impact
- Inventories have benefits and costs – balance is key



QUESTIONS?

