

A New Crystal Ball?: Using Labor Market Data in Collection Development

Acquisitions Institute 2025



BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY



Presenters:

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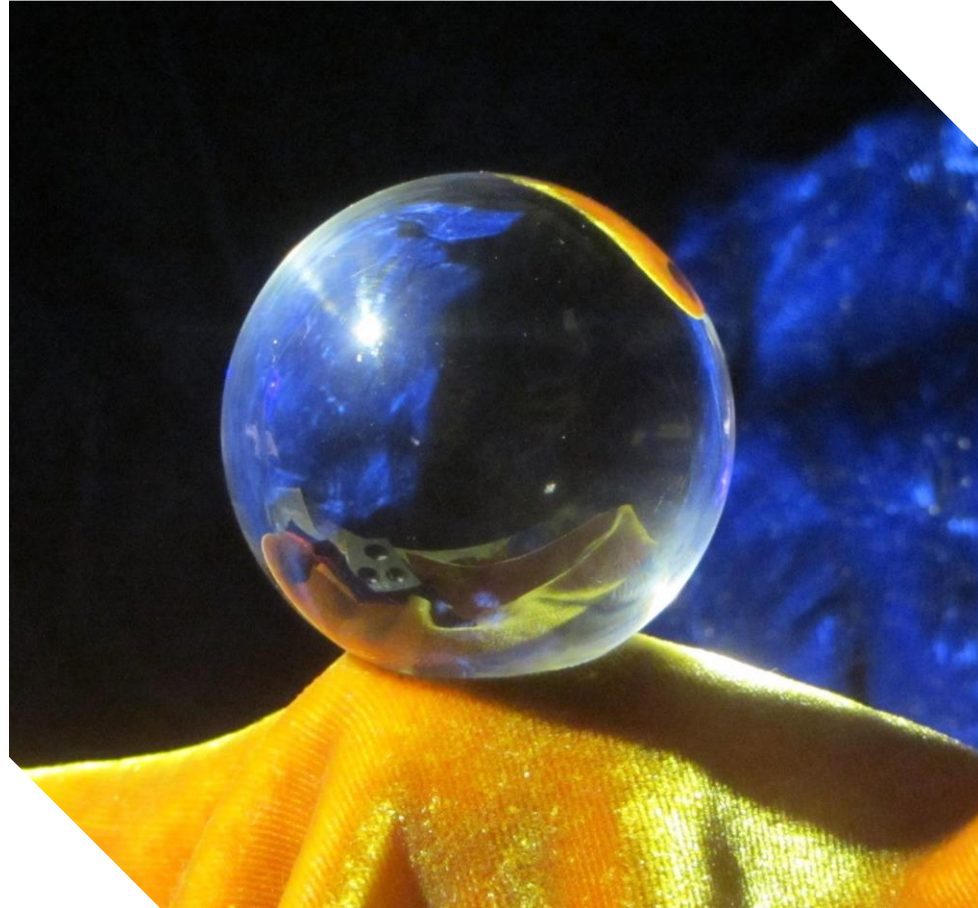
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What if libraries could anticipate future needs?

The role of collection development in academic planning



Traditional Approaches

- *Faculty requests*
- *Circulation data*
- *Usage statistics*
- *Required materials*
- *Reviews, trade publications*

The Shift: Why Look Ahead?

- *Changing expectations for libraries to support emerging programs*
- *Increasing pressure to justify expenditures*
- *Importance of aligning with institutional priorities*

Case Study: Idaho State Board of Education

- *Brief overview of new program proposal requirement*
- *Labor market data as a gatekeeper: what's now expected*

New data fields at planning level -

- *Provide evidence of a reasonable student market for this program or strategies for increasing student demand.*
- *List up to 5 occupations for graduates of this program. If an occupation is an "In-demand career" as determined by the Idaho Workforce development council, indicate with an asterisk and include the SOC code*
- *List any industry advisory councils or other industry stakeholders consulted about the need for the program*

Boise State's Response

- *Partnership with research and analytics firm*
- *Types of data included in reports:*
 - Labor market (Idaho, regional, national) and academic program gaps
 - Project skills gaps
 - Regional competitor programs
 - Student demand forecasts



yields, and retention rates. At each enrollment...



Academic Programming

Build a standout academic program portfolio based on student preference and employer demand.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING

REPORTS & BRIEFS

[Academic Program Development Handbook for Higher Education](#)

Use these four critical market factors to evaluate new program ideas and bring a data-first approach to your academic program development process. In a...



Student Success

Increase retention and maximize student engagement from start date to graduation.

REPORTS & BRIEFS

[5 Student Retention Strategies in Higher Education](#)

Keep more students engaged and enrolled in

Enter the Library: Albertsons Library's Role

- *Access to the same labor market reports as department chairs & deans*
- *Used to:*
 - Forecast likely new programs or certificates
 - Anticipate collection needs
 - Engage in early budget planning

How the Data Informs Decisions

- ***Examples:***
 - Health science certificate = need for anatomy and clinical databases
 - Cybersecurity proposal = increase in digital forensics texts
- ***Think in terms of subject area, format, and licensing complexity, ongoing spend commitments***

Benefits for the Library

- *More proactive resource planning*
- *Informed budget asks - prepared for curriculum proposals*
- *Better faculty relationships*
- *Strategic alignment with university curriculum shifts*

Caveats & Challenges

- *Interpretation of data requires skill/context*
- *Not a replacement for faculty input*
- *Data lag or regional anomalies*
- *Curating for possibility to curating for practicality*
 - Weighing return on investment over tradition

Getting Started: What You Can Do

- *Talk to your provost or academic affairs office*
- *Ask for access to market data used in program proposals*
- *Consider what systems or roles in your library could integrate this*
- *Develop workflows: who reviews? how often?*

What Could a Library Crystal Ball Look Like?

- *New programs*
- *Market demand signals*
- *Budget planning*
- *Collection strategy*



Discussions and Reflections

“What kinds of data would help you plan for emerging programs?”

“How would early notice of a new program impact your collection development process?”

Thank you!

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