

Transforming the Collection Development Process

roles, responsibilities, results, resolve

Laura Schwartz, Program Director, Content Acquisition & Resource Sharing, UC San Diego Library

Acquisitions Institute at Timberline Lodge, Mt. Hood, May 2025

Overview of presentation

- Introduction to UC San Diego and UC San Diego Library
- Reasons for collection development model transition
- Development of guiding principles
- New roles, new responsibilities
- Development of new workflows and tools to support spending
- Communicating and collaborating
- Lessons learned
- What's next for the collections budget?

UC San Diego



Facts about UC San Diego

- Founded in 1960
- 43,381 students, 3,804 faculty, 41,666 full and part-time staff
- One of 10 UC campuses in California
- \$1.73 billion sponsored research funding
- 7th in the world for “most highly cited researchers”

Facts about the UC San Diego Library

Facility and staffing

- Two buildings, one library - Geisel and WongAvery
- 300 staff including 50 librarians
- Thousands of visitors each day (Annual gate count over 1.4M)

Collections

- \$9.5 million collection budget
- Over 4.9M physical holdings and 3.4M electronic holdings
- Last year - over 14K physical titles and 217K ebooks acquired
- New collection development policy

Quick Poll

1. Does your library have subject specialists/liaisons?
2. If yes, is collection development one of their core responsibilities?
3. If no, does your library rely on a couple to a few collections specialists or collection strategists to spend the collection budget?

Reasons for collection development model transition

- Collection budget cut
- Shifting priorities for many selectors
- New acquisition models and consortial acquisition streams created a more complex collection development landscape
- Growing interdisciplinarity of content
- New collection fiscal manager and new acquisitions librarian
- Campus audit prompted us to consider our process
- Streamlining the end of year spend
- Movement away from the liaison model

Development of guiding principles

We are committed to

- making cuts equitable across disciplines
- a diverse and inclusive collection
- a digital first collection
- reducing duplication
- our cost-sharing agreements with campus partners
- our Tier 1 agreements with our CDL partners
- our local transformative and open access agreements

New Roles, new responsibilities: the selector

- Selectors continued to make collection decisions but were no longer responsible for managing funds
- Selectors were monitoring their spend through weekly reports delivered to their email
- Selectors had more freedom to make interdisciplinary or cross disciplinary decisions

New Roles, new responsibilities: the collection strategist

- The collection strategist is now empowered to make purchasing decisions across their broad subject area
- In addition, they are also more directly overseeing the spend of a team of selectors
- The strategist has more ownership of the funds because they were not assigned to specific selectors

New Roles, new responsibilities: the ordering specialist

- The ordering team is empowered to make fund code decisions because selectors are no longer indicating a fund code on orders
- The ordering team is keeping track of available funds
- Restricted endowments are prioritized if the restriction matches to the discipline of the material ordered
- The ordering process has been streamlined

Communicating and collaborating with...

- Collection Strategists
- Ordering team
- Collection assessment lead and Alma/Primo expert
- Selectors/subject liaison
- Publishers and Vendors

Development of new workflows and tools

- Summary funds
- Tracking spend
- Templates
- Reports and analytics

Lessons learned

- Expect the unexpected
- Be in it for the long haul and be willing to experiment
- Accept that assessment is not always possible
- You will always need more time

What's next for the collections budget and UC San Diego Library?

FY26 outlook and changes

- More significant collection budget cut
- Recommitting to some but maybe not all guiding principles
- Centralizing collection development responsibilities
- Preserving diverse acquisition streams
- Communication plans
- Library reorganization planning and impacts on staff

Discussion questions

1. What ideas do you have about rethinking collection development responsibilities as budgets for staffing and collections shrink?
2. Are you relying more or less on programmed collection development models like DDA, EBA, and approval plans as budgets tighten?
3. How are you assessing these models in addition to usage?

Collection Development/Scholarly Resources websites

- UC San Diego Library Collection Development Policy. <https://libraries.ucsd.edu/about/policies/collection-development-policy.html>
- UC Berkeley Scholarly Resources Libguide. <https://guides.lib.berkeley.edu/scholarly-resources>

Articles

- *UC San Diego, bracing for more than \$200M in funding cuts, freezes faculty hiring.* <https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/2025/02/20/uc-san-diego-bracing-for-more-than-200m-in-funding-cuts-freezes-faculty-hiring/>
- *Examining library structures to scale research support services: Insights from an OCLC RLP leadership roundtable.* <https://hangingtogether.org/examining-library-structures-to-scale-research-support-services-insights-from-an-oclc-rlp-leadership-roundtable/>
- *Constant Change or Constantly the Same? A Historical Literature Review of the Subject Librarian Position.* <https://crl.acrl.org/index.php/crl/article/view/25618>

Thank you!

Laura Schwartz, presenter
l7schwartz@ucsd.edu

Roger Smith, contributor
ros001@ucsd.edu