

Undergraduate Library
The General Libraries
University of Texas at Austin

Information Resources Task Force
Report
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Tantalus

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Information Resources Task Force

Introduction

In light of the quickly evolving technological advances in libraries, Undergraduate Library needs to be on the cutting edge of new information technologies in order to fulfill the instructional aspects of its mission statement. In addition to traditional services, UGL will be the Gateway Library by providing access to new emerging information technologies in all formats. It will maintain and strengthen its efforts to work cooperatively with appropriate undergraduate faculty, students, Computation Center representatives, Writing Center personnel, other General Libraries' units, and other services on campus. It will also continue to provide consistent and thorough instructional services.

UGL must have fiscal and format flexibility to adapt to our users' ever-changing needs for instruction in information literacy and access to resources. This indicates the need for identification of a core collection in all formats and the implementation of an approval plan. Subject selectors will continue to monitor the collection, interact with faculty, and begin to emphasize demand-driven acquisition. This requires greater flexibility in the spending of materials and equipment money, allowing UGL to update, replace or add new equipment and purchase additional electronic information and access in a timely manner.

The conclusions drawn from these assumptions are:

- UGL needs to undertake an in-depth study for implementing an approval plan.
- Staff time must be reallocated to accommodate training, core collection maintenance, and faculty contact without loss of public service.
- Reference service must have easy access to as much of the available sources as possible, especially the new information technologies -- this will facilitate staff competencies, develop greater user need and could create a need for multiple service points.

Keeping these points in mind, this task force divided into four groups to individually address four major areas in depth. Cindy Lennartson and Ann Neville dealt with a core collection of circulating materials, Gary Lay addressed audiovisual resources, Beth Kerr examined serials issues and JoAnne Newyear-Ramirez and Darby Syrkin took on reference/EIC resources.

Information Resources Task Force

Executive Summary

In summary, the Information Resources Task Force would like to make the following recommendations which comprise the foundation of the Task Force's report.

1. The fundamental assertion of this report is that UGL will be the Gateway Library for instruction in new technologies including electronic information resources.
2. The acquisition of UGL information resources will be done through a cooperative network of bibliographers in consultation with coordinators for Audio Visual Library, core collection, serials, Reference (in print format) and Electronic Resources.
3. In order to develop information resources, UGL needs to maintain and develop strong ties with the University community including entities such as the Computation Center, University faculty, and other General Libraries' units. This will mean the need for continuing use studies and other means of communication.
4. The procurement of information resources for undergraduate instruction is still a priority regardless of the format of the material acquired.
5. In regards to information resources, the recommended changes for public services and acquisitions indicate the need to maintain staffing allocations at the current level, at the very least.
6. In order to fulfill our recommendations, it is necessary for the General Libraries to fund UGL collections at their current levels. This Task Force also recommends redefining the acquisition of information resources to include both materials and their supporting equipment.

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Core Collections

The collection of UGL should be managed actively. This involves working actively with faculty -- on subject areas to be covered, on class assignments, on what's new in the library, and as an entry into formal library instruction. UGL does not exist in a vacuum. Some coordination with the bibliographers in other units will act to keep our collection focused, and those bibliographers unsurprised at our choices.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

ONE FOCUS FOR FUTURE ACQUISITIONS:

In the past, UGL's monographic acquisitions have been selected mainly by the professional staff at UGL based on the anticipated needs of our patrons with some input from faculty and students. In light of the changes happening at UGL, the focus for future acquisitions should be re-evaluated. Rather than anticipating needs by ordering what we think will be needed by our patrons, we should begin to emphasize demand-driven acquisition based on course curricula, faculty and student input, and professional staff suggestions.

An actively managed collection requires that we be attentive to what our users are likely to want, need and use. On the other hand, when information resources are evolving rapidly, our users may not know what options exist, so to some extent it is important that we rely on our expertise, experience and judgment in providing materials that users don't yet know they need.

COLLECTION EVALUATION AND REVIEW:

In an actively managed collection, weeding is an essential part of the process. Weeding should be increased so that as volumes are added, less-used items can be removed from our collection. Development of a quota system (i.e.: "buy one, weed one") would help make weeding a regular part of the staff's responsibilities while also ensuring that UGL has the most current print information in the circulating collection and prevent us from facing massive weeding projects when space runs out.

The loan period for titles selected for Issues and Ideas should be re-evaluated. This might be accomplished by examining reports for holds and recalls on Issues and Ideas titles and deciding if the 7 day loan period is necessary.

USE STUDIES:

User surveys should be designed and used on a regular basis to enable us to make good decisions about the resources and services that are most successful in serving our users. Exit interviews could be conducted to ask patrons what type of information they were seeking at UGL and if they were successful at finding it. Circulation information could be obtained through the ICS to determine to whom our books are circulating. Does the majority of our circulations come from lower division undergraduates?

The design, administration, interpretation, and response to such surveys will take substantial amounts of staff time, but would help to keep us on track in our acquisition of information resources.

APPROVAL PLAN:

UGL should implement an approval plan for its core collection. An approval plan would permit bibliographers to develop, over time, a precise profile of basic additions to the print collection. This will ultimately cut down on staff time devoted to reading reviews and selecting books for purchase.

The development of an electronic collection is not ready for consignment to an approval plan. Because of the wide variety of equipment as well as material, there is substantial room for bibliographers to make expensive errors by selecting materials that won't run on existing equipment, or are not the most appropriate format. A team approach pairing subject expertise with electronic expertise would be appropriate.

It is not recommended that precise amounts be allocated to print and electronic resources nor that our allocation be divided by subject area. Books in different areas tend to cost different amounts. In electronic format some subjects are better represented than others. Active collection management will include substantial flexibility in terms of where the money goes, depending on what resources are available and what the library's users need.

A task force should be formed to examine the different options and to construct a hypothetical profile of UGL's collection needs for submission to various vendors.

UGL staff should continue to be involved in the receipt of new materials even if that means sending staff over to PCL on a regular basis to handle the incoming books. It would be preferable to receive the materials at UGL so professional staff could examine them here, but regardless of where the materials are unpacked, UGL staff should have responsibility for handling these books.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. A task force should be formed to explore approval plans and UGL should implement an approval plan by the 1994-95 academic year.
2. Bibliographers should select electronic information in consultation with a designated electronic resources coordinator.
3. Money for resources should be kept in one big pot, not divided into many small ones. Ideally, this would allow purchase of equipment with the "book" money.
4. Weeding is an ongoing activity...buy one, weed one.
5. User surveys are an important way to keep the collection on track and should become part of the library's routine. Substantial staff time will be needed for this.
6. Consultation with faculty and with bibliographers in other units is an important part of the collection process and an important use of staff time.

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Audiovisual

OVERVIEW:

The Audio Visual Library has changed a great deal in the last thirty years. It started as an audio collection of musical and spoken word recording that primarily supported music and literary courses as well as listening for students who came for recreation or to enhance their humanities and musical arts. The collection today has a wide range of formats and uses. The AV collection today consists of 8,000 music recordings, 2,000 spoken word records, 800 compact discs, 1,500 audiocassettes, 3,000 plus videocassettes, some 2,500 plus 16mm films from the Film Library, several dozen filmstrip/cassette programs, several dozen slide/cassette programs, a growing number of video laser discs, several interactive programs that use a Macintosh computer and video laser discs and some CD-ROM interactive programs that work with the Macintosh computer.

Access to these materials varies from channel listening to individual use in or out of the library as well as in classrooms including two media rooms in the library. Access to these materials is largely determined by the availability of equipment in the library and at other locations such as multimedia classrooms.

In the last ten years, the focus of the collection has shifted from the audio formats to the visual formats, particularly video. During the last five years, the selection of materials has shifted from individual bibliographer input to direct faculty input for materials to support their curricula. In the last three years, the AV Library has added the services of booking or scheduling videos and 16mm films not only in its media classrooms but for direct delivery and showing in distant classrooms at faculty request on specific dates and times. This gives AV a unique role unmatched by any other General Libraries' unit.

This unique role of the AV Library should continue by allowing faculty requests to drive the majority of the audiovisual acquisitions. The role of UGL bibliographers and professional staff should primarily be staying attuned to the new and developing formats in order to make these resources known and available to faculty and students.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

CORE COLLECTIONS FOR THE AV LIBRARY:

The core of the AV Library should change from music formats to visual formats. The musical recordings on phonodisc should be transferred to the Fine Arts Library while keeping the musical recording on compact disc and adding to this collection only on a small scale at direct student input. The total dollar amount for compact discs of popular music should be a small percentage of the total acquisitions for the unit.

The 16mm film collection represents an active and unique part of the AV collection, but it is a diminishing part. Many of the film titles are wearing out and are not replaceable in a video format. It is important to replace high demand film titles whenever possible with the videocassette format. The VHS videocassette format is the preferred format of today by UT faculty due to the accessibility of equipment for classroom use. Additionally, the VHS format is available in the library for direct student use as well as for home use (a number of faculty are requesting overnight circulation of materials for student use).

Video laser disc programs have a growing appeal to faculty due to the ability to access specific scenes for discussion without the searching required on videotape. This format will be preferred by faculty teaching feature films or Shakespeare plays. Therefore, this is a format the library should actively collect.

The new and developing interactive media programs combining formats such as CD-ROMs, laser discs and computer programs will be a vital area to collect in and work on with faculty. These formats may not have the appeal of videos and films for large classroom viewings, but will likely be a favored format for faculty to have students do independent study and research in the library. Additionally, the CD-ROM format, as equipment across campus and in the library becomes available, could be collected heavily in various subject areas and in support of library programs such as the "Issues and Ideas" of the E 306 program. It is in the

mission of UGL to experiment with new technologies and the AV Library should be a front-runner of this experimentation.

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION:

The use of AV materials may range from a professor having one video or film shown to a class of 500 students once every time the class is offered to multiple instructors requiring numerous sections of a course to view a video in order to write a paper or take a written exam. Therefore close management and coordination of use is necessary for materials. Additionally, the way AV materials are used needs to be closely managed to meet licensing requirements. This requires the daily supervision and coordination of materials by AV staff. A constant examination and evaluation of existing materials must be done.

At the time new materials are selected by bibliographers, who and how they will be used must be determined and relayed to appropriate staff. The most effective way to do this is to have one main bibliographer in charge of a separate acquisitions fund and who will balance all AV purchases between individual, subject bibliographers and faculty requests. *The acquisition of AV formats needs to be coordinated with the availability of equipment to use it.* If any equipment is allowed to be purchased from materials funds, this would require further coordination. One chief AV bibliographer would also be more able to coordinate UGL AV purchases with other library units and campus agencies. This is especially important as AV formats often have a broad base of use that do not fit neatly into one subject field. One other point that is important to consider is that AV services cover both undergraduate and graduate courses.

EQUIPMENT AND HARDWARE RESOURCES:

Access to audiovisual formats has always relied on equipment. As libraries are leaping into the Electronic Age, access to materials can no longer depend on just a well lighted seating area. Therefore, competition for equipment between all areas of the library will only increase. Resources for equipment must be increased to meet the growing demands. The current General Libraries equipment budget cannot meet the diverse needs of all its units. While access to equipment through acquisitions funds allows meeting this demand on a quick, short-term basis, it should not be the only alternative. In the past, the General Libraries has added equipment (hardware and access resources) through special equipment and facilities requests. These requests have been targeted to last for five to ten years. It is recommended that the General Libraries administration seek more permanent funding from the University administration for equipment on a regular basis to keep up with this growing demand. This funding can be justified by the unique role the library can play in providing audiovisual and multimedia resources to such a wide university audience. It is also recommended that the General Libraries administration seek a role in the University's strategic plans for telecommunications and fiber optic access. Without the access through equipment and delivery technologies, UGL cannot meet its mission.

STAFFING AND BASIC COMPETENCIES:

At one time, all AV desk staff had to do was to take channel requests for phonodisc requests and write the request on a chalkboard, take the tape of the request to the control room, and shelve the tape after it played. Today hourly clerical and work study staff have to know how to use and demonstrate various formats of equipment such as filmstrip/cassette players, 16mm projectors, and multimedia programs. It is also expected that each AV staff person knows how to help patrons to use UTCAT to find materials they need. It has become increasingly difficult to train hourly staff, who may work only 9 to 12 hours per week, on all of equipment and resources in the collection. It would benefit AV's services to have staffing at least at the classified office assistant level to meet the current and future demands. With a more stable desk staff, the AV supervisory staff would have more available time to acquire additional technical training.

AUDIOVISUAL RESOURCES, FOR ACQUISITIONS AND METHOD OF ACCESS:

•Compact Discs: Music, limited to user requests for recreational listening.
Access: channel listening or library use only.

•Videocassettes: VHS formats for faulty request and noteworthy titles.
Access: Library use only and 3-Day circulations; Booking by faculty.

•16mm Films: Added only when this format is required by faculty or it is the only format available.
Access: Library use only or 3-Day circulation; Booking by faculty.

•Slide and Slide/cassette Programs: Added only when requested by faculty.
Access: Library use only and 3-Day circulation; Booking by faculty.

•Filmstrip/cassette Programs: Added only when requested by faculty.
Access : Library use only and 3-Day circulation; Booking by faculty.

•Audiocassettes Programs: Non-music programs added as appropriate.
Access: Library use only and 3-Day circulation; Booking by faculty.

•Video Laser Disc Programs: CAV and CLV formats of cinema and educational programs.
Access: Library use only and 3-Day circulations; Booking by faculty.

•Interactive Programs: Program formats that combine video laser discs and computer programs and/or CD-ROM formats.
Access: Library use only with library equipment; Booking by faculty.

•CD-ROM Programs: Multimedia type CD-ROM programs that do not need additional computer programs to function.
Access: 2 hour circulation to the computer lab on the second floor of the FAC.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The VHS videocassette format should remain the main format for UGL Audio Visual Collection for the near future. Video laser discs, Multimedia CD-ROMs, and interactive programs using computers and formats such as laser discs and CD-ROMs should be actively acquired as equipment becomes available.

2. Audiovisual resources should continue to have their own separate acquisition budget and bibliographer to better facilitate the coordination of materials and the access to them.

3. The UGL Audio Visual Collection and the demand for audiovisual resources will continue to grow while funds to provide equipment and facilities for access lag behind. A method of providing funds for necessary equipment and future delivery technologies should be established for audiovisual resources.

4. The staffing levels at the Audio Visual Library Service Desk should be increased at least to classified office assistant positions. Hourly clerical assistants and College Work Study seasonal staffing cannot keep up with the current and future staffing competencies. Staffing levels of UGL AV Service Desk should match those of the Fine Arts Library Circulation Desk.

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Serials

The budget available for serials has not grown in several years as subscription costs continue to rise. Therefore, is it not feasible to expect that UGL will be able to continue its current serials policies. Indexing, the Faxon/Serials Acquisitions morass, changes in curriculum, vandalism and erratic publishing practices have also contributed to the need for an overhaul of the serials collection in UGL. This revamp could be addressed from several angles, including: user surveys, a reduction of paper and/or film subscriptions in favor of more electronic access, a reduction of the number, format and age of the backfiles, a stronger emphasis on local interest and topical material (including student-produced newspapers and magazines), a more balanced selection of titles which are not overly popular or scholarly and changes in cataloging and processing procedures.

I. User surveys can be useful and telling.

- The uncharged circulation counting program on ICS can be employed for calculating microfilm usage. UGL's focus is not research nor archival storage, for example, if microfilm from the 1960s is not being used it should not be in UGL.
- Exit surveys, kept brief and to-the-point, can provide perspective on the users' success rate. With this information, we could better determine where problems are occurring and recurring.
- Increased contact with faculty teaching undergraduate courses is imperative. We would have a greater chance to anticipate what the need will be and plan for it and also be in a better position to encourage faculty to promote effective use of indexes, electronic access, discourage vandalism, etc.

II. In order to stay on the cutting edge of the available technology and to continue to provide an acceptable level of service, UGL will need to seek ways to gain access to periodicals and their contents outside of the common paper subscription. More effort must be spent exploring the possibilities of electronic access, document delivery, CD-ROM full text products, etc.

- Paper and microfilm subscriptions could be reduced somewhat to pay for these usually more expensive alternatives. And in order to fit the periodical collection into the space allotted for it by the first floor renovation, no titles can be bound any longer. This alone will end the need for duplicating titles for binding.
- With the promised full-text version of Expanded Academic Index mounted on UTCAT-Plus, ProQuest, Newsbank and LEXIS/NEXIS, UGL has or will have faster one-step access to some of the most often used periodical and newspaper titles. This is a relatively new way for library patrons to get articles and as it stabilizes (i.e. consistency of the list of titles indexed, fullness of coverage, reliability of indexing, more machines) UGL will be able to drop individual subscriptions and rely on getting the articles in those periodicals from an electronic source. Some titles will always be better used for browsing, but some lend themselves quite readily to this type of access.

III. UGL has provided access to a number of popular magazines, serious-to-scholarly level titles in a wide variety of fields for research and a large selection of literary and extremely narrowly research oriented titles. The extreme ends will need to be trimmed in order to focus on core of serious-to-scholarly level titles which undergraduates need most for their hot-topic oriented papers and speeches. A careful evaluation of these titles in UGL is necessary.

IV. While some leisure/browsing reading can still be accommodated, this area should be much smaller and enhanced three ways:

- Continue to provide local interest materials dealing with UT, Austin, and Texas. This has been covered well in the past and should continue.
- Create a section for student magazines and newspapers. This should take only minimum maintenance. The students would be responsible for getting new issues to the library and replacing vandalized or stolen issues if they chose to. There would be not a

check-in system, the issues would be security stripped and property marked, there would be no weeding and all the papers/magazines should fit on one or two shelves with no alphabetizing. Also, it would be strongly emphasized that this is not the distribution point, so one copy and only one would stay on the shelf.

- Addition of newer, unindexed, hot-topic type titles we have been reluctant to carry in the past due to lack of indexing (for example, Garbage and Wired). This would also encourage the exploration of alternative viewpoints. These could get minimum cataloging and could well only be taken for only one or two years, depending on interest and how problematic the subscription is to maintain.

V. Selection, ordering, receiving, cataloging and processing of periodical subscriptions has mostly been centralized in the Serials Acquisitions and Serials Cataloging section of PCL's technical services department. As much as possible, titles are ordered through Faxon. As the size of these operations increase, so does the rate and number of problems. The confusing array of titles, formats, pricing and multiple copies leads to delays in problem-solving.

- Receipt of issues directly at UGL would eliminate some of the middle-man handling delays. This could only work with a networked check in system, as this would be the only place to get issue-specific information.

- Using minimal cataloging for new CD-ROM indexes and a hot-topic periodical category will speed the receipt in UGL of these items and help with flexibility in changing subscriptions.

- A tighter system for keeping track of annuals and other standing order subscriptions is also necessary.

Serials
Appendix

This report's suggestions would affect staffing and funding in the following ways:

STAFFING

LESS NEEDED FOR:

magazine, film box, and reference material processing
(not as many label changes but - more often)

SAME AMOUNT NEEDED FOR:

shelving of the most often used microfilm

MORE NEEDED FOR:

circulation/shelving of paper issues
claiming/replacing
electronic access help
equipment maintenance
faster changes (more labeling, shifting, etc.)
receiving/subscribing
repairing/analysis
shelving/shifting

TRAINING NECESSARY FOR:

Equipment maintenance
evaluation processing
Excel
INNOVACQ
labeling
receiving periodicals
user surveys

FUNDING

LESS NEEDED DUE TO :

fewer problem subscriptions
fewer titles
less theft
less waste
no binding costs

MORE NEEDED FOR:

equipment
electronic access
CD-ROM subscriptions
signage

Information Resources Task Force

Reference/EIC

The merging of UGL's Reference and EIC greatly affects the information resources of the Reference service area. After examining and discussing the effects of this merger, this sub-task force has come to the following assumptions and recommendations.

Assumption 1:

The Information Resources Task Force has concluded that the inevitable evolution of UGL will be to become a Gateway Library for providing reference and instruction for undergraduate students. Thus, UGL will acquire more electronic format (e-format) materials for the purpose of conducting Reference and undergraduate instruction in light of the new emerging information age.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Timely acquisition of new equipment and/or equipment upgrades
- Acquisition of software, supporting materials, and site licenses
- Designation of Electronic Coordinator for evaluation, installation and troubleshooting of newly acquired e-format materials
- Designation of Staff Development Coordinator whose charge involves organizing UGL staff's orientation to new materials and evaluation of minimum competency criteria for staff
- Re-evaluation of public service staff schedules to include ample time for orientation to e-format materials
- Re-evaluation of staffing for Collection Development, Information Desk, and EIC
- Development of an e-format "Communications Bulletin" for staff to discuss new discoveries, developments and issues concerning information resources in the new Reference/EIC area
- Re-evaluation of how e-format materials are included in instruction curriculum and redesign said curriculum if necessary
- Restructuring of Reference interview to include e-format alternatives

Assumption 2:

Print source acquisitions will be reduced with the increase of electronic format purchases due to a possible static budget. Since the emphasis will be placed on new technologies and information access, the acquisition of Reference/EIC materials will need to be more closely scrutinized in order to acquire the most appropriate material considering UGL's budget, technological environment, and flexibility in purchasing needed materials and supporting equipment.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Purchase of print monographs will be based on thorough evaluation of content, format availability and core collection needs
- Avoidance of purchase of duplicate information sources in multiple formats
- Designation of Reference Print Coordinator to work in conjunction with the Electronic Coordinator to evaluate various sources and formats and to determine the most appropriate format for acquisition
- construction and evaluation of a core Reference/EIC collection
- Establishment of routine review and weeding of all formats of the core Reference/EIC collection
- Coordination of working relationship between subject bibliographers and both Electronic Coordinator and Reference Print Coordinator
- Re-evaluation of staffing requirements for the new Reference/EIC public service area. This includes consideration of Collection Development needs, Reference/EIC maintenance needs, and Public Service requirements. Also to be considered are staff budget allotment, job descriptions, competency levels, etc.

Assumption 3:

If UGL strives to become the Gateway Library to new information technologies and access services then it is apparent that some consideration be made regarding the varieties of electronic access services UGL will support and offer.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Ready Reference Services: Re-evaluate guidelines pertaining to service delivery: What is Ready Reference? To whom do we provide this service? --Only undergraduates? Only U.T. students?
- Document Delivery: Free full-text retrieval? Promotion of CarlUncover? Promotion of General Libraries Interlibrary Loan services at UGL?
- Full-Service searching: Should UGL begin to offer full-service searching for faculty and students?
- U-Search: Should UGL continue to offer the Classmate instruction program? Should this be actively incorporated into the library instruction?
- Reference Interview: restucure to include questions regarding type of format desired, ease of accessibility, urgency, and various costs entailed
- Internet: What role will access to the Internet play for instructional purposes? Should UGL begin to offer demonstrations in conjunction with PCL?
- CD-ROM Network: What role should UGL play in the continual development of the CD-ROM Network? Should some of our funds go to the purchase of new material for the CD-ROM Network? Should we be developing demonstrations and handouts so undergraduates can more effectively use the CD-ROM Network?
- Cost of services: Should UGL incorporate into its budget the provision of some of the services to undergraduates as a free service?

Assumption 4:

The intense re-examination of UGL information resources has been partially due to the addition of a new computer lab on the second floor of the Flawn Academic Center. Because of the close proximity of this new university facility and the added advantages of its resources, it is logical to conclude that UGL should begin to cultivate a working relationship that would be mutually beneficial to both the General Libraries and the Computation Center.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Designatie a Computation Center Coordinator or liaison to promote collaborative acquisition of appropriate materials.
- Evaluate information service and resource needs on the second floor. Staffing with UGL library personnel? Peak periods? All the time? Create a second Reference Service Point? Duplicate ready reference materials?
- Acquire library materials with the intent to utilize these materials with the equipment located in the Computation Center's computer lab.