Weeding Science Collections

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Virginia Commonwealth University
ALA Annual, June 26, 2010
Fast Facts

• One of the nation’s top research universities

• Located in Richmond Virginia, the state’s capital

• Enrolls over 32,000 students

• Two campuses:
  • Monroe Park Campus James Branch Cabell Library (JBC)
  • MCV Campus Tompkins McCaw Library (TML)

• VCU Medical Center including the university health system
  • Offers state of the art care in more than 200 specialty areas
  • Serves as the region’s only level 1 Trauma Center

• This presentation is about the weeding project for the two libraries
• Emphasis on the JBC facility
James Branch Cabell Library

• Built 1975
• Size 172,884 sq ft
• Space allocated to other University priorities since 1975
  • Staff Computing Training Lab 775 sq ft
  • 4th Floor Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) – Offices -3,606 – This was recaptured in 2009
  • Basement Offices, Labs, etc for Technology and Facilities units. 27,583
• Total 31,968
• Total space left for the library = 140,916.
In 1974-75, James Branch Cabell (JBC) housed 251,800 volumes.

As of 2006-2007, total volumes was 1.9 million, which exceeds the 85% mark.

By 2009-2010, the volume count will exceed the planned capacity by over 90%.
VCU Libraries replaced student space with book stacks on a regular basis to accommodate the growth.

LIBQUAL administered in 2004 was a wake-up call.
• 2005, Compact Storage installed in the basement as on-site storage facility

• 3,408 sq ft, 208,985 LFI

• Goals
  - Relieve the overflowing stacks
  - Reduce the frustration of our users
  - Increase usability of the collections
• Removed journals 1990 and older to Compact Storage

• Stopped subscribing to print journals wherever possible

• Stopped shelving mandatory print that comes with electronic

• Removed all subscribed JSTOR print titles to Compact storage

• Removed least used book series to Compact Storage
• In 2006, LIBQUAL administered again
• Results – measured by Gap Scores
• Open ended questions gave further insights
What is a gap score? Gap scores express the difference between a user's perceived level of service or collection quality and their minimum expectation for services and collections. A negative gap score on an item, shown as a negative number in the table on the next slide, indicates that the user perceives services or collections to be less than the user's minimal expectation for those services or collections.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library space that inspires study and learning</td>
<td>-0.32</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.63</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
<td>-0.30</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiet space for individual activities</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.39</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>-0.64</td>
<td>0.23</td>
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<tr>
<td>A comfortable and inviting location</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.32</td>
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<td>A gateway for study, learning, or research</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>-0.30</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.47</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community space for group learning and group study</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>0.91</td>
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<tr>
<td>Convenient service hours</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.66</td>
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<td>A safe and secure space</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
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“A library is a unique place for quiet study, reflection and intellectual meditation. Cabell library does not foster that environment because of limitations of the physical space. It is very difficult to find a quiet spot. There is little I believe can be done to remedy the situation in the current library space. A new library is needed ...”
The Library is overcrowded and needs to be expanded physically. It is too small for a university of this size. In fact, there should be more satellite branches.
“I wish VCU could have bigger library with a lot of spaces.”
“The state of the stacks is appalling and greatly decreases the usefulness of Cabell library. It is often difficult or impossible to find necessary resources on the shelves that are supposed to be there.”
“VCU needs to build an undergraduate library/study hall immediately.”

“Cabell Library needs to be enlarged to meet the needs of the growing student population”
In 2008, we administered another LIBQUAL survey to gauge where we are and where we still need to be
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<tr>
<td><strong>LP-1</strong> Library space that inspires study &amp; learning</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.02</td>
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<td>-0.18</td>
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<td><strong>LP-2</strong> Quiet space for individual activities</td>
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<td><strong>LP-3</strong> A comfortable and inviting location</td>
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<td><strong>LP-4</strong> A gateway for study, learning, or research</td>
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<td>0.33</td>
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<td><strong>LP-5</strong> Community space for group learning &amp; group study</td>
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<td>0.78</td>
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<td><strong>LP-6</strong> Convenient service hours</td>
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<td><strong>LP-7</strong> A safe and secure place</td>
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<td>-0.21</td>
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<td>-0.09</td>
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• Relevant questions LP-1-5

• LP-1 shows some modest improvement across board

• LP-2 shows a worse situation across board

• LP-3 – worse for undergrads, improves for grads and worse for faculty
• LP-4 Stay the same for undergrads, improves for grads and worse for faculty

• LP-5 worse across board
• More rounds of weeding

• Acquired electronic version, of book series such as:
  • Methods in Enzymology
  • Lecture Notes in Computer Science

• Removed the print to storage
• 2009 – Conversion of part of the second floor to Learning Commons with computers and soft furnishing

• Addition of seven group study rooms and group study area with smart boards

• 2010 – VCU Acquired a building – 500 Academic Centre

• Library storage space – over 21,000 linear feet

• Total no. of volumes moved there 250,000
• All A&I with stable electronic version - discarded

• Remaining journals on the second floor – moved to the first floor

• All stacks consolidated

• The rest of the second floor opened up for the construction of a larger learning commons – over 14,000 sq ft
Conclusion:

With the acquisition of the 500 Academic Centre – more efficient stacks and increased circulation

With the Learning Commons, an inviting environment- we expect a more satisfied user population.

Next LIBQUAL – Expect a higher gap score all around
THANK YOU

Questions

Weeding Science Collections