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Recipe for Collection Assessment: Mixing Together Key Ingredients to Make a Roux

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Recipe for Collection Assessment: *Mixing Together Key Ingredients to Make a Roux*

Houston Cole Library collection assessments give an overall quantitative review of a specific collection and its strengths and weaknesses. These numbers, along with narrative sections, help to justify expenditures, enhance the university's curriculum, help with collection development and management, and support program accreditation.

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NUTRITION INFORMATION

Collection assessments are conducted at the Houston Cole Library to ensure that current programs are supported adequately and to find out if materials are needed for newly added programs.

Collection Development and Assessment website (<http://libguides.jsu.edu/cmdg>) serves up assessments as well as links to the Collection Management and Development Policy (<http://www.jsu.edu/library/pdfs/policies/cmd.pdf>) and Collection Assessments Guide (http://www.jsu.edu/library/docs/Collection_Assessments_Guide.ppt).

For a lighter collection assessment, eliminate unnecessary text and fold in numbers using the short form. An example may be seen here: http://www.jsu.edu/library/docs/assessments/Auxiliary_Sciences_Short_Form.docx

DIETARY STANDARDS

ACRL Standards for Proficiencies for Assessment Librarians and Coordinators Standard 3, Assessment Methods and Strategies, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4

COOKING TIME

Subject specialists usually have an academic year to prepare collection assessments. A shorter timeframe may be necessary if information is needed for program reaccreditation reports or new programs. Assessments are conducted approximately every five years.

COOKING TECHNIQUE

Chefs are the subject librarians, who prepare assessment reports using either a detailed long method with conspectus worksheets or a short method with more statistics and less narrative.

INGREDIENTS

- Relevant bibliographies for checking
- Lists of recommended books or journals in professional journals
- Electronic resources, such as *Doody's Core Titles in the Health Sciences* or database subject lists

INGREDIENTS NOTES

Assessment reports on various Library of Congress subjects have the same basic structure, with some differences to fit subjects. A condensed form is conducted

for subject areas that do not have degree programs.

THE ASSESSMENT

- Assemble ingredients with the assistance of the technical services and acquisition departments in preparing needed data
- Check bibliographies
- Compile numbers in conspectus call number ranges, using the appropriate method for your integrated library system

Basic Structure of Assessments

An introduction outlines the current collection level. This is based on collecting and acquisition activity and how well a collection can support academic degree programs.

The holdings section lists the current number of titles in relevant Library of Congress subject headings.

Electronic services access is provided by a list of periodical databases in the specific subjects of each assessment, as well as

listing general databases, such as *Academic Search Premier*, that provides coverage. Links to relevant subject guides are listed as well.

An estimate of online periodical access is included from our e-resource access and management service.

Supplemental support lists Library of Congress subjects in related subject collections that are helpful to scholars, along with their holdings.

Expenditures for periodicals and monographs are listed for the five fiscal years since the last assessment.

A summary outlines changes as well as strengths and weaknesses of the periodical and monograph collections. Additionally, it offers collection development and maintenance recommendations, such as making additional purchases in a specific area or weeding outdated sections.

Checklists are presented with the numbers of library holdings compared to subjects listed in the bibliography, with the percent held calculated.

For examples see: http://www.jsu.edu/library/information/collection_assessments.html

ALLERGY WARNINGS

It is becoming difficult to find current subject bibliographies, so librarians have to look for resources that will fit their recipes.

Collection assessment guidelines rapidly become outdated as collections and material formats change.

CHEF'S NOTE

Assessments are prepared for administrative staff in the Houston Cole Library (HCL), for departments and/or colleges appropriate to the recipes, and for university administration.

Following approval from the Library's Collection Management and Development Group, the assessments are served to the Web for public access.