University of Alberta Libraries  
Joint Report for the American Library Association Annual Meeting, January 2014  
Chief Collection Development Officers of Large Research Libraries  
and  
ALCTS Technical Services Directors of Large Research Libraries Interest Group

Budget
Due to a reduction in our budget, this summer the Libraries undertook a significant serials review and cancellation exercise, resulting in 566 subscriptions being cancelled. It is anticipated that we will undergo further cancellation of serials this spring given ongoing budget difficulties.

Staffing
This fall, the University offered voluntary severance to academic staff as a means of managing operating budget reductions, and 5 librarians took the offer. The positions lost include our Head of Bibliographic Services, Collections Coordinator in the Humanities and Social Sciences Library, Head/Collections Manager of our Business Library, and our East Asian Studies librarian/cataloguer. These positions will end as of June 30th. These losses are in addition to 41 non-academic staff from the library that took voluntary severance earlier in the year.

Our Associate University Librarian for Research and Special Collections, and University Archivist, Dr. Merrill Distad, retired on December 31st after a long and distinguished career.

New Model for Monograph Acquisitions
The Libraries are implementing a new model for the acquisition of English language monographs. At present, liaison librarians do selection and ordering of monographs within the online systems of our two main book vendors, YBP and Coutts. Other ordering is done within Unit libraries. Only a small portion of our monographs come automatically on approval.

This fall the Libraries decided to move to e-preferred for monographs, and undertook an RFP process to choose a single English language monograph vendor (process ongoing). In conjunction with these changes, a major change in how we select and purchase English language monographs was approved earlier this month.

English language monograph selection and purchasing will be centralized and streamlined in order to enable faster service, smooth workflow processes, and consistency across all subject areas, while aiming to improve responsiveness to user needs and overall sustainability of monograph spending power. Our new model will eliminate individual selection by liaisons in favour of, 1) upfront purchasing of ebook publisher packages; 2) a core of (e-preferred) materials covering all subject areas acquired on approval; 3) a wide reaching demand driven acquisitions program; 4) a centralized “request a purchase” service. Unit-based collection managers and liaison librarians will be involved in developing and fine-tuning approval profiles and the ongoing
assessment of these changes upon their subject areas.

The new plan will begin in April 2014, with the start of the new fiscal year, at the same time that our chosen monograph vendor’s contract begins. Details will be worked through in the Winter preceding, and the plans will be monitored closely and amendments made throughout the 2014-15 fiscal year.

Major Acquisitions
The Bruce Peel Special Collections Library acquired a third donation instalment from the collection of Dr Bruce Dancik, distinguished Professor Emeritus of Forestry and former Director of the Devonian Botanic Garden at the University of Alberta. Adding this recent donation to the two tranches Dr Dancik donated in 2009 and 2011—which were certified by the Canadian Cultural Properties Board on both applications—fulfills the purpose of an important national research collection in bringing together titles that would otherwise force researchers to visit numerous, widely scattered library collections. These donated titles are drawn from his larger collection of approximately 3,000 books and an equal number of ephemera; together, they form an excellent complement to the UofA Library’s recently acquired copy of Dean Sage’s classic *The Ristigouche and its Salmon Fishing* (Edinburgh, 1888), limited to 105 copies, and generally considered by connoisseurs and scholars to be the *ne plus supra* of Canadian angling books.

Digitization
A major milestone was achieved this past summer with the completion of the multi-year CIHM microfiche digitization project. The project, funded in part through the Canadian Research Knowledge Network, and in part by University of Alberta, has resulted in the digitization of 76,988 Canadian historical monographs. See [https://archive.org/details/university_of_alberta_libraries_microfilm](https://archive.org/details/university_of_alberta_libraries_microfilm) for access to the collection. Arrangements are being made to have the material preserved in Hathitrust.

As a compliment to our existing digitization workflows, we are now hosting an Internet Archive book scanner on campus. We have begun scanning a large volume of provincial government publications, received as part of an 11 pallet shipment of material from Library and Archives Canada, as they reduced duplication within their collection. UAL has committed annual funds toward the digitization of this collection but given the overall costs, we are actively seeking sponsorship dollars from outside funders, e.g. other post-secondary institutions and government library partners.

Progress continues on the digitization of western Canadian historical material (monographs, archival, images, maps) destined for both the Peel’s Prairie Provinces online collection and the Sam Steele archival collection. We were pleased to have partnered with Library and Archives Canada to borrow rare materials for digitization and addition to the collection. Backstage Library Works is performing the digitization on site at our main campus.

UAL has partnered with Gale Cengage to digitize two special collections of note: the Gregory
Javitch collection (First Nations) and the Madge Entomology collection. Digitization of the Javitch collection has been completed with the entomology collection to follow shortly thereafter. Both collections will be merged into new and existing Gale Cengage products.

**Digital preservation**

Digital preservation planning continues as we make slow and steady progress towards adopting policies reflective of the ISO 16363 standard. As referenced under the research data category, a great deal of effort has been put towards the archivematica development work and our ongoing support of partnerships such as the Canadian Polar Data Network. We continue to be heavily involved in a variety of LOCKSS initiatives, including the Canadian Government Information - Private LOCKSS Network.

**Web Archiving**

Interest in web archiving continues to build momentum with the collection growing significantly larger this past year. Planning is currently underway to further normalize web archiving work as part of our collection development program. We are pleased to be offering a 2014-16 CLIR Postdoctoral Fellow in Data Curation position to research and better understand the potential uses of web archive materials by campus research teams.

**Research Data**

Research data services has been identified by our new university librarian as one of the top priorities and service directions of the Libraries. A number of initiatives are underway including the build-up of technical and human resource support for this work. Initiatives include the formation of a system-wide research data management services development team, as well as the formation of a team dedicated to health-related research data. UAL currently supports a 2013-15 CLIR Postdoctoral Fellow in Data Curation with an interest in the stewardship of human subject data and much is being learned by her work.

In addition to ongoing institutional repository development, UAL expects to be offering a Dataverse service by the summer of 2014 and is further investigating the support of online Data Management Planning tools in anticipation of new RDM requirements from the large grant-funding agencies in Canada.

UAL has also completed development work on the Archivematica software stack that will allow for better packaging and management of the Archival Information Packages used by various data initiatives, e.g. the Canadian Polar Data Network (polardatanetwork.ca).

**Discovery**

After exploring numerous options, we have decided to implement the Blacklight open-source discovery system. We will continue to use Ebsco Discovery Service for article content for the foreseeable future.
Metadata & Cataloguing
An RFP for the monograph cataloguing of all materials acquired (purchases and gifts) excluding materials received from our major English monograph vendor will be issued shortly.

As part of our efforts to normalize our workflows around web archiving, we have been revisiting our existing policy on metadata treatment for such collections. As part of this review, we have undertaken a fairly extensive investigation of and experimentation with functionality around bulk editing, import and export, and conversion of metadata currently available in the Archive-It platform. As a result, we have developed several XSL stylesheets that can be used as tools to complement existing Archive-It metadata functionality. These stylesheets are available to the community through GitHub.

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