Notes on Operations
Evaluating Purchase Plans for Niche Collecting Areas

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Many academic libraries collect art exhibition catalogues and juvenile books to support the curriculum, but academic library review sources and book vendors have limited coverage of these niche areas. For more than a decade, Wichita State University has used purchase plans from Worldwide Art Books and Junior Library Guild to acquire print books. This paper discusses the assessment of both plans, how experience with this assessment has influenced development of an assessment plan, and reasons other libraries may want to assess their own niche collecting plans.

The Wichita State University Libraries has a long history of ad hoc collection assessment projects. The library dean and the recently hired collection strategist agreed that a shift to ongoing, systematic collection assessment was past due. The initial goal was to identify a small project that would provide useful information, help the new collection strategist learn local systems and practices, and begin developing procedures that could be adapted and expanded for future projects. Since the library conducts serials reviews as part of the annual renewal process, the collection strategist decided the initial project should focus on a small segment of the book collection.

Every library has its own mix of collection methods, ranging from title-by-title selection to demand driven and evidence-based acquisitions. Academic libraries often purchase the majority of books and e-books through one or two major vendors, using selection tools developed for academic library needs and online systems that work with integrated library systems (ILS). Many academic libraries also have some needs that are not well served by their major vendors, so they use a variety of smaller vendors and niche collecting plans. At the University Libraries, two niche collecting areas are children's and young adult literature to support the teacher education program and art exhibition catalogs.

For public libraries, children's and young adult literature are core collecting areas, but for our academic library they are considered niche areas because they are not well-supported by our major book vendor, GOBI. Instead of using GOBI, we use Follett, a vendor that focuses on the school library market, and Junior Library Guild (JLG), an approval plan vendor for children's and young adult literature. Title by title selection is time consuming, so we started an approval plan with JLG in 2011. JLG's approval plan consists of more than eighty categories, such as Primary, Young Adult, Multicultural Elementary, and Nonfiction Elementary Plus. The selector for children's and young adult literature chooses categories and the library pays for the plan at the beginning of the year, receiving a discount from the average cost of children's and young adult books and providing a welcome consistency in the cost of this approval plan. Title selections for each category are provided online several months in advance, so the selector can review and swap titles if desired. After the selector reviews the upcoming shipments online, acquisitions staff add titles to the catalog to avoid duplication and to make receiving the monthly shipment efficient.

Unlike children's and young adult literature, the library's major book vendor supplies many art books, and the art selector uses GOBI extensively. Art exhibition catalogs are a niche area because they are mainly issued by galleries and museums,

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many of which are not carried by major academic library book vendors. The library started an approval plan with Worldwide Books in 1991.[1] Worldwide Books was established in 1962 to focus on art exhibition catalogues, books that document or describe an art exhibition at a museum or galley.[2] The Worldwide plan operates much like traditional approval plans, with a profile that has been reviewed and revised many times over the years by the art selector. Books are sent and invoiced approximately once a month.

Both the JLG and Worldwide plans had been operating for over a decade. Both are managed by highly experienced selectors who regularly update the plans. Both selectors consider the plans valuable tools for acquiring materials, reducing the time they spend on title-by-title selection while providing needed materials. The Worldwide plan was assessed long ago by a prior selector, but the JLG plan had never been formally assessed. The collection strategist and acquisitions librarian agreed that assessing these two niche collecting plans would provide useful information for conversations with selectors, address plans with non-standard acquisitions workflow, and serve as a small pilot for systematic assessment of print collections. This paper focuses on the collection assessment, not the workflow assessment.

Literature Review

Approval plans originated in the early 1960s as a method to get new scholarly books into academic libraries quickly and efficiently, with books selected based on a profile without the need of laborious title-by-title selection or individual purchase orders and invoices. In the ensuing decades, they have been frequently discussed in the professional literature.[3] Libraries have been busy assessing approval plans in the last two decades. In 2000, Kingsley discussed the types of information that library system reports can provide and their use in assessing approval plans, suggesting that libraries should consider whether their plans might be too balanced instead of weighted towards heavily used subjects.[4] Two Association of Research Libraries members assessed their approval plan acquisitions for fiscal year 2005, focusing on usage and overlap between the two plans, with the goal of establishing benchmarks for evaluating profile effectiveness; they recommended examining cost per use, circulation rate, and the percentage of titles that did not circulate within about three years of acquisition.[5] A comparison of firm order and approval plan titles acquired at the University of Houston from 2011 to 2014 found that firm orders were consistently circulating at a higher rate, but also expressed some concerns about whether librarians had been responding to curriculum changes through firm orders instead of revising profiles.[6] In 2018, Linden, Tudesco, and Dollar discussed Yale's changing collections model, mentioning that increasing focus on

assessment had resulted in changes to their approval plans, but not going into detail on how they assessed plans.[7] Librarians at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln did a comparison of materials acquired via approval plan, patron-driven programs, and librarian firm orders, assessing scholarly interest in those titles based on number of citations found through Google Scholar; they found that their approval books performed poorly compared to librarian selections.[8] Ramirez and Tabacaru discussed using curriculum mapping as a method for improving approval plan profiling; they concluded that curriculum mapping followed by examination of titles with no usage by content level and publisher was useful in refining the approval plan.[9] When budget cuts necessitated trimming approval plans, Attebury explored whether the GOBI select designation (Basic Essential, Basic Research, Research Essential, Research Recommended) would be useful, finding that the Basic categories had a higher circulation rate than the Research categories.[10]

Relatively little literature is available covering approval plan assessment for art or juvenile literature in academic libraries. In 1999, Wolff assessed a Worldwide Plan for art exhibition catalogues, noting that high cost art books supplied by the plan spurred questions even though the cost is largely due to the type of paper needed and extensive color illustrations.[11] Wolff assessed the collection's quality using *Choice* for list checking and by circulation analysis. Wolff noted that list-checking using *Choice* was problematic, because it reviewed trade publications much more than art exhibition catalogs. The circulation analysis revealed that art books circulated at a higher rate than the overall collection and that art approval plan books circulation was comparable to overall circulation for titles acquired in the same year. One outcome of Wolff's assessment was modifying the art approval plan to eliminate a low-circulating area that was not relevant to the curriculum. Kogut, D'Aveta, and Tabacaru assessed juvenile literature in an academic library, focusing on comparing titles selected by librarians, supplied on approval, and suggested by patrons.[12] They discovered each acquisition method had its own strength and contribution to the collection, with patron suggestions and librarian selections adding smaller presses and Spanish books that the approval plan did not supply. Kogut, D'Aveta, and Tabacaru concluded that all three methods were needed to develop a strong collection.

Methodology

The primary goal of the study was to assess recently added titles to determine if the two approval plans were meeting current needs. Accordingly, we focused on titles added to the collection between July 1, 2017, and June 30, 2021. This provided four fiscal years of acquisitions data, with all titles

having been available for circulation for at least one year. Given that juvenile and art are print-preferred collecting areas, and both the JLG and Worldwide plans are limited to print, only print collections were considered. Research questions included:

- How does circulation of titles acquired via JLG compare to circulation of all juvenile books acquired during the same period?
- To what extent does the JLG plan provide titles from the award lists the selector considers essential?
- How does circulation of titles acquired via the Worldwide plan compare to circulation of all print art books acquired during the same period?
- What areas of the art curriculum does the Worldwide plan support?

Wichita State University Libraries use the Voyager ILS, which relies on Microsoft Access to query the database and generate reports. We modified an existing query that links bibliographic and circulation tables to generate holdings lists. We generated lists of juvenile titles and art holdings from Voyager, based on Library of Congress (LC) Classification. At Wichita State University Libraries, children's titles are classified in PZ 6 and young adult titles in PZ 5, then arranged by Dewey classification. Art titles include the N-NX classifications, plus portions of the TP, TR, and TT classifications. The holding reports included bibliographic record number, title, publisher, publication date, language, normalized call number, bib record create date, total circulations, and latest circulation. After exporting holdings reports, we developed a query linking acquisitions and bibliographic tables to export lists of titles acquired from JLG and Worldwide from FY2018 to FY2021, including bibliographic record number, title, publisher, publication date, and record create date. We used Excel's IF-THEN function to add the vendor name to the JLG and Worldwide holding lists and used the XLOOKUP function to add the bibliographic record number to the acquisition lists. By adding bibliographic record numbers, we could check for instances where bibliographic records used for orders were not overlaid during cataloging and where titles acquired via a purchase plan were not classified in the juvenile or art collection classification ranges. All the titles acquired via JLG and Worldwide fell within the classification ranges defined for the project, but eleven had not matched to the holdings list using the IF-THEN function. We manually matched those eleven holdings by title and publisher.

Upon reviewing the holdings lists, we noted that many art titles had duplicate copies. Since duplication is strongly discouraged by the collections policy, we suspected that the duplicates might be Special Collections holdings and re-generated the holding lists to add location codes. We discovered

that the duplicates, plus some unique titles, were holdings for the city art museum, a non-circulating collection included in the catalog as part of a cooperative arrangement. All city art museum titles were removed from the holdings list, leaving 1,355 art collection titles added to the university library collection from FY2018 to FY2021.

The selector for juvenile materials focuses on building a collection that supports the teacher education program, consulting reviews, awards, and recommended title lists in building the collection. The selector stated that winning and honor titles for six awards (Caldecott, Newbery, Coretta Scott King, Pura Belpré, Michael L. Printz, and Schneider) are added to the collection annually. We chose to use those six awards as a qualitative measure for the juvenile assessment, adding a column to the spreadsheet to indicate titles that were recognized as a winner or honor book for the 2017-2022 awards, looking the award titles up online, then coding them for whether they were acquired via the JLG plan.[13] The choice of award years to include was complicated by the fact that the books being assessed were based on fiscal year added to the collection, while eligibility for awards is based on year of publication. We decided to include award year 2017, since some titles acquired in FY2018 may have been published in and recognized on the 2017 awards list. We also included award year 2022, even though some eligible titles would not have been published in time to be acquired during FY2021.

We also coded recent juvenile acquisitions as picture book, fiction, or nonfiction. The Libraries classify picture books in PZ6, with the second line derived from the author's last name. All other children's and young adult titles are classed as PZ5, with the second line derived from the Dewey Decimal classification. Fiction titles were identified as those classed in PZ5 813, PZ5 823, PZ5 833, PZ5 843, PZ5 853, and PZ5 863. All other PZ5 titles were identified as nonfiction. We acknowledge that this coding is approximate, as it results in books of folklore, poetry, and riddles being coded as nonfiction, but thought the broad distinction might provide useful information.

The art selector consults reviews and awards but relies more on knowledge of publishers and curriculum in selecting titles, so we chose to use relevance to the current curriculum as a qualitative measure for the art assessment. The art curriculum is divided into five areas: Art Foundation, Art Education, Graphic Arts, Art History, and Studio Arts. We reviewed the course catalog and identified LC Classifications that support each major area, then coded the art holdings to show support based on the LC Classification for each title. Titles that did not map to a major course area were coded as N/A.

We calculated usage for all art titles, art titles acquired via the Worldwide plan, all juvenile titles, and juvenile titles acquired via the JLG plan. Only titles acquired from FY2018 to FY2021 were considered. Usage was calculated by dividing

Table 1. Juvenile titles by fiscal year added to collection with circulation

FISCAL YEAR ADDED	Titles Added		Total Circulation		Titles with No Circulation		Circulation Rate	
	ALL TITLES	JLG PLAN	ALL TITLES	JLG PLAN	ALL TITLES	JLG PLAN	ALL TITLES	JLG PLAN
FY2018	370	113	569	123	134	42	1.54	1.09
FY2019	598	214	643	156	307	136	1.08	0.73
FY2020	503	184	300	73	326	137	0.60	0.40
FY2021	428	130	200	36	204	106	0.47	0.28
Total	1899	641 (33.8%)	1712	388 (22.7%)	1077 (56.7%)	421 (65.7%)	0.90	0.61

total circulation for the group by number of titles in the group. This allowed us to compare usage for the plan titles with overall usage for the subject.

We also determined the percentage of titles that had not circulated and divided total circulations by the number of titles to derive a circulation rate for each group. We determined whether differences in circulation were significant by calculating a two-tailed single sample t-test, with a 95 percent confidence level. For the juvenile titles, we calculated the percentage of award titles acquired though the JLG plan, the total and average circulation of award titles, and the number of award titles with no circulation. For the art titles, we calculated titles per curricular area and average circulation per curricular area.

One limitation of this study is the varying amounts of time that books had to achieve their first circulation. The books were acquired between July 1, 2017, and June 30, 2021. Circulation data was retrieved on November 15, 2022. Some books had sixty-three months to circulate, while others had just fifteen months. We reported circulation rates by year of acquisition, to give an idea of the extent to which length of time the title was available may have affected circulation rate. We also note that the library was closed for several weeks during 2020, due to COVID-19, which may have affected circulation.

The Junior Library Guild Plan

As seen in table 1, the juvenile book collection includes 1,899 titles added between FY2018 and FY2021. Six hundred forty-one, or 33.8 percent, were acquired through the Junior Library Guild plan. Juvenile titles acquired from FY2018 to FY2021 have circulated a total of 1,712 times, with the JLG titles comprising 388 of those circulations. Although JLG titles made up 33.8 percent of the collection, they accounted for only 22.7 percent of the circulations. Of the 1,899 juvenile titles added FY2018 to FY2021, 1,077 (56.7 percent) had not circulated as of November 15, 2022, while of the 641 JLG titles, 421 (65.7 percent) had not circulated as of November 15, 2022.

Overall, juvenile titles acquired between FY2018 and FY2021 circulated 0.90 times per book, but the JLG titles circulated just 0.61 times per book, as shown in table 1. Since this appears to be a large difference, we calculated a t-test to determine significance and found that circulation of titles acquired through JLG (M=0.61, SD=1.1) was significantly lower than circulation of all juvenile titles acquired FY2018-2022, $t(640)=6.8$, $p=0.001$. We also noted that of the seventy-one juvenile titles that circulated five or more times, just nine were acquired through the JLG plan. The significantly lower circulation of the JLG plan titles indicates that the juvenile selector is better at picking titles that are likely to circulate than the approval plan is. However, switching to all title-by-title selection would increase the selector's workload.

When we chose FY2018-FY2021 acquisitions to analyze, our primary goal was to focus on recent acquisitions that had had at least a year to circulate. One concern we had was the possible impact of COVID-19, since the University was closed for half a semester before shifting to online and hybrid learning modes designed to reduce the number of people on campus. The COVID-19 closures began March 2020, midway through FY2020. The circulation rate displayed in table 1 suggests that circulation was closely related to the number of years a book had to circulate. Books acquired in FY2018 had four full years to circulate and had a circulation rate of 1.54, more than three times higher than the 0.47 circulation rate of FY2021 acquisitions. When comparing circulation rates, librarians need to consider how long items were in the collection.

As shown in table 2, from FY2018 to FY2021, 117 titles that won or were recognized as honor titles for the Newbery, Caldecott, Coretta Scott King, Pura Belpré, Printz, and Schneider awards were added to the juvenile collection, with some titles being recognized by multiple award programs. Just nineteen of the award titles were acquired through the JLG plan. The award titles circulated a total of 163 times, but fifty award titles had no circulations as of November 15, 2022. Award and honor titles circulated more (M=1.39, SD=5.48) than all recently acquired juvenile titles, $t(116)=2.27$, $p=0.02$. We were surprised to note that more than

Table 2. Juvenile titles by awards program

	Titles Added FY18-FY21		Circulation		Titles with No Circulation	
AWARD	ALL TITLES	JLG PLAN	ALL TITLES	JLG PLAN	ALL TITLES	VIA JLG PLAN
Newbery	15	2	23	3	5	1
Caldecott	16	4	25	7	7	1
King	36	5	62	3	13	2
Belpré	28	4	23	1	17	3
Printz	19	4	61	12	5	0
Schneider	17	1	21	4	5	0
All Awards	117	19	163	29	50	7

Note: Some titles appeared on multiple award lists, so All Titles is not equal to sum of titles for award.

Table 3. Books by category

	All Juvenile Titles Added FY18-FY21				JLG Plan Titles Added FY18-FY21			
CATEGORY	TITLES	CIRCULATION	% OF TITLES	% OF CIRCULATION	TITLES	CIRCULATION	% OF TITLES	% OF CIRCULATION
Fiction	746	736	39.3	43.0	223	97	34.8	25.0
Nonfiction	435	556	22.9	32.5	162	162	25.3	41.8
Picturebook	718	420	37.8	24.5	256	129	39.9	33.2

half of the Belpré titles had no circulations, even though 16 percent of the university's population and 19 percent of the state's population is Hispanic.[14]

The juvenile selector can choose from over eighty categories when developing the JLG approval plan, based on age level and subject, so we were interested in how three categories of books circulated, picture books, fiction chapter books, and nonfiction chapter books. As indicated in table 3, picture books consisted of 37.8 percent of recent juvenile acquisitions, but accounted for only 24.5 percent of circulation, while nonfiction chapter books were only 22.9 percent of recent acquisitions but almost a third (32.5 percent) of circulation. A quarter (25.3 percent) of the recent JLG acquisitions were nonfiction chapter books, but 41.8 percent of the JLG plan titles that circulated were nonfiction. The JLG plan provided 37 percent (162 JLG of 435 total nonfiction titles) of nonfiction chapter books and JLG plan nonfiction circulated more than JLG fiction or picture books, suggesting that an emphasis on JLG nonfiction categories might be advisable.

In discussing these results with the juvenile selector, they commented that they support their perception that current faculty are emphasizing young adult fiction. They also noted that demand for different types of juvenile materials shifts with faculty changes, but that they try to consider both current demand and the long-term goal of a collection that can be used to study trends in children's and young adult literature.

The Worldwide Art Exhibition Catalog Plan

Art is a print preferred collecting area at the University Libraries, with 95 percent of one-time purchase funds being spent on print from FY2018 to FY2021. As table 4 indicates, 1,355 art titles were added to the collection from FY2018 to FY2021, with 519 titles acquired through the Worldwide approval plan. As of November 15, 2022, art titles acquired FY2018-FY2021 had circulated a total of 1,051 times, with the Worldwide titles comprising 508 of those circulations. Overall, the recent art titles circulated 0.78 times per book, but the recent Worldwide titles circulated 0.98 times per book. Since this appeared to be a large difference, we calculated a t-test to determine significance and found that circulation of titles acquired through Worldwide ($M=0.98$, $SD=0.61$) was significantly higher than circulation of all art titles acquired FY2018-2021, $t(518)=6.3$, $p=0.001$. Almost half (633 of 1,355) of all recently acquired art books had not circulated as of November 15, 2022, but just a quarter (132 of 519) of the recently acquired Worldwide titles had not circulated. These circulation patterns clearly indicate that the Worldwide plan is providing useful titles for the art collection.

The art program is divided into five major areas, so we were interested in how the collection, and particularly the Worldwide approval plan, supports those five areas. We

Table 4. Art titles by fiscal year added to collection

	Titles Added		Total Circulation		No Circulation		Circulation Rate	
	ALL TITLES	WORLDWIDE PLAN	ALL TITLES	WORLDWIDE PLAN	ALL TITLES	WORLDWIDE PLAN	ALL TITLES	WORLDWIDE PLAN
FY2018	366	148	307	152	149	33	0.84	1.03
FY2019	433	144	392	169	189	18	0.91	1.17
FY2020	302	142	245	143	120	30	0.81	1.01
FY2021	254	85	107	44	175	51	0.42	0.52
Total	1355	519	1051	508	633	132	0.78	0.98

Note: Circulation is for the period July 1, 2017–November 15, 2022.

Table 5. Art books acquired FY18-FY21 by program supported with circulation

Program			Books Added		Circulations		Circulation Rate	
CODE	TITLE	COURSES	ALL	WORLDWIDE	ALL	WORLDWIDE	ALL	WORLDWIDE
ARTE	Art Education	22	57 (4%)	9 (2%)	22	6	0.39	0.67
ARTF	Art Foundations	6	35 (3%)	6 (1%)	34	5	0.97	0.83
ARTG	Graphic Arts	23	73 (5%)	1 (<1%)	48	2	0.66	2.00
ARTH	Art History	41	1060 (78%)	466 (90%)	856	451	0.81	0.97
ARTS	Studio Art	82	1131 (84%)	487 (94%)	874	470	0.77	0.97
N/A	No Program	0	103 (8%)	22 (4%)	81	24	0.79	1.09

Note: Percentages are calculated based on a total of 1,355 titles acquired in FY18-FY21, with 519 titles acquired via Worldwide.

identified LC classification ranges that mapped to courses in the university catalog (see Appendix A). Many of the subject classifications were relevant to multiple art programs. For example, Private collections and collectors (under N) mapped to courses in the Art History and Studio Art programs. We note that there were no recent acquisitions in some areas, such as TP, which includes ceramic and glass technology.

Table 5 displays the number of courses and books by program area. We were initially surprised to see that 84 percent of recently acquired titles were relevant to Studio Art and 78 percent to Art History, but only 4 percent were relevant to Art Education, 3 percent to Art Foundations, and 5 percent to Graphic Arts. One simple explanation is that Studio Art and Art History have many more courses. It is also possible that more titles are published in each area or that the art selector perceived a difference in demand for materials based on faculty requests or assignments made. Another factor that contributes to the high percentage of titles relevant to Studio Art is that many lower-level Studio Art course descriptions included a history component, resulting in substantial overlap between subjects mapped to Studio Art and Art History. Table 5 reveals that the Worldwide plan adds very few books supporting the three smaller programs, Art Education, Art Foundation, and Graphic Arts, but this is likely due to the Worldwide plan focusing on exhibition catalogs which are

less suited to these subjects. The selector may want to check on whether the Worldwide profile could be tweaked to add more Graphic Arts titles. Knowing that three programs are not supported by Worldwide, the art selector may want to focus on them more when doing title-by-title selection. Table 5 also indicates that 103 books from the art classification ranges did not map to any of the art programs. Those 103 titles had a circulation rate of 0.79, which is comparable to the 0.78 circulation rate of all art books shown in table 4.

Figure 1 compares the circulation rate of all art titles acquired in FY18–FY21 with titles acquired via Worldwide during that period. Worldwide plan titles have a higher circulation rate than the overall art acquisitions in every LC classification range except TR and TT. The difference in circulation rate is particularly noticeable for classifications NA (0.35 overall, 0.93 Worldwide), NC (0.75 overall, 1.44 Worldwide), and NX (0.70 overall, 1.20 Worldwide). We suggested to the selector that they consider relying mainly on Worldwide for NA, NC, and NX, allowing them to focus more time on title-by-title selection for the other classifications. We also noticed that while the university does not offer any courses in architecture, the NA-Architecture titles we obtain from Worldwide circulate, suggesting that architectural history may be integrated into the art curriculum even though it does not appear in course descriptions other than study abroad. The lack of circulation rate for Worldwide titles
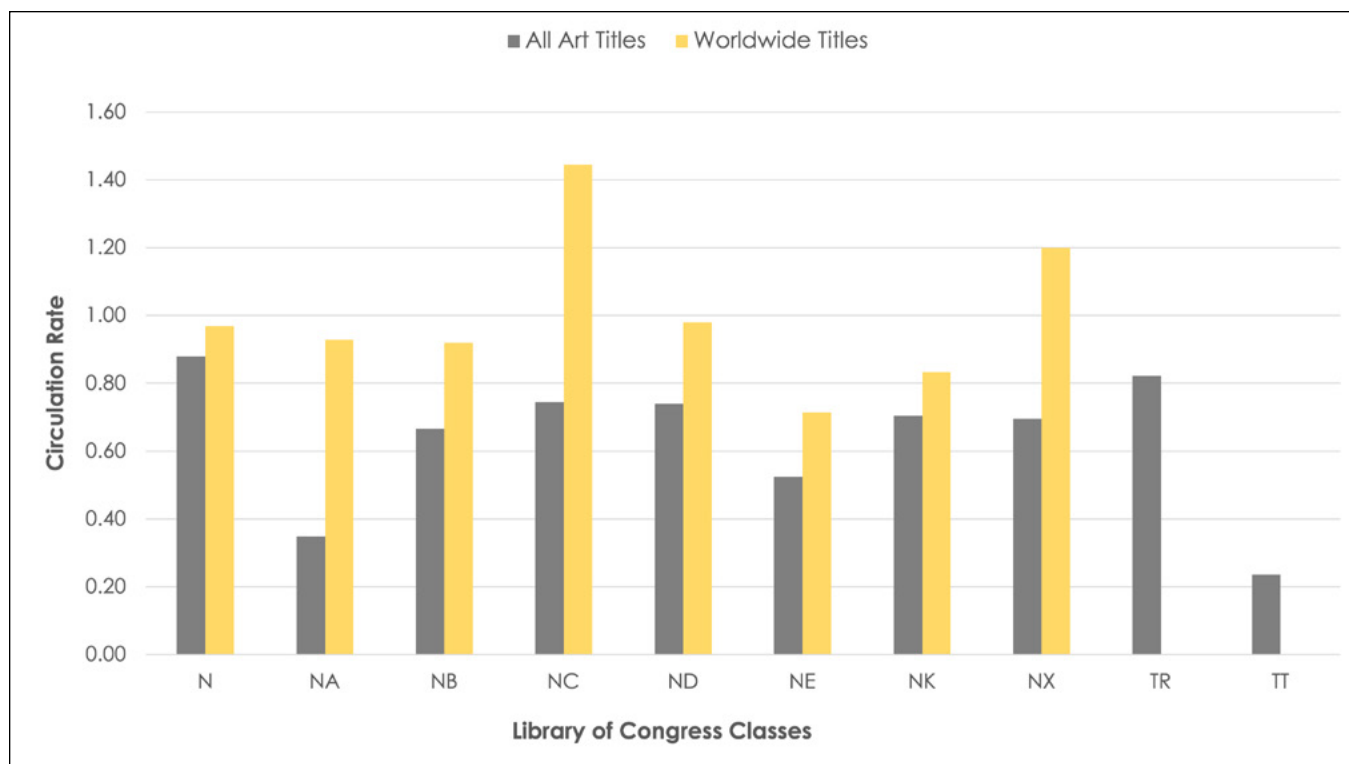
Figure 1. Circulation rate of art titles by classification.

in TR and TT was because the Worldwide plan did not supply any titles in those classifications.

Influence on Development of Assessment Plan

The new collection strategist's goals for this project included beginning to develop procedures that could be adapted and expanded as part of a systemic collection assessment program. Not only does the dean have a strong interest in quantitative data demonstrating program support and good stewardship of the collections budget, but multiple selectors have expressed an interest in more data to help them update profiles and guide selection priorities. The collection strategist is also interested in data to help prioritize deselection projects, as the print collection is badly in need of weeding.

Working on this project helped us develop standard queries for data downloads. As we worked with our initial data download, we discovered a need for additional data and found that some data in our first data download was not used. We were very glad that we had selected a small initial project as a pilot, since we downloaded data three times as we figured out what we needed and had to start our analysis over each time. Since we anticipate switching library systems within two

years, we will use our revised reports to download and store critical assessment data that is sometimes lost during migrations as encouraged in our library's migration preparation plan. For example, we migrated to Voyager on November 22, 1999, and our system indicates that was the item create date for a substantial portion of the collection. In addition, the earliest circulation data we have is for November 1999. We used item create date and circulation data for this assessment, and plan to use that data again to target areas for deselection review, so we want to ensure that data remains available if it does not migrate successfully. Our revised Voyager queries include a standard set of assessment data for the print book collection. Those queries can be modified for other physical formats. We also identified cleanup procedures that need to be done for each data set, such as using location codes to separate materials cataloged for partners like the local art museum from the Libraries' own collection. Our next goal is to develop procedures for downloading and storing data for re-use, then download that data for the entire physical collection.

This project also served as an opportunity to experiment with various ways of reporting quantitative data. We wanted a standard report template that would present data in ways that prompt reflective practice and start conversations about the collection. Our long-term goal is to encourage librarians to think about whether the way students use the collection is changing, whether the types of assignments faculty are giving

is changing, and whether their perceptions of what is needed are matched by data on what is used. For this project, we focused on books acquired in the last five years, but we have agreed that our systematic collection assessment templates should be expanded, allowing librarians to examine data for all resources and to filter by resources acquired in the last five years, last ten years, and last twenty years. We expect the ability to review data for different time spans and subjects will be helpful in establishing guidelines for collection management. For example, it is easy to think that older science and technical materials are not useful and can be deselected, but in areas like aerospace engineering where aircraft stay in service for decades, older technical materials may be valuable. Identifying patterns of use by decade may allow us to identify areas where cloth books are more cost effective than trade paperbacks because they are likely to be used for longer periods and to identify where to target deselection projects so we can free space for other needs.

For this project, the collection strategist and acquisitions librarian did some qualitative assessment, looking at award titles for juvenile books and matching art course descriptions to subject classifications. The awards title work was straightforward, as the juvenile selector had identified key awards. The curriculum mapping was more difficult and time-consuming, as we encountered unfamiliar terminology in both course catalog descriptions and LC classification schedules. In developing future assessment plans, the collection strategist will focus initially on quantitative data, and then work with selectors on qualitative measures such as checking the collection for recommended titles and mapping collections to programs. The goal of our systematic collection assessment program will be to provide selectors with quantitative data, so they have a basis for developing qualitative assessments.

Conclusion

We learned several lessons during this assessment project that other libraries may benefit from when embarking on assessment projects. First, start with a small project. The first time you export data from your system, you will likely discover that you did not get everything needed for your assessment. Starting small lets you export data, start analyzing, then re-export data until you figure out just what you need and how to get it from your system. Second, choose assessment projects that help you make wise use of limited

time and funds. Spend time discussing the data, looking for patterns that suggest changes might improve the collection's usefulness. Third, try to involve a librarian who is familiar with the subject early when planning qualitative assessments. Subject librarians were helpful in pointing us to award lists and course descriptions as qualitative measures that would provide useful information based on needs they had observed. Fourth, provide selectors with data and point out a few of the questions that data suggested to you, then give them time to consider whether to make changes in their selection practices. Learning to look at data, spot patterns, and consider possible explanations takes time, but is essential to building a culture of assessment. Fifth, recognize that your pilot project should be the start of ongoing, systematic assessment. Keep good notes of what you tried, what worked and what frustrated you, and then take time to develop systematic procedures to make future projects easier. Investing time in a pilot project will save time on future assessments.

Niche collecting plans are easy to overlook in assessing collections. They use a relatively small amount of the budget and require relatively little time to manage. They could run for years without being assessed. One of the two plans in this study was last assessed more than two decades ago, while the other had never been assessed. This assessment focused on providing two experienced selectors with data to help them make decisions about continuing, cancelling, or revising their niche collecting plans. The JLG assessment found that plan titles circulate less than the overall juvenile collection, but also suggested modifying the JLG plan to focus on juvenile nonfiction. The Worldwide assessment found that plan titles circulate more than the overall art collection, but it also found that 40 percent of all art titles acquired in FY2018 still had not circulated. As we expand from this initial pilot project into ongoing, systematic collection assessment, we will need to consider how much librarian time and collection budget should be devoted to buying books in areas where circulation rates are low.

Niche collecting plans make useful assessment pilot projects. Their small size makes them ideal for developing a small-scale project to learn a library's local system and practices and to test methods for harvesting and reporting data. Although the new collection strategies librarian at the university was tempted to plunge directly into a large project, focusing on these two niche collections has established a foundation of local knowledge to support building an ongoing, systematic collection assessment plan for the Libraries.

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Appendix A. Art Books by Classification and Program Area Supported

Subject Classification	ARTE	ARTF	ARTG	ARTH	ARTS	All Titles	Worldwide Titles	Total Circulation
N Visual arts						606	292	533
Art and the state. Public art				x	x	4	2	3
Art as a profession. Artists				x	x	4	1	4
Art museums, galleries, etc.	x			x	x	26	6	12
Art studios, materials, etc.	x				x	0	0	0
Economics of art				x	x	4	0	3
Exhibitions				x	x	3	1	1
General		x				1	0	1
General works				x		33	5	48
History				x	x	438	242	380
Private collections and collectors				x	x	10	8	9
Special subjects of art				x	x	43	19	43
Study and teaching	x					14	3	6
Theory. Philosophy. Aesthetics of the visual arts		x		x	x	25	5	23

Subject Classification	ARTE	ARTF	ARTG	ARTH	ARTS	All Titles	Worldwide Titles	Total Circulation
One subject that did not map to curriculum						1	0	0
NA - Architecture						66	14	23
Aesthetics of cities. City planning and beautifying					x	4	0	0
History				x	x	53	13	18
General works		x				1	0	0
Three subjects that did not map to curriculum						8	1	5
NB Sculpture						42	25	28
Designs and techniques					x	1	0	0
General		x				1	0	0
General works		x				0	0	0
History, including collective biography				x	x	36	24	25
Mobiles, color, sculpture gardens, etc.					x	1	0	1
Special forms				x	x	1	0	0
Study and teaching	x					0	0	0
One subject that did not map to curriculum						2	1	2
NC Drawing. Design. Illustration						106	9	79
Commercial art			x			49	0	31
Copying, enlarging, and reduction of drawings			x			0	0	0
Study and teaching	x					0	0	0
General, including collective biography		x				1	1	1
Greeting cards, postcards, invitations, book jackets, etc.			x			3	0	0
History of drawing					x	12	7	10
Illustration			x			13	0	7
Posters			x			4	1	2
Special subjects					x	3	0	1
Technique		x	x		x	3	0	8
Three subjects that did not map to curriculum						18	0	19
ND Painting						285	151	211
History				x	x	232	134	172
Mural painting					x	5	1	7
Study and teaching	x					0	0	0
Technique and materials					x	9	1	3
Six subjects that did not map to curriculum						39	15	29
NE Print media						21	7	11
Copying art. Copying machine art			x			0	0	0
Etching and aquatint					x	3	1	2
General works					x	0	0	0
History of printmaking				x	x	8	3	5
Metal engraving					x	0	0	0
Monotype (Printmaking)			x			1	0	0

Subject Classification	ARTE	ARTF	ARTG	ARTH	ARTS	All Titles	Worldwide Titles	Total Circulation
Study and teaching	x					0	0	0
Wood engraving					x	8	2	4
One subject that did not map to curriculum						1	1	0
NK Decorative arts						54	6	38
Decoration and ornament. Design		x		x	x	15	1	10
Other arts and industries - Ceramics					x	8	2	7
Other arts and industries - Metalwork					x	2	0	0
Other arts and industries - Woodwork					x	3	1	2
Religious art	x					0	0	0
Six subjects that did not map to curriculum						26	2	20
NX Arts in general						46	15	32
Administration of the arts				x	x	0	0	0
Arts centers and facilities					x	0	0	0
Exhibitions				x	x	0	0	0
History of the arts				x	x	26	10	16
Patronage of the arts				x		0	0	0
Special subjects, characters, persons, religious arts, etc.				x	x	12	3	10
Study and teaching. Research	x					0	0	0
One subject that did not map to curriculum						8	2	6
TP Clay industries. Ceramics. Glass				x	x	0	0	0
TR Photography					x	112	0	92
TT Handicrafts. Arts and crafts	x			x	x	17	0	4
Total	0	0	0	0	0	1,355	519	1,051

Note: Program areas are Art Education (ARTE), Art Foundation (ARTF), Graphic Arts (ARTG), Art History (ARTH), Studio Arts (ARTS).