Collection Assessment

SPEC Survey
Webcast Series
October 12, 2016
Introductions

Karen R. Harker, MLS, MPH
Collection Assessment Librarian
University of North Texas, Denton

Janette D. Klein, MLIS
Information Science Doctoral Student
University of North Texas, Denton
Presentation Objectives

- Explain why we undertook the survey
- Describe the response to the survey
- Provide details of selected results
- Suggest ways these results can help you us
- Point you to the SPEC Kit
- Answer any questions you may have
Definitions
Assessment, Evaluation – What’s the diff?

Defer to Peggy Johnson’s *Fundamentals of Collection Management*, Chapter 7

Collection Analysis

- “…analysis of the library’s collection, its use, and ultimately its impact.”
- Assessment – “aim…is to determine how well the collection supports the goals, needs, and mission of the library or parent organization.”
- Evaluation – “examine or describe collections either in their own terms or in relation to other collections and checking mechanisms, such as lists.”

For this survey, terms used interchangeably.

- Methods, data and personnel overlap.
Section 1: Our Objectives

Objectives & Survey Response
Stated Objectives of Survey

- “…to determine how collection assessment methods, measures, and practices are currently employed and how the results are utilized at ARL libraries.”

- Very few studies examining the actual collection assessment or evaluation practices of libraries.

- A lot of what *should or could* be done, very little of what *is being* done.
Why we *really* undertook this survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we wanted learn</th>
<th>What we wanted to gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• How do other libraries analyze their collections?</td>
<td>• Knowledge of new approaches or methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How much work does this take them?</td>
<td>• Ideas for improving methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Who is involved?</td>
<td>• Potential collaborators for inter-institutional research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What do they do with the results?</td>
<td>• Initiatives for developing new tools or methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How can this be improved?</td>
<td>• Ideas to make it easier.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Details

- 60 questions – some quite complex
- Sent to 124 ARL member libraries
- 71 responses received – 57% response rate (slightly higher than average over last 3 years)
- All engaged in data collection & analysis, but all in different ways
Section 2: Who & Why & When

Purposes & outcomes of collection assessments

Locus of control of data and analyses

Human resources
Processes, Purposes and Outcomes of Collection Assessment

- 97% of respondents gather collections data beyond ARL & IPEDS statistics surveys requirements

- Formality of Assessments
  - 49% - process contains both formal and informal elements
  - 17% - have either a formal or informal process
  - About 30% - no process in place but plans are present for a future process
  - 4% - no process in place and no future plans to implement a process
## Frequency of Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of Assessment</th>
<th># of Responses</th>
<th>% of Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As needed/Ad hoc</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semiannual</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuously/ Ongoing</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n=65
Scope of Collection Evaluations

- Select responses to *Other scope* indicate that currently assessments are performed on

  “All subscribed resources – all formats, disciplines”

  “Format-based without regard to disciplines at this time”

n=67
Format of Collection Evaluations

Collection Evaluation Formats

Number of Responding Institutions

- Electronic - Online: 67
- Print: 65
- Physical AV: 45
- Streaming AV: 45
- Online - Paid Access: 42
- Microform: 38
- Other Physical Resources: 31
- Other Format: 7

13 Association of Research Libraries

#ARLSPECKit352
Assessment of Collections

- 7 survey options for collection type, not including “other”
  - Journals/Serials
  - Monographs/ monographic series
  - Demand-driven acquisitions
  - Government documents
  - Open Access resources
  - Archives
  - Digital repositories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># Collection Types Selected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Types of Collections Assessed

Collection Evaluation Collections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collection Type</th>
<th>Number of Responding Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journals/Serials</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monographs</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDA</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Documents</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Access Resources</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archives</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Repositories</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Collections</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#ARLSPECKit352
## Purpose of Assessments

**Purpose of Assessment Initiation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Options</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Options</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>Collection development</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>New program reviews</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Accreditation review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Library administration/other library-specific</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Initiate development of a shared collection</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Evaluate shared collection strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Accreditation review (program, department, or school level)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Establish criteria for collection selection digitization</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Other purpose</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Legend**

- # Options
- Selected (size)
## How Assessments are Used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose of Assessment Use</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Answer Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Select physical materials for weeding or remote storage</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate serials or database for selection or de-selection</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify database overlap</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjust allocations of expenditures or funds</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate value to the institution</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate level of activity</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justify funding increases to stakeholders</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate collection strengths and weaknesses</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate the adequacy or inadequacy of collections for accreditation</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimate costs of new or upgraded collections</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate comparisons with peer institutions</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify core works or journals</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify core collections of the library or consortial libraries</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate value to the patron</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target parts of the collection for promotion and/or instruction</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modify or adjust shared collection strategy</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision to initiate a shared collection strategy</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify opportunities for digitization</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate selector effectiveness</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other use, please briefly describe</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection evaluation data is not used for collections work</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17 Association of Research Libraries

#ARLSPECKit352
Who Does What – The Locus of Data Control

Levels of Data Gathering and Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Data Gathering and Analysis</th>
<th>Number of Responding Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consortial</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local &amp; System</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local, System &amp; Consortial</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Collections</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Structure of Data Gathering and Analysis

- **39% - centralized process**

- **61% - decentralized process**
  - About 40% - separate committees for data gathering and analysis
  - Data analysis committee size – 2-3 times larger than that for data gathering
    - Data gathering: <5 - >40 members, Avg: 5-10
    - Data analysis: 4-40 members, Avg: ~10
Locus of Control – Library Collection Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decentralized - Committee/Group</th>
<th>Centralized - Single Department/Position</th>
<th>Other Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gathering</td>
<td>Analyzing</td>
<td>Gathering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gathering &amp; Analysis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20 Association of Research Libraries
The Element of Human Resources

- Staffing - Data Gathering/Analysis
  - 59% - single position
  - 45% - single department
  - Average of 1.4 FTE for collection assessment

- Frequency & Time – Committee Meetings
  - Monthly, weekly, and as needed
  - Only 8 provided estimates for time spent in meetings:
    - Data gathering: <50 - >2000 hrs/yr
    - Data analysis: 20 - 200 hrs/yr
    - Assessment: Avg: ~2.4 FTE
Section 3: How

Tools & Methods Used or Desired

Dissemination of Results
Commercial Collection Analysis Tools

- YBP Gobi Peer Groups
- OCLC Collection Evaluation/Analysis System
- ProQuest’s Intota Assessment
- Bowker Book Analysis System
- Other tool

Legend:
- **Currently use**
- **Previously (but not currently) used**
- **Would be interested in using**
- **Never used**
Other data management tools

- Holdings analysis
  - GreenGlass
  - SerialSolutions (overlap)
  - Ulrich’s Serials Analysis
  - Gold Rush
- Usage
  - 360 Counter
  - Usage Consolidation
  - UStat
- ILS
  - Alma Analytics
  - Innovative Decision Center
  - SirsiDynix
- Data storage
  - LibAnalytics
  - LibPas
  - Piwik
- Other
  - Altmetrics
  - Citation analysis tools
Dream Tools

• Improvements to existing systems
  • Mostly ILS’s & ERM’s
• Pie-in-the-sky tools

• Categories
  • Data aggregation & integration
    • Between and within systems
  • Resource evaluations
    • E-resource usage, circulation & $$$
  • Automated collection
  • Visualization, reporting
  • Holdings assessment
## Collection Assessment Methods (% Used)

### Use or Users

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>% Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Usage of electronic resources statistics</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circulation by subject or format</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interlibrary loan requests by user groups</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circulations by user groups, subject, and format</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local citation analysis studies</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gap analysis</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINES for Libraries© responses</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Collections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>% Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collections budget analysis</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection growth</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection size by subject and/or format</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection currency and age</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Quantitative Methodology

- **Input from librarian**: 87%
- **Input from faculty/staff/researchers**: 82%
- **Input from students**: 76%
- **Comparison of holdings with readings in course syllabi**: 42%
- **Mapping the collection to courses and research centers**: 62%

### Qualitative Methodology

- **Accreditation guidelines**: 77%
- **Peer library comparisons of title holdings**: 62%
- **Direct or visual evaluation**: 61%
- **Peer library comparisons of overall library measures**: 61%
- **List-checking**: 56%
- **Global citation analysis (e.g., impact factor)**: 45%
- **Conspectus**: 50%
- **Brief Tests of Collection Strength**: 20%
Minimal use of open data

Use of Open Data

- ARL
- IPEDS
- CUFTS
- Source Normalized Impact per Paper (SNIP)
- Impact per Publication (IPP)
- SCImago Journal Rank (SJR)

Yes 13%
No 87%
Spreading the Knowledge

Local Dissemination of Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library administration</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection Development Manager</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject specialist librarian</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library staff</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Administration</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requesting Entity</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty governance committee</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General public</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other constituent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Global Dissemination of Data

Accessibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accessibility</th>
<th>Summary Data</th>
<th>Raw Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most, if not all data is <em>easily accessible</em> directly to stakeholders.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most, if not all data is <em>accessible</em> upon request.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some data is <em>accessible</em> directly, other data upon request.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some data is <em>accessible upon request</em>, other data not accessible at all.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most data is <em>not accessible</em> at all.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most, if not all data is *easily accessible* directly to stakeholders.

Most, if not all data is *accessible* upon request.

Some data is *accessible* directly, other data upon request.

Some data is *accessible upon request*, other data not accessible at all.

Most data is *not accessible* at all.

Summary

Most, if not all data is easily accessible directly to stakeholders.

Most, if not all data is made accessible upon request.

Some data is accessible directly, other data upon request.

Some data is accessible upon request, other data not accessible at all.

Most data is not accessible at all.
How the results are disseminated depends on **who** receives it.
Outcomes & Impact of Collection Evaluations

(n=271, About 4 options selected each)

- Better understanding of...
- Change in collection development...
- More money for targeted collections
- Collaboration with faculty on...
- Better understanding of...
- More money for overall collections
- Change in funding formulas

0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25%
Skills in Three Groups

Skills Importance

Rank | Collection development | Subject expertise | Knowledge of publishing | Collection assessment | Analytical thinking | Statistical analysis | Data management | Database | Spreadsheets | Data visualization
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---
1    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
2    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
3    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
4    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
5    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
6    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
7    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
8    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
9    |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
10   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
11   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

 Broad Principles

Critical Thinking

Technical

# of Libraries

1 11

33 Association of Research Libraries

#ARLSPECKit352
### Grouping the Skills

#### Rank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Broad Principles</th>
<th>Analytical</th>
<th>Technical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **2**: 1
- **10**: 1
- **20**: 1
- **30**: 1
- **40**: 1
- **45**: 1

34 Association of Research Libraries #ARLSPECKit352
How well do each of the following statements reflect the collection evaluation and assessment climate at your library?
Collection Assessment Attitudes

How well do each of the following statements reflect the **attitude** toward collection evaluation and assessment in general at your library?

### Collection Evaluations...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>...and data should be shared with others in the field.</th>
<th>...are difficult to interpret, understand, or apply.</th>
<th>...should be a centralized function.</th>
<th>...should be used to adjust allocations of funding for collection development.</th>
<th>...supported by the theoretical foundations of collection development.</th>
<th>Quantitative more important than qualitative.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Well</td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Green" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Green" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Green" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Green" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Green" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Green" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well</td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Green" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Green" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Green" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Green" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Green" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Green" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately</td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Yellow" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Yellow" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Yellow" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Yellow" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Yellow" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Yellow" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Red" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Red" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Red" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Red" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Red" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Red" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at All</td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Red" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Red" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Red" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Red" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Red" /></td>
<td><img src="#" alt="Red" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Successes and Challenges

Success!

- Two-thirds reported successes
  - 30% Collection of usage statistics
    - For selection/de-selection
    - Longitudinal trends
  - 25% Evidence-based decision making
  - 20% Collaboration
    - With subject librarians
    - With faculty

Challenges

- 55% identified challenges
  - Data – quality, collection, integration, sharing
    - Process improvement
      - Staff development
      - Increased staffing
      - Planning assessment
      - Improved efficiency
How can these results help you us

Explore New Ideas

• Tools
  • Integrate data
  • Visualize
  • Tell the story
• Methods
  • Compare with others
  • Contrast with needs

Focus

• Skills needed
  • Most important: Analytical
  • Less: Technical skills
• Stakeholders
  • Internal – Check!
  • External – How to reach?
More information…

- ARL SPEC Kit 352: Collection Assessment in ARL Libraries
  - http://publications.arl.org/Collection-Assessment-SPEC-Kit-352/
- Contact:
  - Karen Harker, Karen.harker@unt.edu
  - Janette Klein, Janette.Klein@unt.edu
Questions & Discussion

Join the conversation by typing questions in the chat box in the lower left corner of your screen
Thank you!
SPEC Survey Webcast on Collection Assessment

1. Welcome (Lee Anne)

Hello, I am Lee Anne George, coordinator of the SPEC Survey Program at the Association of Research Libraries, and I would like to thank you for joining us for this SPEC Survey Webcast. Today we will hear about the results of the survey on Collection Assessment. These results have been published in SPEC Kit 352.

Announcements (Lee Anne)

Before we begin there are a few announcements:

Everyone but the presenters has been muted to cut down on background noise. So, if you are part a group today, feel free to speak among yourselves.

We do want you to join the conversation by typing questions in the chat box in the lower left corner of your screen. We will answer as many questions as possible at the end of the presentation. I will read the questions aloud before the presenters answer them.

This webcast is being recorded and we will send registrants the slides and a link to the recording in the next week.

2. Introductions (Lee Anne)

Now let me introduce today’s presenters:

Karen R. Harker is Collection Assessment Librarian at the University of North Texas Libraries in Denton.

Janette Klein is Interdisciplinary Information Science PhD student at the University of North Texas.

Use the hashtag ARLSPECKit352 to continue the conversation with them on Twitter.

Now, let me turn the presentation over to Karen.

3. Presentation Objectives (Karen)
Thank you, Lee Anne, and thank you all for coming. I’m Karen Harker and with me is Janette Klein. In this presentation, we will review our reasons for undertaking this project, the overall response to the survey, and details of selected aspects of the results. We will then discuss how these results can help us in your libraries, point you to the SPEC Kit itself, and finally, answer any questions you may have.

4. Definitions: Assessment, Evaluation—What’s the diff? (Karen)

Like any good work, there is a preface to set the stage. In our case, we wanted to clarify our use of these terms: assessment and evaluation. For this, I first will defer to the classic text on collection management by Peggy Johnson. In Chapter 7 of *Fundamentals of Collection Management*, on the, “analysis of the library’s collection, its use and ultimately its impact,” she distinguishes these terms in this manner. She considers **assessment** to be an examination of quote “how well the collection supports the goals, needs, and mission of the library or parent organization.” Conversely, she considers **evaluation** to be more of a comparison of the collection with some internal or external criteria.

However, we did not make that distinction, a distinction that can be difficult to communicate effectively. So, for the purposes of this survey, we use these terms interchangeably.

5. Section 1: Our Objectives (Janette)

Karen and I, during the course of our own work together, realized that while a significant amount of literature exists on the topic of collection assessment, specifically in the form of case studies, very little literature was present on what methods and techniques other institutions were using in the field.

6. Stated Objectives of Survey (Janette)

As a result of those observations we realized that a unique opportunity was at our fingertips to investigate what practices are being employed above and beyond the traditional should and/or could approaches historically discussed within collection assessment literature. We then developed the SPEC survey proposal with the key objective to investigate the methods, measures, and practices used at ARL libraries.
and also to determine what forms the results of those assessments took for use and dissemination at other academic institutions.

But as with all projects, the underlying objectives were far broader than our stated objective.

7. Why we really undertook this survey (Janette)

Especially important to us as we began developing the survey was our desire to see how other libraries analyzed their collections, the time commitment within the assessment process both for data gathering and analysis, who was involved in the different aspects of assessment, when data gathering and analysis were being performed, what the results were used for, to whom they were disseminated, and lastly to determine if other ARL libraries perceived their collection assessment processes as being successful and what if any areas of improvement existed that they were willing to identify. Yes, we recognize that we were using the traditional structure of interrogatories to develop the survey but we also hoped that by doing so, we could establish a baseline from which additional inquiries could be developed in the future.

Additionally, we had several aspirations of what we wished to gain by conducting this survey. Of course we were desirous of gaining additional knowledge of the methods and measures used at other institutions beyond what we currently used at our own institution but we were also hoping to identify potential collaborators for future research projects, and approaches and ideas for improving our own existing collection assessment process.

So what was the structure the final survey and to whom was it distributed?

8. Survey Details (Janette)

The survey consisted of a total of 60 questions, many of which were multi-level and included branching logic, thus creating a fairly high level of overall complexity to the survey. The survey was distributed to the 124 ARL member libraries and we were fortunate to receive a total of 71 responses yielding a 57% response rate. This response rate is slightly higher than the average SPEC survey response rate. As we expected, all responding institutions indicated that they were involved in data
gathering and analysis but what we were surprised to see was the degree of
diversity expressed throughout the survey of how they approached and engaged in
data gathering and analysis.

9. Section 2: Who & Why & When (Janette)

Exploring the survey responses, we return once again to the original questions of
Who, Why, and When, as these interrogatories pertain to identification of the
purposes and outcomes of collection assessments, the locus of control of data
gathering and analysis, and the human resource element related to the time spent
on these processes and the number of people engaged in the process. The next few
slides will break down each of these three key areas of focus in more detail while
highlighting overall findings and some unique feature that manifest within the
responses.

10. Process, Purposes, and Outcomes of Collection Assessment (Janette)

One of the principle goals within the survey was to ascertain exactly who is doing
what and what data is being used within collection assessment data gathering and
analysis. From the institutions responding to questions on the gathering of data,
97% indicated the gathering of collections data above and beyond the requirements
for ARL & IPEDs statistics surveys. Delving into these responses more deeply, 49%
noted the presence of both formal and informal elements in the processes used for
regularly assessing their library collections, while almost 20% indicated that either
a formal or an information process was in place. Interestingly, 30% indicated that at
the time of the survey, a process was not in place but that they were working
towards instituting a process.

11. Frequency of Assessment (Janette)

Sixty-five institutions responded indicating their frequency of assessment. This
particular question was open ended and from the responses we developed seven
levels of assessment frequency from the 96 responses as shown in the chart.
Somewhat surprising to us was the almost 42% response rate indicating that
assessments were conducted on an as-needed basis, surpassing even the number of
institutions performing assessments on an annual basis. Also, several institutions
noted that they conduct assessment on a monthly and/or ongoing basis. This was
interesting as it leads to further questions in our mind about what types of
collections are being assessed on such a frequent basis.

12. Scope of Collection Evaluations (Janette)

Knowing a little more about how frequently institutions were conducting
assessments, the survey questions then transitioned to gathering insight on the
scope of collections evaluations. Within this series of questions, 67 institutions
responded indicating the format and discipline included in the evaluation. Receiving
just over 52% of the responses, it is clear that the majority of the institutions are
conducting evaluations on all formats—all disciplines, including their digital
collections. At the other end of the spectrum, only 4% of the institutions indicated
that they were evaluating all formats/selected disciplines and all formats/all
disciplines, not including digital collections.

13. Format of Collection Evaluations (Janette)

As collection evaluations are being conducted a point of interest is investigating
what formats are being included in the evaluation process.

Sixty-seven institutions chose one or more of the eight provided format options for a
total of 340 responses. An average of just over five formats were selected by each
institution. As expected the most frequently evaluated formats are those of
electronic/online and print. However, it is worth noting that between 63% and 67%
of the institutions do also perform evaluations on the remaining five formats.

14. Assessment of Collections (Janette)

Similarly, the survey explored the types of collections that were included in the
collection assessment process. Interestingly, 33% indicated that they assess three
collection types with most indicating monographs, journals/serials, and DDA.

15. Types of Collections Assessed (Janette)

Delving even further into the types of collections assessed, the 67 responding
institutions made a total of 287 selections from the available seven collection type
options and one “Other collections” category. As shown, the most common types of
collections assessed were those of journals/serials receiving 23% of the total
selections and monographs receiving 22% of the total selections. DDA received 16% of the total selections and open access and archives each received 8%. On average, institutions selected about four collection types within this section.

In reviewing the survey responses, 11 institutions indicated that they assess all eight of the collections types, while six institutions indicated that they only evaluate books and journals. Interestingly, four institutions selected only one collection type.

Now that we have a clearer picture of what format and type of collections are being assessed as reported within the survey, we will look at institutional responses as to the purpose of the assessments conducted.

16. Purpose of Assessments (Janette)

As mentioned in our purposes for conducting this survey, we are very interested in ascertaining why collection assessments are both initiated and used. Based upon selections made by the 65 responding institutions to the nine provided options and one “other” category for a total of 373 category responses; nearly all respondents indicated that collection assessments were initiated for reasons associated with collection development, as well as for library administration or other library purposes. Accreditation and new program reviews were also very common, although university-level accreditation was indicated by just over half of the respondents. As shown within this chart where the number of options selected corresponds with both size and color. On average, a total of 5.7 categories were selected for this question.

Shared collections received a fair number of responses with nearly 50%, indicating assessment for the purpose of initiating a shared collection and 37%, indicating assessment for evaluation of a shared collection.

Within the open-ended responses to the other category, comments indicated reasons related to collection movement and space, external reporting, budget, and weeding/de-selection. A few unique comments included “understanding user behavior,” “maximizing our utility,” and “answer questions from departments about library funding and acquisitions.” To see the detailed comments provided to the open ended “other” category we encourage you to review the section on Purpose of Assessments within the SPEC Kit.
17. How Assessments Are Used (Janette)

Now that we understand a little more why assessments are being initiated we turn our attention to **how** the completed assessments are being used. This survey question also had 65 responding institutions who were able to select as many options as were applicable from the 21 answer options, one of which was an open-ended “other” category for a total of 737 responses.

As shown, the average category response was 11 and two-thirds of the respondents indicate assessment use for demonstrating value and/or funding justifications, evaluation of collection strengths/weaknesses, and funding allocation adjustments.

Understanding the purpose and how assessments are used provided valuable insight into what is happening at research libraries. But how are the collection evaluation and assessment processes being coordinated? Understanding the locus of control within the data collection and assessment processes for collection assessment is our next topical area.

18. Who Does What—The Locus of Data Control (Janette)

The levels of data gathering and analysis were divided into three broad categories to determine where data gathering and analysis occurred. A total of 67 institutions responded and as we reviewed the data we noticed that of those locations that perform data analysis and collection together, 80% indicated that data gathering and analysis occurred at the local level, 40% at the consortial level, and just over one-third at both the local and library system level. Interestingly, 10 institutions indicated engagement with shared collection partners other than consortium AND five institutions indicated gathering and analysis on multiple levels, including local system, consortium, and shared collections partners.

19. Structure of Data Gathering and Analysis (Janette)

At a more granular level, we proceeded to determine if a centralized or decentralized process was in place for data gathering and analysis. Of the 67 total respondents, 39% indicated a centralized process while 61% indicated a decentralized process for data gathering and analysis. Of those that indicated a decentralized process, about 40% engage separate committees for data gathering.
with the committee size ranges from fewer than 5 to more than 40 members. On average the committee size was between 5–10 members. While the decentralized institutions indicated committee sizes ranging from 4–40 members with an average committee size of around 10 members for data analysis. This is 2–3 times larger than the reporting numbers for data gathering.

20. Locus of Control—Library Collection Data (Janette)

Determining who was performing what function, whether the gathering or analysis of collections data, was both one of the most challenging parts of the survey to develop and also to analyze during the tabulation of the data.

As shown within the chart, institutions identifying as decentralized committee/group segment shown in dark blue had the highest number of responses for data gathering, analysis, and gathering & analysis. Surprisingly, “other structure” also received a high level of responses; while within the centralized single department/position, the responses were fairly evenly distributed.

21. The Element of Human Resources (Janette)

Ascertaining the number of individuals involved in the collection assessment process is an area that we hoped to be able to delve into within this survey. While certain insights emerged, such as data gathering and/or analysis by a single position dedicating an average of 59% of their time to those duties and institutions that perform the same duties with a single department allocating 45% of their time to the gathering and/or analysis of data. Within this an average of 1.4 FTEs are being dedicated to collection assessment.

Yet, determining trends within the amount of time spent on committee meetings was a little more challenging as only eight respondents provided input to this question and the responses received varied widely with data collection estimates from less than 50 hours to more than 2000 hours per year. And data analysis estimates ranging from 20 to 200 hours per year. This then did not allow for any conclusive themes or trends to be developed from the survey.

With this information at hand, I will now turn it over to Karen.

22. Section 3: How (Karen)
So, we’ve covered the “why,” the “who,” and the “when”…now, we will discuss the “how”—the methods & tools used to collect and analyze data, and disseminate results.

23. Data Tools Used (Karen)

There were two dimensions that we measured regarding specific data tools: actual use and/or interest in using. Here, the size of the rectangle indicates the use (current or past) (with Excel being the largest with all respondents using it) and color indicates interest in using, with visualization having the most interest (39% of respondents). Indeed, data visualization as a tool centers prominently in the responses with a moderate level of use, and a strong interest in using. We were surprised that databases also figure heavily, with nearly 2/3rds having used MS Access and nearly half having used MS SQL Server.

24. Commercial Collection Analysis Tools (Karen)

Of the four commercial collection analysis tools in our survey that compare holdings with other libraries, YBP’s Gobi Peer Groups had the greatest positive response, with over 60% having used it, and another 20% interested. Over half of the institutions reported having used OCLC’s Collection Evaluation System previously, but few are currently using it. ProQuest’s Intota had the most institutions interested in using, and because the Bowker BAS is no longer offered, it had no current use, but a small set had previously used it.

Now, we understand that these are not equivalent tools, but they use the same approach—peer-comparisons of collections.

25. Other Data Management Tools (Karen)

Other tools mentioned could be grouped into these categories:

- Holdings analysis, notably GreenGlass, the most recent addition to the toolbox, and serials overlap tools like SerialSolutions, Ulrich’s & Colorado’s Gold Rush.
- Usage data management, specifically ProQuest’s 360 Counter, EBSCO’s Usage Consolidation, and Ex Libris’ UStat
- ILS’s data analytics services, notably from Alma, Innovative & SirsiDynix
• Data storage, like LibAnalytics and LibPAS
• Finally, there were citation analysis tools, including Altmetrics.

26. Dream Tools (Karen)

We also wanted to know what librarians were dreaming of—what tools were missing? What did they want done that they couldn’t get done?

Generally, they provided either improvements to existing tools like the ILS’s & ERM’s, or pie-in-the-sky tools that do not exist yet. The solutions they wanted were centered largely around data aggregation and integration, both between and within systems. They also wanted tools to evaluate specific resources more easily, based largely on cost-per-use. Other desired solutions included ways to automate the collection of data, more effective & easier to use reporting and visualization tools, and finally, ways to make holdings assessment easier to generate and more useful in the reporting.

27. Collection Assessment Methods (% Used) (Karen)

In addition to the tools, we wanted to know what methods librarians have been using to assess their collections. The options provided in the survey were selected and organized based largely on the matrix that Peggy Johnson provides in Chapter 7 of her text, Fundamentals of Collection Management. This matrix has two dimensions: Quantitative and Qualitative, and Use- or Users-based and Collections-based. Here are the rates of ARL libraries that had used each method at least once in the last 10 years. Color, of course, varies by the response rates. Three of the four quantitative-collections-based methods (upper-right quadrant) had been used by at least ¾ of the libraries, while qualitative-collections-based methods had been used the least (average of half). Methods that were quantitative-use or users-based had the widest variation of use—most every institution looked at the usage of e-resources, but only 14% used MINES for Libraries.

28. Minimal Use of Open Data (Karen)

We were a bit surprised that few institutions used open-source data in their collection assessments. These sources include the national surveys, as well as the
data gathered on the impact of journals that are independent of the more traditional (and costly) Journal Citation Reports.

29. Spreading the Knowledge (Karen)

As noted by Megan Oakleaf and others who are deep in the assessment of academic libraries, gathering data & analyzing that data are only half the work. The information generated from that work must be disseminated to those who will use it to make decisions. So we asked how and to whom these collection evaluations were reported. Generally, the most common audiences were internal stakeholders: library administration, collection development, subject librarians, and other library staff. Those in the broader parent organization were far less likely to receive this information, and certainly not the general public.

We were also very interested in learning if and to what extent librarians share their data—with their stakeholders and with the world—(summarized, as in what is presented in reports, or raw, that which is at a more detailed level (like expenditures at the item level)). About a quarter have their data accessible to stakeholders directly (no intervention required), a third make their data available upon request, while another quarter make very little data available at all.

30. How the results are disseminated depends on who receives it (Karen)

Generally, the format of the results of collection assessments was dependent largely on the audience of the results. Most commonly, reports were delivered as print or PDF, or as a presentation, and these were accessible via the library’s intranet for internal stakeholders or direct delivery (mail or email) to the institutional stakeholders.

The libraries’ own institutional repositories were disappointingly underutilized for such dissemination.

31. Outcomes & Impact of Collection Evaluations (Karen)

We were particularly interested in learning what, if anything, these collection evaluations or assessments had on the libraries themselves. Over a fifth reported that the librarians gained a better understanding of the collections, and slightly fewer reported that the evaluations resulted in a change in collection development
priorities. Improved funding for either targeted collections or overall collections was reported by 15% and 9% respectively, and another 13% reported improved understanding of collections by faculty themselves.

32. Relative Importance of Skills (Karen)

Now, collection assessment requires skills in a lot of areas. We wanted to know what these librarians thought were the most important skills. So we asked them to rank these skills from most (1\textsuperscript{st}) to least (10\textsuperscript{th}) important (there was an open-ended “Other” option, as well). In this chart, the color indicates rank (green highest, red lowest, grey in the middle), while the size of the square indicates the number of responses, from 1 to 26, the most any one skill-rank received.

These skills can be grouped into three distinct categories:

33. Skills in Three Groups (Karen)

• Broad Principles, including collection development, subject expertise, and knowledge of publishing

• Critical thinking, including collection assessment, analytical skill, and statistical analysis;

• And Technical, notably data & database management, spreadsheets & data visualization.

34. Grouping the Skills (Karen)

Merging the ratings for these groups, it appears that Analytical Skills were considered the most important by the most librarians, followed by Broad Principles, while Technical Skills were considered less important.

Skills Grouped:

• Broad principles:

  Collection Development Principles

  Subject Expertise

  Knowledge of the Publishing Industry
• Analytical skills:
  Collection assessment skills
  Analytical/critical thinking skills
  Statistical analysis
• Technical skills
  Data management
  Excel
  Access
  Data visualization

35. Collection Assessment Climate (Karen)

All that we have been discussing so far—the purposes, the outcomes, the human resources, the skills, the reporting, etc.—are dependent upon the climate and the attitudes of the librarians and their administration. Generally, librarians indicated that they worked in a climate that was positive and supportive of collection evaluation and assessment. In particular, they reported that the internal stakeholders were interested and that library administration generally supported their work. But few reported that their external stakeholders had any interest.

It should be noted that the first item listed here, “Data difficult to gather” is itself a negative statement. Thus, agreement with this statement is more negative than positive. So we inverted the color scale to match the context of the remaining statements. Nobody disagreed with this statement, and about half strongly or very strongly believed that, yes, data is difficult to gather.

36. Collection Assessment Attitudes (Karen)

While institutional climate was important, we also wanted to better understand the attitudes of those who are most closely associated with collection assessment. Most of these statements are positive, but one is negative (the second one on interpreting data), and we did not invert the scale, so interpreting agreement needs to take
direction into context. Generally, attitudes were positive, with most agreeing moderately or more strongly with the statements. Regarding the negative statement that interpreting data is difficult, even that was positive, in that a sizable portion disagreed with the statement.

**We’re** hopeful because librarians are very interested in sharing results of collection evaluations, and they believe that collection evaluation is supported by theoretical foundations in collection development. Interestingly, most only moderately agreed that quantitative data trumps qualitative, thus providing more opportunities for qualitative data to be used.

### 37. Success and Challenges (Karen)

Finally, we asked about successes and challenges that they have faced. First, the good news—nearly a third reported that the collection of usage statistics has been very helpful for selection or de-selection of specific resources, as well as demonstrating longitudinal trends. Others reported that collection evaluations provide the foundation of evidence-based decision making, and a fifth reported increased collaborations with subject librarians and/or faculty.

Based on the results we have presented so far, it is not surprising that the key challenges identified were related to data (quality, integration & sharing), and improving the processes—notably in training and in allocating resources.

### 38. How Can These Results Help You Us? (Karen)

As Janette mentioned before, our real reasons for doing this was to find out what other libraries were doing, and to learn from them. **We** (us and you) can use this information to explore new ideas, including tools that enable us to integrate your data and visualize them to tell our story, as well as new methods that compare & contrast our collections with our institution’s needs and with other libraries.

We can also use this survey to focus on developing the most important skills, as well as that audience which we are not reaching—the external stakeholders.

### 39. More Information (Karen)
ARL has joined in the Open Access revolution by making the PDF’s of the SPEC Kits freely available. You are encouraged to download *our* SPEC Kit (#352) from the ARL Digital Publications website, as well as purchase your own hard-copy.

We can be reached via email at UNT.edu.

40. Questions & Discussion (Lee Anne)

We welcome your questions. Please join the conversation by typing questions in the chat box in the lower left corner of your screen. I will read the questions aloud before the presenters answer them.

41. Thank you (Lee Anne)

Thank you all for joining us today to discuss the results of the collection assessment SPEC survey. You will receive the slides and a link to the recording in the next week.