Week 3: Assignment 1: QuickWrite 1   February 2, 2021

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Based on the course material readings, the general intention of a collection development policy

(CDP) is to set goals for a library collection based on the library mission (Johnson, 2019). It

should provide information to the library stakeholders regarding how the collection is developed,

and who is responsible for the collection development decisions. The CDP of the Mardigian

Library at the University of Michigan (Dearborn) provides guidelines in line with the systematic

development of material in all formats for the library's collection (University of Michigan,

2020). It also clearly outlines processes involved in selection and deselection, and provides a

'framework for collection development' (University of Michigan, 2020, p. 1). Therefore, this

follows the general principles of CDPs to provide guidance for material selection, deselection,

and treatment in libraries, indicating both how the collection is developed and how it is managed.

CDPs should prevent self-censorship, with clear goals and guidelines, and should protect

intellectual freedom and prevent censorship (Johnson, 2019). The Mardigian Library CDP

clearly states the collection goals, the library faculty and selection areas - indicating who is

responsible for the collection development and management, and provides clear collection

guidelines. However, regarding the collection guidelines, although it stipulates the processes

involved in retaining intellectual freedom and potentially avoiding self-censorship - I feel this is

vague, and as such, I consider that self-censorship could occur. For the selection of new titles, it

states factors to be considered, including timeliness of the material, positive reviews and

evaluations, student interest, quality standards, author's reputation in the particular field,

publisher's reputation, and cost. It does not state what metrics are used for comparative purposes

or a baseline, so some of these decisions regarding the collection could be biased or subjective. Therefore, the positive reviews of the material could be biased depending on the review, so I feel that several factors should be considered together when making selection decisions. This policy does not state that these factors should be considered together, or if they can be considered individually when making a decision.

Initiatives, such as Digital Public Library of America (DPLA), Google Books, Internet Archive, and HathiTrust have all been developed to enhance the accessibility of information (HathiTrust, 1999), and as such, have taken some pressure off the collection development of libraries. CDPs are systematic documents, providing a resource for planning and management of collections owned by libraries, and these free resources will allow CDPs to focus more on special and unique collections. CDPs are specific to institutions, and so cannot incorporate these digital freely available resources, since these may be developed using different criteria and goals. However, libraries can collaborate with these initiatives to enhance their individual collections without the constraints of their institutions. However, if libraries rely on these resources, there is the possibility of them no longer being available, leaving libraries with potential gaps in their collections. But CDPs can be used for strategic collection planning to identify collection strengths and weaknesses, to ensure these areas are respectively enhanced and addressed. So, based on effective CDPs, libraries can have well managed, diverse collections with open access to these digital resources, further enhancing their resource diversity and accessibility.

Reference:

University of Michigan. (July 22, 2020). Collection development policy.

https://library.umd.umich.edu/services/collection.php