WEED-WHACKING!

A print collection cleanup project using OCLC Greenglass at Providence College

Julie Kliever
Head of Collections Services

Joseph Glammarco
Collections Services Specialist
Who are we?

- Julie: Head of Collections Services here since 2007
  - I inherited a 270,000 print-title collection
  - Do we really need all these books?

- Joe: Collections Specialist here since 2017
  - Started as a part timer
  - got roped into this project

Not actually Julie and Joe
PC’s Print Collection

• In 2018:
  – About 350,000 volumes
  – About 270,000 were print monographs

• What was the history of past weeding projects?
Past weeding projects attempted:

• Letting faculty review weeded titles
  – They all ended up back on the shelves

• Throwing weeded titles down a chute into a dumpster
  – Bad optics
Why does any library need to weed?

• Make room for new titles
• Remove damaged items
• Resource is available online

• “Less is more” –
  – Keeping everything you ever acquired is not helpful
  – An overabundance of titles makes it harder for patrons to find what’s useful
OCLC Greenglass – how it works:

• Visual interface

• Choose ranges for call numbers, publication dates, number of checkouts, etc

• Ability to see the impact of your selection criteria
  – Fine tune a pull list, make multiple changes before committing
  – Are you removing too many titles in an area? Too few?
  – Is your deselection criteria too broad or too narrow?

• Allows for holdings comparisons with other libraries
  – Other Consortium members (is this the only copy in the consortium?)
  – Peer institutions (should we keep this because other schools like us have a copy?)
  – Hathitrust (has it been digitized?)
What did choose to weed?

- Only our Circulating collection
- We didn't not want to use this method for Reference, Archives, or any other special shelving location
How we prepared for this project

• OCLC sent us a tech specs questionnaire
  – Which areas did we want to analyze
  – What kind of classification method, call number structure, etc

• Comparator Groups questionnaire
  – We were asked to choose up to 6 "comparator groups"
  – This enabled us to view other institutions' holdings for each of our titles.
Comparator Groups

1. HELIN Consortium members

2. Non-HELIN RI libraries Brown, URI, Bryant

3. Catholic colleges Boston College, Holy Cross, Fordham, St Anselm, Villanova, etc.

4. Peer Institutions (from Future of Higher Ed publication) Northeastern, Fairfield, UCONN, etc.

5. Primary ILL lenders to PC, based on ILL stats

6. Dominican Theological Library at Dominican House of Studies, (Washington DC) 60,000 theology/philosophy titles
The Greenglass interface

• Live demo!
  – more like a very quick overview
How did we handle the actual work?

- Export the Greenglass query to Excel
- Hide columns except for call#, title, barcode
- Print out 3 pages of titles at a time, give to student worker
- Students check off books as they pull them, or indicate NOS
- Cart with pulled books and completed sheets taken to Tech Services area
Removing weeded titles from WMS

- Used the marked pull lists to document titles that were NOS (fancy library jargon for "Not On Shelf").
- Used online sheet to copy barcodes into WMS
- Can delete 100 barcodes at a time
Physical processing of weeded titles

• Books were brought to a staging room in the basement

• Student workers:
  – Crossed out barcode
  – Stamped "no longer property of Phillips Memorial Library"
  – Boxed in cartons supplied by Better World Books

• Lastly, we arranged shipping to BWB
  – Via UPS for 14 or fewer boxes
  – Via freight truck for larger number of boxes
  – Our last shipment was 169 boxes
And then there was COVID

• We began this project in the Winter of 2018.
• We had a 2-year license for the Greenglass interface
• We were about 75% complete by March 2020
• Running pull lists and supervising student workers from off campus went as well as you might expect.
• We asked OCLC for a year extension on Greenglass, they obliged.
• We finished April 2021.
Before and after

• Winter 2018
  – Circ Stacks 269,822

• Spring 2021
  – Circ Stacks 256,111

• Total titles removed:
  – 13,711
  – approximately 5% reduction
Thank you!

Julie Kliever jkliever@providence.edu

Joe Giammarco jgiamma1@providence.edu