Outline for
Future of Print Case Studies
June 20, 2018

As academic libraries engage in vital conversations about ways in which library spaces and services are designed to meet changing needs, expectations, and opportunities in higher education, the print collections that libraries accumulate and make available are of growing interest and concern. New design strategies and methodologies for curating inclusive print collections are essential for engaging and inspiring our communities. The active development and presence of collections is intertwined with services; collections are themselves a form of service. Print collections also serve as important actors within a space, with the possibility of design that engages audiences.

ASU Library presents this outline for a case study to encourage libraries to approach current and future print collections with a fresh perspective. The exercise of gathering, interpreting, and reacting to these elements can provide an approach for considering how library collections serve communities, and where opportunities for improvement lie. As you track ways in which current efforts and energies are aligned with community needs, and where there are gaps of practice or inclusion across services, spaces, and collections, you may also find that questions of institutional priorities and service excellence will resonate with print collections.

Outline

A case study allows your library’s project team to communicate with current and future collaborators, while serving as an internal discussion and planning tool, and ideally as an eventual snapshot of academic practices as they change over time. This outline sets forward a way to structure a case study, suggesting description of the context for the organization and offering some detail about library use, holdings, audiences served, and available resources.

Overview of Institution and Current Collections Landscape
This section should provide a summary of background statistics and information that gives the reader context for your parent institution and your library’s current philosophy, services, initiatives, and practices with regard to collections overall, with special attention paid to print resources.

I. About the library or system
   1. Library or libraries: locations, function on campus
   2. Estimates of collection size (e.g. volumes held, e-resources, microforms, serials, etc.)
II. Library use
   1. Total: volumes, gate count
   2. Main library, if applicable: volumes, gate count
   3. Collections use: checkouts, renewals, interlibrary loans
III. Holdings
   1. Print resources: monographic titles, serial titles, physical volumes, and other tangible materials such as maps and microforms, when relevant to your institution
   2. Electronic resources: monographic titles, serial titles
   3. Archives
   4. Rare books & special collections
   5. Off-site holdings
   6. Other collections
IV. Communities served
   1. Surrounding community
   2. University as a whole
      - All students: race, ethnicity, gender, first-time/full-time, first generation, Pell Grant eligibility, international
      - Undergraduate students
      - Graduate students
   3. Main campus (if distinct from university)
V. User personas (optional)
VI. Collections development philosophy for the organization or institution
VII. Current projects and practices for print and tangible collections
VIII. Library staff and resources
   1. Current and projected staffing levels in support of print; budget allocations, where relevant; and current services
IX. Project team profile

Analysis of Data and Observations
This section describes your analysis of challenges and opportunities that are informed by the data gathering process from above. This is also an opening to consider the possible future of print at your institution and to understand potential impacts of changing resource allocations on the communities you serve.

1. Budget trend for print information resources
   - Budget projections over time
   - Planning for funded projects
2. Strengths of the library & overview of existing projects
3. Community analysis
4. Reflection on inclusion in existing designs and practices
Planning for the Future
This section offers an opportunity to gather further data, develop strategies, and design scenarios for your print collections. This case study should remain as a speculative document, with room for projects and incremental change as you explore various directions and continue to engage with target audiences and stakeholders.

1. Avenues for community conversations with stakeholders and existing and potential audiences that gather data about their current and anticipated interests and needs
2. Goals and objectives for print collection design moving into the future
3. Philosophy and overall logic of design directions and strategies
4. What inclusion means for collection development in your institution
5. Approaches to assessing and evaluating new directions with current or new assessment mechanisms

Sharing your Work

Developing a case study allows your library to undertake a discovery process that may uncover opportunities for community engagement, space planning, collection improvements, and the promotion of print collections. Although it is not a requirement, publishing or sharing all or part of your case study with others contributes to an open and active environment for communicating what we are learning about how we can better align practices with the needs of communities we serve, both locally and collectively.