

Shifting Priorities: Unlocking Your Library for 21st Century Learning Spaces

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Gather Data

- Linear inches of available space
- Linear inches per classification
- # of volumes added/withdrawn during last 5 years

Assemble No-Budget Tools

- Excel (or free equivalent) for planning document
- Painter's tape for numbering shelves in filing order
- Nylon rope, knotted to serve as standard measure
- 6"x6" lumber, cut and sanded to create standard shelf spacers (We used 3", 6", 8", 9", & 12")
- Bucket and rags for cleaning

Create Your Plan

- 1) Create a Collection Map [Excel].
- 2) Number your available shelving in filing order [painter's tape]. Double check against Collection Map.
- 3) Calculate available linear inches of shelving space for collection.
- 4) Create a standard measure [knotted rope]. Tie a knot in one end, then tie a second knot so that the space between the knots equals the length of your shelving.

- 5) Use standard measure to determine linear inches of books by LC subclass. Measure at least 2x. Compare measurements, and remeasure any subclass that is off by more than 10% (or less for large subclasses).
- 6) Use acquisition/withdrawal stats from ILS to determine growth rate for each LC subclass [Excel].
 - a) # of books added during previous 5 years x 1" = estimate of linear inches of growth. Calculate % increase by comparing linear inches of growth to linear inches of actual collection.
 - b) If appropriate, use the same formula with withdrawal stats to determine contraction of collection. Subtract from % increase to get a more accurate growth rate. *Skip this step if you have purged the subclass within the last 5 years.*
- 7) Use % increase to identify % of growth space per shelf of LC subclass [Excel].
- 8) Calculate # of shelves needed per LC subclass. [Excel]
- 9) Calculate running total to determine where LC subclasses should begin/end. [Excel]
- 10) Create planning document that designates begin shelf/end shelf and which standard shelf spacer to use for each LC subclass. Include space for shifting crew to note actual begin/end. Review actual numbers daily, and adjust shifting plan as needed.

Lessons Learned

- Use uniform spacing of shelving within sections and ranges. This makes planning easier and ensures neater results.
- Partner with acquisitions/collection development staff during the planning stages. This is critical for the long-term success of the full collection shift.
- Place shelf # labels at the end (right side) of shelf instead of the beginning (left side) to reduce confusion when recording progress.
- Measure collection during the summer or another low circulation time.
- Use a standard measure and hash marks to measure each subclass. Then multiply the length of the standard measure by the # of hashes to determine linear inches for each subclass. This will reduce the number of measuring errors and will also make the measuring process go much faster.
- When using the standard measure, round up to the nearest $\frac{1}{4}$ rope length.
- When measuring the collection, break down large subclasses (such as PR and PS) into smaller segments (e.g., PR1-PR1799). This will make recording more accurate, as well as reducing time spent during the inevitable re-measure.
- Plan to leave empty shelves at end of literature subclassifications to accommodate newly published literature and criticism.
- Once the planning document is complete, test your plan on a small subclass to see if measurements and calculations are on target.
- Take advantage of empty shelving to wash off dirt and dust. Use a damp rag, and always leave adequate time for shelving to dry before shifting books to that area.
- Schedule two student assistants at the same time so that they can measure or shift in teams.
- Limit the amount of time student teams work continuously on shifting.
- Track progress at small intervals to leave time to make adjustments in the plan.
- Have a trusted shelf-reading team following the shifting team, checking for problems before too much additional progress is made.
- Re-train student assistants after semester breaks.

Email sarah.copeland@chattanooga.state.edu to receive a sample Excel file to help you create your shifting plan.