

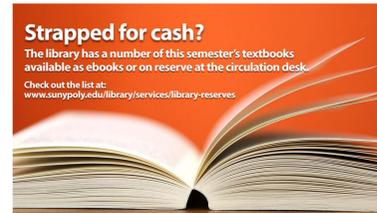
Using Small Grants to Make the Library a Driver of College & Career Access and Affordability

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Funding Through Grants, Gifts, and Our Tired Collection Budget

Since our limited collection budget could not support the purchase of textbooks on an annual basis, we applied for a small grant from our institute's **Auxiliary Services Corporation**, and were awarded \$5000 for this purpose in the summer of 2017. Altogether we purchased 46 textbooks during the 2017-18 academic year.

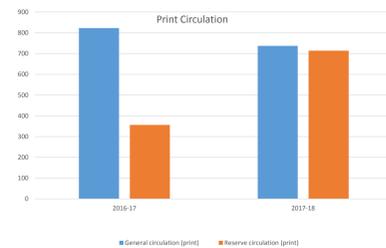


The initiative proved so popular that the **Student Government Utica** awarded us \$2000 to continue the next year, and we also were given another \$2000 from **Auxiliary Services**.

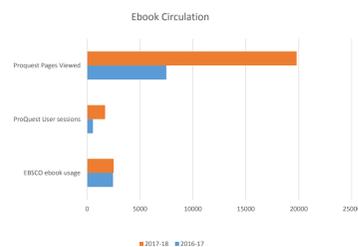
Remarkably, though, it wasn't the texts that we purchased that were the most heavily used. **Ebooks already in the library collection, made easily discoverable through our extensive textbook marketing campaign, were used most often.**

Surprising Results

Although our general circulation was down 11%, our reserves circulation doubled. Business, math and engineering students used print reserves heavily.



Our ebook circulation showed a significant increase, in the case of Proquest nearly tripling. What is surprising is how much of this uptick was tied to existing holdings (particularly ebooks).



Problem

Every semester hundreds of students come to the library searching for their course textbooks because they cannot afford to purchase or rent these required course materials.

Like many academic librarians, we believe that making course texts freely available is of tremendous benefit to our students, for reasons including expanding educational access and affordability, social justice, and sustainability.

SUNY Polytechnic's shrinking collection budget, however, does not provide a sustainable solution. Or does it?



Process

We attempted to use MS Access to match our existing holdings against the titles of required course texts gathered from a course list in Banner and bookstore purchase requests. We were not completely successful in isolating the ISBN or title for the purpose of automated matching.

Next we did a manual review using EBSCO Discovery Service and found many ebook and print title matches. Some titles required follow-up with instructors to see if the version we had would be acceptable. All matches, both print and electronic, were listed on a Google sheet linked to our course reserves web page; this sheet became the definitive list of reserves for the semester.

Our extensive PR campaign led to increased dialogue with both instructors and students, the identification of additional holdings to be designated reserves, as well as requests for additional purchases. Some of these requests were for updated certification study guides, which support new program accreditations.

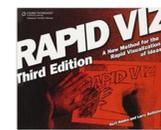
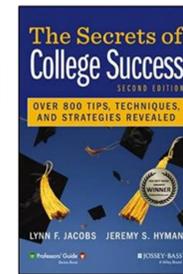
Publicity

Extensive publicity efforts included, in order of importance:

- Communication directly with the teaching faculty
 - Soliciting extra copies of texts to put on reserve
 - Inquiring about new or old editions
 - Announcing what texts we had for each of their classes, including persistent links to electronic versions
 - Suggesting that announcements and links to library-held texts be included in syllabi, Blackboard (Course Management System) and direct communication with students
- Communication directly with the Deans of our six colleges
- Campus plasma screens
- Campus-wide email announcements
- Library home page
- Library fall newsletter
- Library Tweets



Top Ten Reserves Titles 2017-18 By Circulation Count



Universal Principles of Design - 432 checkouts [ebook]

The Secrets of College Success - 227 checkouts [ebook]

Health Promotion and Wellness: An Evidence-Based Guide to Clinical Preventive Services - 186 checkouts [ebook]

Contemporary Business Law - 86 checkouts [existing print title]

Rapid Viz: A New Method for the Rapid Visualization of Ideas - 61 checkouts [ebook]

Calculus with Applications - 59 checkouts [grant funded print purchase]

Self-Care Science, Nursing Theory, and Evidence-Based Practice - 45 checkouts [ebook]

Pioneering Theories in Nursing - 42 checkouts [ebook]

Self Care Theory in Nursing: Selected Papers of Dorothea Orem - 36 checkouts [ebook]

Food Media: Celebrity Chefs and the Politics of Everyday Interference - 35 checkouts [ebook]

Looking Forward / Next Steps

- Increased automation of the matching process for existing holdings, an improved workflow for identification of titles to purchase, and the earliest possible identification, acquisition, cataloging, and processing of new titles, will allow the project to continue.
- Only current semester reserves are kept on reserve shelving. We may want to keep off-semester holdings there as well to avoid duplication of work and accidental interlibrary loans.
- In an effort to streamline the process, we will try to re-use our Spring 2018 course reserve sheet to help us identify matches for Fall 2018. This can probably be done by course number, before the other more labor intensive manual efforts.
- We must continually strive for new ways to reach students and faculty to promote reserves, certification manuals, and study guides
- We must continually assess for the purpose of determining strategic expenditure of new grants to maximize impact



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