ARLIS/NA Collection Development Discussion Group Brown Bag

Saturday May 3, 2008, 1-2pm

Moderator: Timothy Shipe

Recorder: Chris Sala

More than fifty people attended the session. The two main topics were the formation of a Collection Development Discussion Group SIG (Special Interest Group) and a roundtable discussion of topics of interest to the attendees.

As of May 3, 2008 it is possible for the Collection Development Discussion Group to form as an interest group. Last year it was agreed that the group would like to continue in a more expanded form, including the development of a website with useful information related to collection development, and to carry on discussion of issues beyond a once-a-year meeting. After a unanimous show of hands, it was agreed that setting up a special interest group was desirable. Timothy Shipe will advise the ARLIS/NA board of the intent to form such a group. The ARLIS/NA board will vote on the proposal and send out a notice to ARLIS-L that it exists. For the 2009 conference in Indianapolis, a request for a 1 ½ hour meeting time slot will be made.

A poll was taken of the attendees and three issues were selected to discuss. The first was approval plans. The concern is the number of approval plans available worldwide. A survey was taken of libraries that have blanket approval plans. The use of approval plans depends on the budget available, size of staff, and how much time selectors have. Some libraries have cancelled their approval plans because of too much duplication and because monitoring the plans took as much time as firm ordering. Some attendees felt they had more control by firm ordering and received materials in a timelier manner. The use of Worldcat Selection was discussed. Experience with Worldcat and approval plans is needed to utilize this service. The drawback was the expensive price.

The topic of selection for offsite storage and what to retain for browsing purposes generated a lively discussion. The major concern is how to make selection decisions for arts and humanities subject areas for high density
facilities when those materials are highly illustrated. Use statistics are unhelpful for books with illustrations. Several options were presented. Education and outreach to patrons about the use of offsite items can alleviate problems. Enhanced cataloguing records, table of contents, etc., will help a patron tell what parts of an item or items are needed, or if the item is needed at all. The timeliness of delivery is also a significant factor in patron satisfaction. Journals available online are an easy choice to go offsite. It is important to remember that lending libraries can not be browsed anyway. The question of how consortia are handling offsite selection when sharing a facility was briefly discussed.

Collection assessment in general, and the OCLC product in particular, was the final matter discussed. What should be done if a very detailed overview about a particular portion of the collection needs to be generated very quickly? The OCLC analysis tool has information already entered from cataloguing records and existing data can be extracted rapidly. It is call number driven so area studies subjects are more problematic. One needs to be careful about interpreting data using this tool.