Collections: Statistics, Description, and Philosophy

Statistics

The following statistics reflect the state of the Galter Library’s collection as of August 2015.

- Number of electronic journals: 9,008
- Number of electronic books: 4,493
- Number of print volumes (remote storage): 162,041
- Number of print volumes (on-site): 18,123
- Number of subscription databases: 135
- Total collection budget: $2,163,256

Brief Library Description

The Galter Health Sciences Library is sometimes asked to provide a brief description of the library, its resources and its services to Feinberg School of Medicine affiliates for grant applications. Please feel free to use the following text. If you need additional information, contact us.

The Galter Health Sciences Library’s mission is to support the research, education, and patient care activities of the Feinberg School of Medicine and the McGaw Medical Center. The library’s website provides 24-hour access to a vast collection of online medical resources including over 9,000 e-journals; 4,500 e-books; and 130 literature databases. Users can also create and customize personal lists of web resources using GalterLists. Other library services include training in literature searching; curriculum and research support through the library’s liaison program; EndNote and publication support; document delivery to users’ desktops; and wireless access throughout the library. In FY 2015, there were 532,097 visits to the library’s website and 1,705,074 page views.

Collections Philosophy

Purpose.

This Collections Philosophy guides Galter Health Sciences Library staff in our current acquisitions practices for building the best collection for the Feinberg School of Medicine community. This document is meant to work in conjunction with all other relevant library policies.

Scope of the Collection.

Galter Health Sciences Library strives to offer its users a current, top-quality, relevant collection in line with the library’s mission and strategic plan. We use our expertise to assess and acquire resources in a variety of formats and seek out electronic collections whenever feasible to meet users’ needs for access. We add to the collection year-round to support
emerging research, clinical, and education needs in the Feinberg School of Medicine’s missions, programs, departments, and initiatives.

**We manage the collection with the following guiding principles in mind:**

**Environmental Scans:**
- We use various means to measure the use of our collection and take into account expertise from key constituents to provide resources for research, curricular, and clinical needs.
  - Additional Galter staff contribute toward assessing renewals and when we consider acquiring key resources.
  - Collection Development strategies include consulting usage statistics, interlibrary loan reports, and reviews.
- We assess the needs of our users on a regular basis, utilizing liaison contacts, regularly consulting FSM strategic plans and Northwestern Medicine documents, and by conducting formal assessments such as surveying our users about proposed key acquisitions or cancellations.

**Collection Management Principles:**
- We maintain a collection wishlist year-round to help us prioritize possible future acquisitions and incorporate faculty recommendations through reference and liaison activities and communications.
  - Having items on our radar allows us to be more responsive to requests and newly available resources.
- To maintain a current and relevant electronic collection, we assess it regularly and deselect or cancel little-used resources in order to:
  - Conserve our collections budget.
  - Refocus our collection development efforts on new resources or to meet new demands.
- Print materials are reviewed and deselected or relocated as needed in order to optimize the library space for the needs of students, faculty and staff.
- We actively add to our electronic collections, pursuing journal subscriptions in electronic editions only, considering electronic journal backfiles, if appropriate, and acquiring eBooks to respond to users’ preference for ubiquitous access to our collections.
- Other electronic resources, such as databases, streaming video and specialized resources, are reviewed and licensed, as curricular or other information needs warrant and budget permits.
- We add a few select key titles to our print book collection for curricular reserves, authored by FSM faculty, or recommended by Galter’s primary user community.

**Business Principles:**

We seek out business arrangements with publishers and vendors who understand the unique research and education relationships within all Northwestern University libraries, allowing us to provide access to the entire NU community and fulfill obligations to affiliated hospitals whenever possible. We seek joint-purchasing and shared licensing opportunities with other Northwestern University libraries, departments, and consortia to conserve funds and to avoid cumbersome technical arrangements. We consult with Northwestern University’s legal services as appropriate. Whenever possible, we negotiate for the following data or benefits where we have a contract:

- IP-authenticated access, including by proxy.
- COUNTER compliant usage statistics.
- Electronic fulfillment of ILL requests and allowances for eReserves.
- Multi-year subscriptions to maximize our collections budget.
- Post-cancellations rights to subscribed content. We pay particular attention to publishers’ and vendors’ participation in long-term electronic access solutions such as Portico, LOCKSS and CLOCKSS and try to influence such sustainable behaviors.

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