Proposal to reduce duplication in the journal collection at the Faculty of Information

Background

A discussion paper entitled "Multiple Format Journal Collections: Benefits and Challenges" (dated July 23, 2009) has been distributed to all faculty, staff and student representatives of the Faculty of Information. The discussion paper identifies the need to continue investing in information resources that support the increasingly interdisciplinary academic and research activities conducted at the Faculty, and the need to expand access to content in a way that is inclusive of all programs, taking into account users' changing expectations towards access. The discussion paper also recognizes that resource duplication as a result of multiple publishing formats in the area of journal collections is not the best use of finite resources and that it is unsustainable in the long term.

The discussion paper puts forward six recommendations:

1. Reduce resource duplication by decreasing the number of print subscriptions in favour of the e-journal, where the e-format satisfies specific criteria.*
2. Maintain and preserve already acquired print periodical holdings.
3. Circulate the discussion paper for comment from iSchool committees and communities.
4. Appoint a team to evaluate Information Services' journal subscriptions on a title-by-title basis, according to a set of agreed-upon criteria.
5. The team charged with evaluating the journal collection should prepare and submit a report containing recommendations on how to allocate monies previously spent on duplicated content to evolving research and teaching areas.
6. Revise the Inforum Collection Development Policy to incorporate the philosophy that reducing resource duplication is a goal of the Information Services Unit when journals meet the agreed-upon criteria, and allocate monetary resources to evolving research and teaching areas.

Faculty, staff and representatives of the student bodies were invited to attend an open consultation meeting, held on Monday, January 11, 2010. Attendees were receptive to the issues presented and provided feedback on the journal evaluation criteria.

* A draft of possible journal evaluation criteria is appended to this proposal for reference.
Proposal

The Information Services Committee moves the following three-part motion:

- That the Faculty of Information Council adopt the journal collection policy of reducing resource duplication by decreasing the number of print subscriptions in favour of the e-journal, where the e-format satisfies specific criteria, but maintain and preserve those print periodical holdings which have already been acquired.

- That the Information Services Committee appoint a task group to evaluate Information Services' journal subscriptions on a title-by-title basis, according to a set of agreed-upon criteria. The task group charged with evaluating the journal collection will prepare and submit a report containing recommendations on how to allocate funds previously spent on duplicated content to evolving research and teaching areas.

- That the Information Services Committee report back to Council on the above by the second meeting of Council in Fall 2010.
Appendix: Draft criteria for evaluating individual print journal subscriptions

For those journals which are available in both print and electronic formats to our users, suggestions for possible journal evaluation criteria include:

Comparison of formats:
- To what extent do the print and electronic contents match?
- Is there a publisher embargo on the electronic version currently held by the University of Toronto Libraries (UTL), and if so, for how long?
- Is maintaining a print subscription critical to supporting academic work at the iSchool?

Journal content and ranking:
- Is the journal peer reviewed?
- What is the journal’s ranking according to an external source?

Cost of subscription:
- What is the cost of the print and electronic journal subscriptions?
- What are the absolute value increase and percentage increase in the print subscription cost for the journal over one or more years?
- Is the journal part of a bundled print + electronic subscription?

Journal holdings within the UTL system:
- Is the title part of a legacy print subscription that the Inforum has maintained for a significant period of time?
- What are the Inforum’s current print holdings of the journal?
- What are other UTL print holdings of the journal?

Relationship with other library systems:
- Does the journal fall under a "last copy" agreement?
- Is a print subscription required to satisfy any UTL/Ontario College and University Libraries (OCUL) agreements?
- Is UTL/OCUL electronic archiving in place for this journal? If not, does the electronic subscription provide perpetual access to the material?
- Is UTL/OCUL print archiving in place for this journal?
- As a net lending library, are we obligated to maintain the print subscription?