A Model for Assessing Interdisciplinary Collections

Allison Sivak
Library Assessment Conference
Baltimore, Md
October 27, 2010
The Problem

• Increasing interdisciplinarity in scholarship
• Little research on methods of collection assessment across disciplines
  – What exists: analog methods
The UAL Example

• Environmental Studies

• Needs
  – Easy replication

• Challenges
  – No dedicated department, no single liaison librarian
  – Monos vs. serials
Methods

• Understanding collection “picture”
  • i.e., no peer comparison
• Impact factor journals
• Vendor reports by interdisciplinary subject
## Tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Scope</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Drawbacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| OCLC Collections Analysis  | Current and historic | • Big picture of us and peers  
• Simple, fast  
• Future interd. reports? | • Laborious, inflexible interd. category creation |
| Director’s Station          | Current and historic | • Big picture of what we have  
• Simple, fast  
• Good data visualization  
• More flexible categories | • Laborious interd category creation |
| Vendor reports (YBP, Coutts) | Current       | • Big picture of publishing  
• Simple, fast  
• Good data visualization  
• Established interd. Categories | • Limited to monos  
• No historic measure  
• Limited to vendor’s stock |
Conclusions

• **Fastish** and **easyish**
  – Choose frequency and subjects wisely
• Suitable for interdisciplinary areas where collection currency is key
• Remaining questions
  – Are liaisons thinking ES when they select?
  – How best to share awareness of ES resources?
  – How to deal with those e-books?
  – What if vendor hasn’t created your inter.d category?
    • e.g., Circumpolar collection
Allison Sivak
Assessment Librarian
University of Alberta Libraries
allison.sivak@ualberta.ca