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**But we made the easy cuts last year**

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# "But we made the easy cuts last year!" Maintaining a Quality Journal Collection in Tough Budget Times

**Introduction:** After dealing with three major budget cuts in FY03, The Lamar Soutter Library faced additional reductions for FY04. After brainstorming, the Management Team realized that drastic journal and staffing cuts were on the horizon. Concerns for the collection and continued customer service called for creative solutions. This poster examines the measures taken to preserve a quality journals collection.

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**Results and Conclusions:** The results of this process were unexpected. The faculty had been involved in the process and understood the ramifications of massive journal cuts. As a group, the Faculty Council appealed to the School Administration – and the Administration gave the necessary funds to the Library to pay for the journals slated to be cut. Although a “happy ending” is not always possible, a carefully planned review process, utilizing as much hard data as possible, and keeping the users informed at each stage, can benefit the library as it seeks to provide quality resources in support of the school’s mission.

2001

2002

Winter 2003

Spring 2003

Summer 2003

Fall 2003

**Sept:** LSL starts to collect usage data for print journals by scanning barcodes.

**March:** LSL starts to collect usage data for electronic journals using Cold Fusion

**Winter:** LSL Management Team compiles data on titles with fewer than 50 uses.

**June 5:** Library Director Elaine Martin discusses possible journal cuts with Faculty Council and Academic Department Heads.

**Summer:** Faculty send comments to Associate Director for Technical Services.

**August 7:** Martin updates Faculty Council.

**Sept 1:** Deadline for Faculty comments.

Usage Data is Collected by Scanning Barcodes at the Time of Re-Shelving



**Summer:** LSL Management Team compiles data for making decisions about journal cuts for 2003.

**Feb 12:** LSL submits budget request for FY04: Working FY03 Budget plus an increase to cover inflation

**June 17:** Martin discusses Journal Cancellation Project with UMMS Library Committee.

**July 7:** Martin discusses Journal Cancellation Project with curriculum-related Educational Policy Committee.

**August 19:** Martin calls special meeting of Library Committee.

**Sept 2:** Martin thanks Administration for increased funds; only 40 titles to be cut.

**Sept:** Final decisions made on journal cuts for 2003; 113 titles cut with fewer than 5 uses.

**Feb 13:** LSL is asked to trim 10% from Approved FY03 Budget and submit new budget for FY04.

**June 18:** Martin sends e-mail and journal lists to Faculty asking for their input to cut \$100,000 (about 200 titles) from Journals Line by Sept. 1. (Journal Cancellation Project) Her message and the list of titles slated for cancellation are posted on the LSL web page under “What’s New?”

Information Posted on LSL Website for Journal Cancellation Project



Comments were received from 52+ Faculty about 106 Titles.

Letter from Elaine Martin with GOOD NEWS

September 2, 2003  
Dear Colleagues:  
As you know, the combination of a phenomenal rise in journal subscription costs this year coupled with the loss of state funds earmarked for libraries has had a negative impact on the Lamar Soutter Library's FY04 budget. Earlier this summer, these unfortunate events made it necessary to reevaluate our book purchases. Despite other cost savings measures, to meet the budget shortfall, we also planned to cut almost 20% of the current journal collection. A list of targeted journals was generated based on usage and cost data and posted on the library's website for comment.

"I appreciate this opportunity to comment on the journal titles that are scheduled for termination by the Library..."

"Title is one of the primary journals in the field, and key in education and research. It is a must keep!"

"I strongly urge you not to eliminate Title. Some of our full-time faculty hold editorial positions on this journal. It would be strange indeed for a University to cancel the subscription to a journal for which its own faculty play an editorial role."

"...I'd also like to ask that you consider adding Title."

Each Title has One Barcode Per Decade



Use OBSERVER software for Endeavor ILS on a PDA with a built in laser barcode scanner.

See: <http://paulasay.indstate.edu/observer>

**Alphabetical Title List With Data**  
JOURNALS TARGETED FOR CANCELLATION SUMMER 2003  
Table with columns: Title, ISSN, Title, Author, Publisher, Frequency, Price, LSL, UMS, and Response. Includes a legend for response codes and a list of abbreviations.

Letter from Library Director Elaine Martin to Faculty

June 18, 2003  
Dear Lamar Soutter Library Patrons:  
We need your help!  
The Library is committed to providing quality health information through access to its resources and services. Unfortunately, the phenomenal rise in journal subscription costs and state budget problems, especially the elimination of a special line item in the state budget earmarked for the 20 Massachusetts College and University Libraries (including the Medical School), have had a negative impact on the Lamar Soutter Library's budget. These unfortunate events have made it necessary to reduce Library staff, reduce Library hours, and reevaluate our book, journal and electronic subscription purchases.

For the past two years, we have been gathering statistics on in-house journal usage of paper journals and electronic access to online journals. The results of this study are provided on a website developed to encourage you to help us reevaluate our print and electronic journal collection. Please visit <http://library.umassmed.edu/journaldata.htm> or visit the "What's New" section of the Library's website to view a list of all journal titles, their usage and cost. The website allows you to provide us with your feedback and help us identify journals for cancellation. We need your input by September 1, 2003. Please note that all cancellations will take effect in January 2004.

Thank you,  
Elaine R. Martin  
Director of Library Services

Table 1: 371 Titles Used Less Than 50 Times

Table with 2 columns: Title and Count. Lists various journals and their usage counts.

Print Subscriptions are Decreasing due to Budget Cuts

Table with 2 columns: Fiscal Year and Print Journal Subscriptions. Shows a steady decline from 1681 in 2001 to 1430 in 2004.