Insights for the Future: Exploring Trends and Issues in Academic Art Libraries

ARLIS/NA 2019 Annual Conference
State of Academic Art Libraries
2019 Report

Exploring current trends and challenges facing academic art libraries.
Project Team Members

Andi Back, University of Kansas
Caley Cannon, Brand Library & Art Center
Emilee Matthews, University of Arkansas
Ginny Moran, Macalester College
Becca Pad, UT Austin
Mary Wasserman, Philadelphia Museum of Art
Roger Lawson, National Gallery of Art, Editor
Methodology

- Literature review
- Academic Library Division survey
- Case studies
Literature Review

- Print and electronic collections
- Library spaces
- Digital scholarship
- Subject expertise
- Advocacy
Academic Division Survey

- 100 survey respondents
- 72 academic librarians
- 67 US institutions, 4 Canadian institutions
- 45 academic librarians - public institutions
- 25 academic librarians - private institutions
Case Study Institutions

Colby College
Indiana University Bloomington
LaGuardia Community College, City University of New York
McGill University
Northwestern University
Temple University
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Top Insights

- Library spaces
- Collections
- Subject liaisons
- Advocacy
Library Spaces
77% report space change in their library

Highest reported areas of change:
- Collections
- Learning commons
- Technology enriched classrooms
- Makerspaces
- Data or digital scholarship labs
80% reported space change impacted library collections
Responses to collection impacted space change

1. Moving collections to offsite storage
2. Collection reduction
3. Consolidating materials
4. Changes in collection development policies
The redesign of library spaces has implications for arts research.

- How scholars engage with collections
- Graduate students ability to conduct research
- Opportunity to learn transliteracies
Collections
60% report that buying e-books is not a priority for art publications

Unique and in transition:

- Primacy of print
- Challenges of digital
- Centralization and automation
- Financial landscape
Challenges of Digital:

- Availability
- Access and discovery
- Not all-encompassing
67% reported not knowing their collection budget for electronic resources in the arts.
80% report having at least one art approval plan

49% report not having a collection policy for art resources
Subject Specialists
95% indicate using subject expertise a “moderate amount, or great deal.”
Knowing all the things

- Expectation of deep subject knowledge and experience
- Agility with other disciplines for ideation
- Required functional knowledge
31% have digital scholarship or related functions as part of their jobs

Job duties have expanded
- Digital assets management
- Collection management
- Research & instruction

Reliance on collaborative relationships
Advocacy
68% consider advocacy a key aspect of their role

Focus of advocacy efforts:

- Space and collections
- Outreach and partnerships
- Donors and gifts
- Data and documentation
13% reported that feedback from librarians is not regularly included in decisions.
Understanding the college or university library from multiple perspectives is one starting point for advocacy.

1. Departmental meetings (35%)
2. Administration meetings (23%)
3. Email (20%)
4. Task force/committee service (14%)
Recommendations

- Communication strategy
- Advocacy tool kit
- Partnerships
- Reframe ideas
- Consider unique needs
Insights from Case Studies

Sarah Carter, Indiana University Bloomington
Margaret Ericson, Colby College
Small Group Q&A

1. What insights from this report relate to your own institution?

2. In the past, have you ever had to advocate for the library you were employed? If so, what were some successes and/or failures related to your efforts?

3. What takeaways from this report will be most useful to you at your own institution?
Questions?