

HOW JOURNALS ARE ADDED AND CANCELED

Decisions about adding and subtracting subscriptions are made by the Database and Serials Evaluation Team (DASET), which is a committee of six librarians. Each broad subject area (Arts/Humanities, Social Sciences/Business/Education/Health, Science/Engineering) is represented. Two Collection Development librarians and the Serials Division provide most of the logistical support.

SUBSCRIPTION CANCELLATIONS

January - February

Collection Development and the Financial Manager study the costs of the subscription renewals which have just been paid and the University's apparent budget outlook. They set a dollar goal for the review which will help pay for anticipated price increases and will allow for the purchase of some new titles and faculty requests. If it seems likely that the university will have a budget cut, that is also factored in.

Rather than examine the entire collection every year, DASET identifies classes of materials to be examined each year - for example, journals with a high cost per download and microforms. All major publishers receive at least a quick review to make sure their titles are a good value for the money. Data is gathered on thousands of titles and provisional lists are made. Throughout the process DASET tries to remember extenuating circumstances. The size of some departments may mean the potential audience is small or we may have one of the few subscriptions in North America. The review list is intentionally greater than the minimum needed to balance the budget so that we can modify it as we receive more information and opinions from patrons and colleagues.

March

With the end of the Legislative session the funding outlook becomes a bit clearer. The Committee adjusts the proposed lists and meets with subject liaisons to explain the likely budget and the current review plans.

The review list and a letter of explanation are posted on the library's website. Comments are invited. We inform the campus community:

- Collection Development writes a prototype email announcement. Subject liaisons inform academic departments. Some departments give librarians direct access to e-mail lists of all faculty and graduate students. In other cases, communication goes through the faculty liaison the department has selected.
- A notice is included in the FYI Bulletin, which is sent to all University employees.
- A news announcement is posted on the Marriott Library's homepage.

April - June

The comment period generally runs from late March to mid-May. We make sure the list is posted at least one month before the end of the academic year, and continue to allow comments into summer semester. After comments are closed in May, the feedback is organized and prepared for DASET so it can be evaluated by mid-June.

June - July

DASET evaluates the comments from patrons and library employees. In four of the past five years we were able to continue almost every title faculty asked us to renew. A provisional list of titles not to be renewed is posted for all subject librarians to review by mid-July.

August

The final list is made and submitted to the Acquisitions Order Division, which needs it by Labor Day to begin the renewal process for the next year.

REQUESTS FOR NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS

DASET also reviews requests for new subscriptions. For the past several years our philosophy has been to start journals requested by faculty if at all possible and then evaluate their use and value after a three year probationary period. The committee also looks annually at the journals requested through Interlibrary Loan to see whether a subscription is warranted. A webpage listing new journals is posted every spring and featured on the Marriott Library homepage.

Publishers now commonly offer packages of all their online journals. Marriott Library has been cautious about these. They may offer attractive initial prices and inflation caps, but they make it nearly impossible to cancel individual titles and we want to avoid having a large percentage of our materials budget inflexibly committed. DASET evaluates packages and starts those which seem prudent. The Utah Academic Library Consortium also chooses and buys journal packages and databases for all Utah college libraries.

Surveys of U of U faculty and graduate students consistently show that better online access to journals is their highest library priority. Many large publishers charge a premium for full electronic access and DASET decides which upgrades seem like the best investments.