

Collection Management



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Richard Wisneski PhD and MLIS and MA and BA

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Collection Development Assessment for New Collection Development Librarians

Richard Wisneski

ABSTRACT. A number of articles have been written in the past several years that provide practical advice for librarians new to collection development, particularly in terms of understanding terminology, learning collection development processes, and gaining familiarity with one's library and institution. This article furthers this discussion, but with attention to working in collection development within the OhioLINK consortial environment. In order to thrive in this environment, new bibliographers are benefited by becoming familiar with and using data such as usage statistics, consortium reports, and peer institution statistics to develop and expand collections in one's assigned disciplines. Attention is also given to creating subject collection statements, faculty networking, and colleague assistance. The writer, himself relatively new to collection development, provides insights and perspectives on these matters, chiefly applicable to others new to collection development.

KEYWORDS. Collection development, collection management, research libraries, library collection development, book selection

Over the past few years, the number of academic library jobs featuring collection development duties has greatly increased. In the first few

Richard Wisneski, PhD, MLIS, MA, BA, is Library Research Assistant, University of Akron Archives, LL10 Polsky Building, Akron, OH 44325 (E-mail: rw25@uakron.edu). The author thanks Linda Brown, George Lupone, Julia Gammon, and Coleen Parmer for their feedback on this paper's earlier drafts.

Collection Management, Vol. 33(1/2) 2008 Available online at http://col.haworthpress.com © 2008 by The Haworth Press. All rights reserved. doi:10.1080/01462670802158088 months of 2007 alone, over 90 positions mentioning collection development or bibliographic duties were advertised in American Library Association's online Job List. Many library science programs include either courses in collection development and management, or collection development components in core curriculum courses. Scholarly books and articles also abound in collection development theory and practice, such as Peggy Johnson's *Fundamentals of Collection Development & Management* (2004) and articles from *Recruiting, Educating, and Training Librarians for Collection Development*, edited by Peggy Johnson and Sheila Intner (1994). However, new academic librarians may still find collection development and management tasks daunting despite prior coursework and research.

Nowhere might this last statement be truer, perhaps, than for those new academic librarians in Ohio. Most Ohio academic institutions are members of OhioLINK, a statewide cooperative library and information system of over 80 member institutions, which allows its members to share resources such as monographs, journals, and databases. OhioLINK has been recognized by librarians and scholars alike as one of the most successful statewide collaborative efforts nationally and internationally. But as successful as OhioLINK has been and continues to be, it, like so many other statewide cooperative library efforts, faces economic, and budgetary challenges. Several vision task forces have been created by OhioLINK to address ways to make cooperation among member institutions within OhioLINK more effective and efficient. Included are task forces on cooperative collection building, coordinated book buying in Ohio, coordinated non-book buying in Ohio, and open access strategies. While it is beyond the scope of this article to elaborate on these task forces' missions and objectives, it is important to underscore the necessity for their existence; namely, to promote cooperation and purchasing efficiency of bibliographers both within their institutions and among member institutions.

Academic librarians new to collection development, thus, not only must learn how to do tasks such as work with spreadsheets, use bibliographic software and online tools, and establish rapport with library representatives from various academic departments, but they must also be acutely sensitive to the decisions they make and ways they go about purchasing and recommending materials given budgetary issues. There are, though, certain points to bear in mind and practices to follow to make this work, if not easier, at least less daunting. What follows are five areas that can have an impact on new collection development librarians, particularly those who are part of a consortium (such as Ohio LINK): mentors, subject collection development statements, collaboration with faculty, col-

laboration with fellow bibliographers, and technical and professional skills.

MENTORS

As helpful as course work and research in collection development and management is, success in being a bibliographer begins with having a good mentor (or mentors) at one's institution. Scheduling regular meetings and tutoring sessions with one's mentor can be invaluable to such skills as making use of online bibliographic tools, learning the acquisitions and library department's policies and procedures, and familiarizing oneself with the holdings of one's subject areas, both within the home library and throughout OhioLINK (e.g., through OhioLINK's subject group listservs). Mentors can also be found via local and state professional conferences in which experienced bibliographers may present their work and research. And, mentors can be found amongst fellow bibliographers.¹

Some institutions offer peer mentoring groups, which can consist of three or four bibliographers, including beginners and veterans, or a combination of bibliographers and their respective instruction librarian counterparts. Institutions may also offer learning communities, such as new faculty learning communities, to help orient those new to an institution to services offered, as well as introduce faculty from various departments and colleges to one another. My institution, for example, offered a new faculty learning community, which consisted of librarians as well as new faculty from a diverse range of disciplines, which allowed us all to gain insight into how other departments operate and what various faculty research interests and concerns were. And, institutions may promote mentor-mentee opportunities.²

SUBJECT COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT STATEMENTS

In my first year as a collection development librarian, our chair and collection development coordinator assigned all bibliographers the task of revising old subject collection development statements, and in some cases creating such statements for the first time. This task proved invaluable to me, as it forced me to understand my subject areas' curriculum, faculty research interests, and the library's policies and procedures regarding acquiring and maintaining material.

Bibliographers were given a template from which to construct the statements, which in turn would be put on the library's collection development web site. While the site was open to the general public, its audience was primarily those in the library's collection development department and teaching department or college liaisons.

Creating Collection Development Subject Statements is a useful task for anyone new to collection development. Peggy Johnson offers sample Subject Collection Development Statements in Fundamentals of Collection Development & Management (2004). Other examples can be found in the Guide for Written Collection Policy Statements (American Library Association. Subcommittee to Revise the Guide for Written Collection Policy Statements 1996) and The Guide for Training Collection Development Librarians (American Library Association. Subcommittee on Guide for Training Collection Development Librarians 1996). I recommend writing two subject statements in each assigned area for two audiences: the general public, including, particularly, department liaisons and teaching faculty; and librarians, including fellow bibliographers, reference and instruction librarians, support staff, future bibliographers, and librarians from other institutions (such as those from other consortial partners). Collection development librarians should consult with their collection management chair and coordinator/supervisor in constructing both statements.

The subject statement for the general public should be concise (recommended no more than 4 pages), and include the following: purpose; description of materials collected, collected selectively, and excluded; collection development department policy and procedures (e.g., ordering requests, policies regarding the book repository, time frames to order materials); and levels of collections. This document serves two purposes: (1) as a syllabus is to an instructor for his/her students, a Subject Statement is to a bibliographer for his/her liaisons—it acts as a contract, or statement of understanding, of what the Collection Development department's policies and procedures are, and how one operates as a bibliographer. It should be referred to in the event of the need for any clarifications between bibliographers and department liaisons, such as deadlines and the extent to which a bibliographer orders materials for a department (Appendix A).

The subject statement for librarians need not necessarily repeat general policies and procedures of the collection development department, but should assist one's chair, coordinator, fellow bibliographers and librarians at one's own library and consortium libraries, and future bibliographers in understanding the departments to which one is assigned.

This document should elaborate on a department's curriculum, faculty research interests, liaison and department chair names, accrediting agencies, degrees offered, LC subject headings/classes, new or emerging subject areas, and academic or professional publishers in the field. It should, furthermore, take into account approval plans, and various formats and media requested by faculty, such as audio-visual, CD-ROMs, microform, and digital formats (Appendix B).

It may be in the best interest of bibliographers to collaborate with their department liaisons in writing the portions of this statement that concern faculty research interests and curriculum. Although much of this information can be gathered from researching a department's web site, such collaboration gives bibliographers the opportunity to get to know their liaisons and other faculty and shows a commitment to work closely with the departments to which one is assigned. This point leads to the next recommendation.

COLLABORATION WITH FACULTY

Articles abound in library journals and trade publications concerning how librarians can collaborate with teaching faculty and promote library services.³ The challenge is for librarians to reach out to faculty and play an integral role in their research and pedagogical needs, and thus counteract the misperception some hold that a librarian's primary duty is to check out books to patrons or order any and all materials faculty request. This challenge is especially difficult for new collection development librarians. If bibliographers only correspond with their liaisons via e-mail or an occasional phone call, the result can be a non-working relationship in which bibliographers receive few requests or queries from their liaisons, or are relegated to being just a name for liaisons or faculty to reference on occasion.

One means of effective collaboration for bibliographers is through implementing Web 2.0 tools, such as a blog, wiki, RSS feeds, instant messaging, or participation on a listserv.⁴ For example, a wiki can allow bibliographers to share what they are acquiring on their approval plan of which their liaisons may not be aware, and allow their liaisons in turn to submit via the wiki any monograph or serials recommendations or suggestions. Liaisons can propose titles of monographs and periodicals they would like, and offer comments, questions, or suggestions (Appendix C). Many academic and public libraries are quickly adopting Web 2.0 tools for their main web sites. Reference and instruction librarians in particu-

lar are using blogs, wikis, and instant messaging to collaborate with faculty and assist students and patrons. Collection development librarians can also take advantage of the many possibilities Web 2.0 offers as an additional means to reach out to faculty and department liaisons.⁵

However, as exciting as the possibilities Web 2.0 offers to bibliographers are, face-to-face meetings are still oftentimes essential. I made my department liaisons aware of the wiki I created for collection development, and they did visit it, but no one wrote in it. Teaching faculty are busy people, and all stated that they did not have the time to contribute to the wiki. My face-to-face meetings with liaisons and faculty, however, always proved invaluable. While there was no requirement for meeting with one's liaisons, I made a point of visiting each at the beginning of each semester and at least once during the school year as an informal short "drop-by" session during office hours, in addition to regular e-mail, campus mail, and occasional telephone correspondence. While e-mail and campus mail correspondence is helpful and many times necessary to receive requests and inform liaisons of his or her department's budget, face-to-face interaction allows the bibliographer to see first-hand the liaisons' work environment and learn specifically in a less formal setting of faculty and their students' research interests and library needs. Such meetings can be an effective way to network in departments as well. Bibliographers can learn, for example, of special events departments host that one can attend, and of potential research or project collaborations. One of my liaisons, for instance, during a face-to-face meeting, informed me that one of his colleagues was looking for assistance with his research project, which in turn led me to collaborate with him. In short, face-toface meetings with liaisons can bring up needs and ideas that might not come up in e-mail or telephone interactions.

COLLABORATION WITH FELLOW BIBLIOGRAPHERS

Related to the importance of collaboration with one's department liaisons is collaboration with fellow bibliographers both within one's library and within a consortium such as OhioLINK. Instruction librarians sometimes ask faculty to think of them as colleagues who can assist their students with their research skills and needs. Faculty need not, in other words, think of themselves as going it alone in teaching a class, but rather have librarians to further assist them in their instruction.

Likewise, bibliographers, particularly those new to the profession, need not think of themselves as alone in doing their jobs or in working

with faculty. One can turn to her or his fellow bibliographers and librarians for assistance when assigned such tasks as, for example, making cuts to standing orders or serials (e.g., asking librarians to rank the use or importance of particular monographs or serials). During my second year as a bibliographer, my collection development coordinator announced that certain departments had to make cuts to their standing orders. One of my departments was selected to make a cut of approximately \$2,000. I had established a good working relationship with my liaisons, and I had compiled information on the costs of all standing orders, including price increases, usage data, OhioLINK and e-book availabilities, and projected future costs. Nonetheless, the department chair requested to be present for my face-to-face meeting with the liaisons to discuss the issue. In turn, I asked the collection development coordinator and a fellow bibliographer who had familiarity with the department to join me at this meeting, to which both agreed. The meeting ultimately proved very cordial and informative, with each of us sharing our knowledge with the chair and two liaisons. The department chair and liaisons were at first reluctant to agree to such cuts, but in the end understood and offered ways themselves to raise monies to support library acquisitions in their field. This teamwork approach, which can also include instruction librarians, can be very effective in sharing information and offering support.

Such teamwork should also go beyond one's own institution. New collection development librarians benefit greatly from getting to know fellow bibliographers at other institutions who work with the same departments. In the state of Ohio, bibliographers can take advantage of their membership in OhioLINK. They can correspond via OhioLINK listservs, in-state meetings, conferences, and workshops, and on their own initiative via e-mail, telephone, and occasion personal meetings at nearby institutions. New bibliographers should hear how fellow department bibliographers from other institutions conduct their work, make connections, and deal with issues such as selection and budgets. They may learn of other methods to make selections or work with computer programs and software in doing collection and budgetary analysis.

TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Any help those new to collection development can receive with regard to collection development and management tools, such as integrated library systems (ILS), books vendors' systems, and electronic resources management products (ERM), will be beneficial, given the robust nature and complexity many of these systems have, and given the importance and use one can get from these systems. For example, anyone in collection development would greatly benefit from having some expertise with spreadsheets in, among other matters, doing calculations, sorting through titles, determining expenditures, encumbrances, and so on.

The book vendor system used by members of the OhioLINK is Yankee Book Peddler (YBP)'s Global Online Bibliographic Information (GOBI). Using GOBI's many functions, bibliographers can run lists of items not purchased by member OhioLINK, institutions, run peer reports to see how one's institution's purchases in a particular subject or LC call number range compared to those of other institutions both in-state and out-of state, and see the number of copies on order, received, or coming on approval a particular item has among OhioLINK institutions. Such lists and reports are helpful not only in making monograph selections, but in doing one's part in resource sharing and responsible purchasing within the OhioLINK system. For instance, checking an item's availability in OhioLINK is helpful if a general collection development department's general policy is to not purchase an item that has approximately seven or more available copies throughout the state. Consortia reports can show if OhioLINK peer institutions are generally lacking in a particular LC call number range or LC subject that is of interest to faculty, students, and researchers, or conversely, is inundated with materials in that range or subject heading (Appendix D).

An electronic resources management product (ERM) is another useful online tool with which new bibliographers should become familiar. Using Serials Solutions, a widely available ERM, bibliographers can conduct overlap analyses (e.g., with full-text titles held between two or more databases, or the number of databases that carry a particular journal and its date range) and explore unique titles, dates of availability, and total holdings. For example, in running one overlap analysis of two computer science databases, which included the sum of unique titles and availability of journals in both databases, I was able to show my collection development department chair, coordinator, and department liaison the full capabilities and limitations of both databases (Appendix E). Serials Solutions also provides usage statistics, so one can see, for instance, which journals get the most use to least use.

Should a department liaison wish to see which periodicals the library's budget allots to her or his department, or should a bibliographer wish to see which monographs were purchased the previous year for a particular discipline, running lists and reports on an integrated library system can perform these functions, and much more. Innovative Interfaces Incorpo-

rated (III) Millennium, the ILS used by all OhioLINK members, can help one determine the amount spent on monograph or serial purchases from one year to the next, search one's catalog, locate when orders were placed and by what vendor, to name only a few functions. Bibliographers can run statistics on record number ranges, review files, view fund balances, and index ranges according to author, title, call number, and so on. III Millennium also helps bibliographers locate how often particular items were checked out and renewed, and use such information as an additional means to determine which subjects or items are heavily used and thus would benefit from more purchases or investigation.

Those new to collection development should also make use of other collection development tools, such as web sites that offer book reviews (e.g., Bowker's Global Books in Print, YBP), vendor contact information, professional organizations related to collection development and management (e.g., American Library Association, Association for College and Research Libraries, Research Libraries Group), and links to classification tools (e.g., Library of Congress Classification Web, OCLC). Vendor training services, such as those conducted by YBP, and vendor web sites (e.g., Swets, http:// www.swets.com/web/show) are also useful, especially in learning of services and tools available. These and other resources help bibliographers make selections, and know the profession in more detail, including trends, issues, and research. Bibliographers also may benefit from studying their own library's collection development web site, which typically lists professional organization and journals, vendor web sites, book review web sites and resources, usage statistics links, and so on.

Finally, given the emphasis on resource sharing and attention to budgets within the state of Ohio, those new to collection development in Ohio academic libraries should make periodic use of and visits to OhioLINK web pages to see such matters as usage statistics on particular databases and other items, new acquisitions, database acquisitions and cancellations, contact names, purchase considerations, and budgetary issues (Appendix F). Bibliographers should stay abreast of and participate in OhioLINK meetings, online discussions, and listservs (e.g., the Cooperative Information Resources Management Committee) related to collection development and management. Such participation can, furthermore, help new bibliographers make use of and learn to interpret the data from these various collection development and management tools.

CONCLUSION

As Peggy Johnson states, collection development is both an art and a science, resulting from a combination of knowledge, experience, and intuition (2004). In a consortial environment, another level of complexity is added. Although many tools today, such as the YBP's GOBI system, make selection easier for bibliographers, being a bibliographer in today's oftentimes difficult economic library climate is nonetheless still challenging. Success in being a bibliographer comes with practice, working with others, and being willing to learn new skills.

NOTES

- 1. Several articles have been written regarding mentor relationships. See, for example, Terri A. Scandura et al., "Perspectives on Mentoring," *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 17, no. 3 (1996): 50-56; Gillian Hallam and Carol Newton-Smith, "Evaluation of Transitional Mentoring for New Library and Information Professionals," *Library Management* 27, no. 3 (2006): 154-161; Allison Level and Michelle Mach, "Peer Mentoring: One Institution's Approach to Mentoring Academic Librarians," *Library Management* 26, nos. 6-7 (2005): 301-310; and Norma T. Mertz, "What's a Mentor, Anyway?" *Educational Administration Quarterly* 40, no, 4 (2004): 541-560.
- 2. The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Spectrum Scholar Program offers another means for new faculty to be mentored by tenured or experienced faculty from other institutions.
- 3. See in particular, Tim Harper and Barbara Norelli, "The Business of Collaboration and Electronic Collection Development," *Collection Building* 26, no. 1 (2007): 15-19; Randall Ward, John Christensen, and Elizabeth Spackman, "A Systematic Approach for Evaluating and Upgrading Academic Science Journal Collections," *Serials Review* 32, no. 1 (2006): 4-16; Tony Horava, "A New Approach to Faculty-Librarian Collaboration: A 'New Professors' Fund' for Collection Development," *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 31, no. 5 (2005): 482-485; Christy Stevens, "Beyond Preaching to the Choir: Information Literacy, Faculty Outreach, and Disciplinary Journals," *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 33, no. 2 (2007): 254-267; and Beverly Lynch et al., "Attitudes of Presidents and Provosts on the University Library," *College & Research Libraries* 68, no. 3 (May 2007): 213-228.
- 4. See Allison Level and Sarah Myers, "Creating Internal Web Tools for Collection Development," *Collection Building* 22, no. 4 (2003): 162-166; Gerry McKiernan, "WikimediaWorlds," *Library Hi Tech News* 22, no.8 (2005): 46-54; and Angela Weaver, "Personal Web Pages as Professional Activities: An Exploratory Study," *Reference Services Review* 28, no. 2 (2000): 171-177.
- 5. For some samples, see *The Wanamaker Collection Development Blog* http://wanamakerlibrary.wordpress.com/ (accessed July 10, 2007); Dylan Baker, "Collection Development in the Digital Age" http://www.slideshare.net/dbaker/collection-development-in-the-digital-age/ (accessed June 24, 2007); Bronwyn's Library Blog

http://liblogger.wordpress.com/tag/collection-development/ (accessed July 7, 2007); SUNY Potsdam Collection Development Wiki http://potsdamcd.pbwiki.com/ (accessed March 4, 2007); and the National Science Digital Library (NSDL) Collections Development Wiki http://collections.comm.nsdl.org/cgi-bin/wiki.pl (accessed March 8, 2007).

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OhioLINK 2007. http://www.ohiolink.edu/ (accessed March 1, 2007).

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Reviewed: 09/12/07

Revised and Accepted: 09/20/07

APPENDIX A

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT SUBJECT STATEMENT FOR LIAISONS/GENERAL PUBLIC

DATE

SUBJECT/SCHOOL

Collection Development Statement

Prepared by NAME

I. PROGRAM INFORMATION

NAME OF UNIVERSITY offers several degree and program options, including... The selection policy is based on the following: . . .

II. COORDINATION AND COOPERATIVE INFORMATION

The selection of materials is coordinated by NAME, and the representatives from NAME.

Materials ordered through the NAME fund are deposited in the Main Library, including monographs and serials. Materials deposited to the REPOSITORY include:

III. SUBJECT AND LANGUAGE MODIFIERS

Languages Geographical Areas Chronological Periods Important Sub-disciplines

IV. DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS COLLECTED

Included:

Collected selectively:

Excluded:

V. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY & PROCEDURES

VI. CONSPECTUS OF FIELDS AND LEVELS OF COLLECTIONS

Initial Study Level (B1):

Advanced Study Level (B2):

APPENDIX B

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT SUBJECT STATEMENT FOR LIBRARY

DATE

SUBJECT/DEPARTMENTCollection Development Statement

Prepared by NAME

I. Persons Responsible for Collection

II. Purpose and Program Description

- A. Accrediting Body
- B. Degrees Offered/Majors or Areas of Specialization
- C. General Education Support

III. Scope of Coverage

- A. Collecting level
 - Initial Study Level (B1):
 - Advanced Study Level (B2):
 - Research Level (C):
- B. Languages
- C. Geographical areas (content)
- D. Chronological periods (content)
- E. Important sub-disciplines
- F. Publishers/Vendors for Subject
- **G.** Imprint dates

IV. Types of Materials Collected

A. Included

- Subject-specific encyclopedias and reference texts, including:
- Research and experimental reports, including:
- Top-tier journals, including:
- Scholarly databases, including:
- Handbooks, including research, teaching, cognitive-behavioral interventions, aging, research methodology, law, medicine, sports & exercise
- Abstracts & Indexes
- Bibliographies

APPENDIX B (continued)

- Biographies
- **B.** Collected selectively
- C. Excluded

V. Subjects Covered

- A. LC classes
- **B.** Subject descriptors (narrower than LC if necessary)
- C. New/emerging subject areas
- **D.** Faculty research interests (as of DATE)
- VI. Interdisciplinary Relationships
 - A. Subject areas
- VII. Other Local and Regional Resources

VIII. Additional Information

- Full-Time Faculty, YEAR, NUMBER
- Part-Time Faculty, YEAR, NUMBER
- Graduate Assistants, YEAR, NUMBER
- B.A. students: YEAR, NUMBER
- B.S. students: YEAR, NUMBER

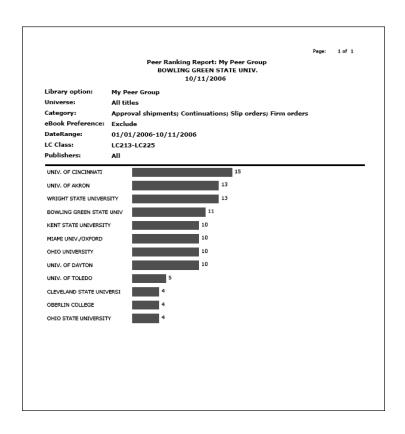
APPENDIX C

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT Wiki



APPENDIX D

PEER RANKING REPORT



APPENDIX E

SERIALS SOLUTIONS SAMPLE

1-866-SERIALS (737-4257)							Your Account Support Center C			
SerialsSc	olutions								Bowl	ing Gi
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Data Summa	ry and Analysi	is Tools								
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Holdings Summar	у	Title Unique	Holding Unique	Total Unique	Full Holding Overlap	Partial Holding Overlap	Total Holding Overlap	Title Overlap	Total	P
American Mathem	atical Society	11	0	11	0	0	0	0	11	
Computer Source		289	6	295	0	0	0	0	295	
Journal Holdings	Totals									
Total holdings in collection*		300	6	306	0	0	0	0	306	
*Total holdings i							e. However	, the total I	nolding	s nu
Holding Type	Description									
Title Unique	Journal holdings	available in onl	ly one databa	se						
Holding Unique	Journal holdings				t which do no	t overlap in co	verage dates			984
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APPENDIX F

OhioLINK LIBRARY STAFF INFORMATION

OhioLINK Libraries Staff Information

Search staff documents:

Search (Individual documents may be password-protected)

What's New on Ostaff?

- LexisNexis Online Business Content Training July
 13
- IM Reference Workshop June 6
- OhioLINK PCIRC Conference June 1

Quick Links:

- · Problem Reporting
- · Cooperative Collection Building
- Databases
- · Digital Resource Commons Information
- Glossary
- · Marketing Toolkit
- Policy Handbook
- Reinventing OhioLINK* (Strategic Initiatives Summary & Progress)
- Training Calendar

Directions: OhioLINK <u>map</u> | <u>directions from Port Columbus</u> <u>International Airport</u> | <u>directions from other locations</u>

General Information & Committees:

- Administrative Information * (statistics, email, LibQUAL)
- · Library Directors *
- <u>Library Systems and Information Technology</u> (Lead Implementors, TAC)
- . Circulation and ILL (ICS)
- Collection Development (CIRM)*
- · Reference and User Services (USC)
- Technical Services (DMS)

Meeting Information:

- Schedule of upcoming meetings
- Video Broadcast Viewing Instructions
- Winter Weather Procedures