

Conforming Collections: Compliance of Medical and Allied Health Collection to Doody's Core Titles

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed the print collections of an academic medical library and utilized list checking as the methodology. It identified the collection's compliance based on Doody's Core Titles (DCT) sub-specialties, determined the strong and weak subjects areas, and compared the trends for the last five years from 2014 to 2018. Out of 117 subjects covering five sub-specialties, twenty-one were 100% compliant to DCT 2018 where majority complemented the curriculum of the educational institution served by the academic medical library. Basic Sciences was the strongest sub-specialty where most subjects were 100% compliant. Most academic programs share the same basic sciences foundation subjects, thus the tendency for high compliance. Clinical psychology, Oncologic surgery, History of Medicine, and Ambulatory (Nursing) were the subjects with lowest compliance percentage. Associated Health-related Disciplines was the weakest sub-specialty. These subjects need to be prioritized in collection development. All sub-specialties exhibited an increasing trend of compliance between 2014 and 2018. Although there are gaps in the collections that need to be filled, there is much opportunity to develop the collections to meet the standards.

Keywords: collection development; compliance; Doody's Core Titles

INTRODUCTION

Collection assessment is an important process to keep library collections relevant, authoritative and updated. It is essential in the effective management of library resources, ensuring that libraries abide by their goals, users have access to the information that they need, and budget is appropriately allocated. Collection assessment is used for various purposes, such as planning and budgeting, accreditation, and monitoring of accountability (Johnson 2014). It enables libraries to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the collection using statistical data and personal judgment based on knowledge and experience (Bushing as cited by Johnson 2014). Collection assessment is an opportunity to develop the collections with objectivity and soundness because it identifies areas of the collections that need to be maintained or improved.

LITERATURE REVIEW

List checking

Different types of collection assessment techniques may be used. List checking is among the qualitative assessment methods which involves determining the percentage of the titles included in the library collection against the titles found on the list, such as a catalog, bibliography, subject compilation, list prepared by a professional organization or government body, or course syllabi. The advantages of list checking include the availability of credible and updated lists that libraries can use, the opportunity for the librarians to become more familiar with the resources for a specific subject, and the combination of qualitative and quantitative assessment it offers brought by the judgment of the persons or organizations who compiled the list and the statistical value of the titles that the library has. On the other hand, it poses some disadvantages, such as the bias of the compiler, the appropriateness of the list to meet the library's mission, and currency of the list (Johnson 2014).

Several studies in the past have employed list-checking to assess collections (Crawley-Low 2002, Smith 2003, Nisonger and Meehan 2007, Meehan, Swanson, Yates, and Decker 2010, and Williams and Deyoe 2014). There have been researches that reported on developing core lists to aid in selection and collection assessment for nursing journals (Sherwill-Navarro, Kennedy, and Allen 2014) and for veterinary medicine (Moberly and Page 2018). These studies show that lists and list-checking are regarded as relevant in collection selection and assessment among libraries.

Doody's Core Titles

Doody's Core Titles (DCT) is a list of core titles for medicine and allied health published by Doody Enterprises, Inc. and updated annually. It was developed as a result of the discontinuation of the Brandon/Hill Selected List of medical, nursing, and allied health books that had long been used as a collection development guide by medical libraries (Spasser 2005). It contains recommended core titles in 121 health science specialties in Clinical Medicine, Basic Sciences, Nursing, Allied Health, and other Associated Health-related disciplines selected by content specialists and librarians based on five collection development criteria (Doody's Enterprises). An Essential Purchase Titles List is also provided to help small libraries decide on which titles to buy out of the core titles list.

Some flaws were noted in DCT in terms of the objectivity of the selection but it has a commendable selection and rating criteria and regarded as an "important resource for health sciences librarians who are responsible for developing and maintaining monographic collections" (Spasser 2005). Although DCT may be subjective due to the judgment brought by the selectors, it makes up for it through its distinctive approach of pooling a "community of experts" composed of librarians, health professionals, subject experts, and technical staff to identify the best medical and allied health titles, thus, the selection decision is based not only in a small group of individuals but on a collective assessment of the said community. It "can assist collection development, aid collection assessment, serve as a recommended source for textbook selection, and provide an

entry point into the literature of an unfamiliar discipline” (Shedlock and Walton 2006). DCT was utilized as one of the benchmarks in developing an electronic reference collection (Husted and Czechowski 2012) and was also cited in several studies in the past that used DCT as a point of reference in collection assessment.

The De La Salle Medical and Health Sciences Institute Romeo P. Ariniego, MD Library is the Institute’s partner in providing relevant and updated medicine and allied health content to support learning, teaching, and research of ten medical and allied health graduate and undergraduate courses. It holds around 28,000 volumes of print books with an annual acquisition rate of 1,500 to 2,000 print volumes from 2014 to 2018. It uses DCT as one of its collection assessment guides to keep its collections responsive to the needs of its users and the medical and allied health professions. It is also utilized to comply with the accreditation requirements set by the local regulatory body in the country which requires libraries to perform collection assessment. DCT was chosen as the assessment tool because of its subject specialization and its strengths as a selection tool for medicine and allied health sciences. The Library performs annual collection assessment using DCT from 2014 to 2018.

Statement of the problem

This study was intended to assess the print collections of the Library using DCT. Specifically, it sought to:

- identify the compliance of the print collections based on DCT 2018;
- determine the strong and weak subjects areas based on DCT 2018; and
- compare the trends of compliance for the last five years from 2014-2018.

The study shall be helpful to administrators, librarians, faculty members, and students because it shall be used as a basis to develop high-quality medicine and allied health collections according to industry-accepted standard. Gaps in the collections shall be identified and improved while strong subjects shall be maintained.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study was descriptive and list checking was employed to the print collections of the Library from 2014 to 2018 based on DCT 2014 to DCT 2018. DCT has five sub-specialties, namely Allied Health Professions, Basic Sciences, Clinical Medicine, Associated Health-related Disciplines, and Nursing. Titles were exported from <http://www.doody.com/dct/> for each year to MS Excel and arranged by sub-specialty. Titles listed in DCT were searched in the library’s online public access catalog. All titles owned by the Library and encoded in the catalog were included in the search. Titles with the same edition found in the catalog are marked as exact matches in MS Excel. Titles with superseded edition found in the catalog are marked as near matches in MS Excel. Finally, titles not found in the catalog are marked as non-matches in MS Excel. Previous studies employed the same methodology of checking the titles in catalog (Smith 2003, Nissonger and Meehan 2007, Meehan, Swanson, Yates, and Decker 2010). Table 1 shows the number of title

listed in DCT and the number of titles that the Library has where the DCT titles have been checked against per year.

Table 1: Number of titles listed in DCT and number of titles that the Library has per year

Year	Number of titles listed in DCT	Number of titles the Library has
2014	2,276	19,593
2015	2,273	19,951
2016	2,276	22,374
2017	2,199	24,027
2018	2,156	22,778

The total number of match titles per sub-specialty is computed by adding the exact and near match titles. Percentage of match is derived to determine compliance. Strong and weak areas were identified based on the percentage of compliance. The trend was determined by comparing the percentage of compliance of sub-specialties across five years.

Four DCT subjects were excluded because the Institute does not offer these programs, specifically Dental Auxiliaries, Dentistry, Optometry, and Veterinary Medicine.

RESULTS

Compliance of the print collections based on DCT 2018 sub-specialties

Out of 117 subjects covering five sub-specialties, twenty-one were 100% compliant. Most of these were Basic Sciences subjects which complemented the curriculum of the majority of the courses offered. There is a tendency to have high compliance with Basic Sciences subjects because these subjects were taken by many students from different courses. On the other hand, most of the subjects were 50%-75% compliant, where majority were Nursing subjects. There were nine subjects with less than 50% compliance, most of which were Associated Health-related Disciplines subjects. Table 2 presents the percentage of compliance of the sub-specialties.

Table 2: Percentage of compliance of the sub-specialties

Percentage of compliance	Number of subjects					Total	%
	Associated Health Professions	Basic Sciences	Clinical Medicine	Other discip	Nursing		
100%	3	9	3		6	21	17.95 %
76%-99%	7	3	21		4	35	29.91 %

ICoLIS 2019, Malacca: DLIS, FCSIT-UML, 2019

50%-75%	3		22	3	24	52	44.44 %
Less than 50%			3	6		9	7.69%
Total	13	12	49	9	34	117	100.00 %

While 17.95% of subjects were reported to be 100% compliant, 44.44% of the subjects were 50%-75% compliant. The Library needs to pay attention to these subjects to improve compliance and develop better collections.

Strong and weak subject areas based on DCT 2018 sub-specialties

Basic Sciences was the strongest sub-specialty where most subjects were 100% compliant. Most academic programs share the same basic sciences foundation subjects, thus the tendency for high compliance. Strong subjects tend to match the undergraduate programs offered by the Institute, such as Pharmacy, Radiologic Technology, and Speech, Language & Hearing among the Associated Health Professions and Biochemistry among the Basic Sciences. Due to the propensity to acquire titles to support the programs offered by the Institute, there is an opportunity to build collections based on the new programs that the Institute shall offer in the future. On the other hand, titles corresponding to programs not offered by the Institute are unlikely to be acquired because there is no curriculum to support.

Clinical psychology, Oncologic surgery, History of Medicine, and Ambulatory (Nursing) were the subjects with the lowest compliance percentage for each sub-specialty. Associated Health-related Disciplines was the weakest sub-specialty. Subjects from the Associated Health-related Disciplines may not be taught in many courses offered in the Institute. Thus, books on these subjects may not be given as much attention as the other subjects that are shared by a number of courses. Clinical Psychology is not offered as a course resulting in low compliance.

Among the reasons for the weak subjects areas may be the unavailability of titles from book suppliers. The Library performs regular book selections locally and internationally. While most of the books were sourced abroad, there are instances where some titles are not available from Asian book suppliers and publishers. Shipping costs and duration of shipment discourage the Library from purchasing books outside of Asia. School administrators and faculty members actively participate in book selection. However, not all of them are aware of DCT and may not use it as a guide during selection. This may also drive the low compliance for some subjects. These subjects need to be considered in collection development to close the gap in the collections and the Library need to address these deficiencies. Table 3 shows the strong and weak areas per sub-specialty.

Table 3: Strong and weak areas per sub-specialty

Sub-specialty	Subjects with the highest compliance (Strongest subjects)	Subjects with the weakest compliance (Weakest subjects)
Associated Health Professions	Pharmacy (100%) Radiologic Technology (100%) Speech, Language & Hearing (100%)	Psychology, Clinical (56%)
Basic Sciences	Anatomy/Embryology (100%) Biochemistry (100%) Immunology (100%) Microbiology (100%) Molecular Biology (100%) Neuroscience (100%) Pathology (100%) Pharmacology (100%) Physiology (100%)	Epidemiology (92%)
Clinical Medicine	Diagnostic Radiology (100%) Radiation Oncology (100%) Surgical Pathology (100%)	Oncologic Surgery (35%)
Associated Health-related Disciplines	Dictionaries/Terminology (67%)	History of Medicine (0%)
Nursing	Administration/Management (100%) Diagnosis/Assessment (100%) Fundamentals (100%) Laboratory (100%) Nursing Process (100%) Research (100%)	Ambulatory (50%)

Trend of compliance from 2014-2018

Figure 1 demonstrates that all sub-specialties exhibited an increasing trend of compliance over the last five years based on DCT 2014 to DCT 2018. Although there are gaps in the collections that need to be filled, the trend shows that the Library attempts to respond to these deficiencies and improve the quality of its collections by acquiring more books based on DCT. It performs regular collection assessments where strong and weak subjects are identified and maps the quality of the book collections. Results of the collection assessment are considered in acquisitions planning and communicated to the school administrators and faculty members to help guide in book selection. The Library helps them to be aware of the relevance of DCT and encourages them to prioritize the selection of books included in DCT. Budget allocated to print collections has been increasing for the last five years which affords the Library more opportunity to acquire

DCT-listed titles. There is much potential in improving the collections through the continuous efforts of the Library to manage its print resources.

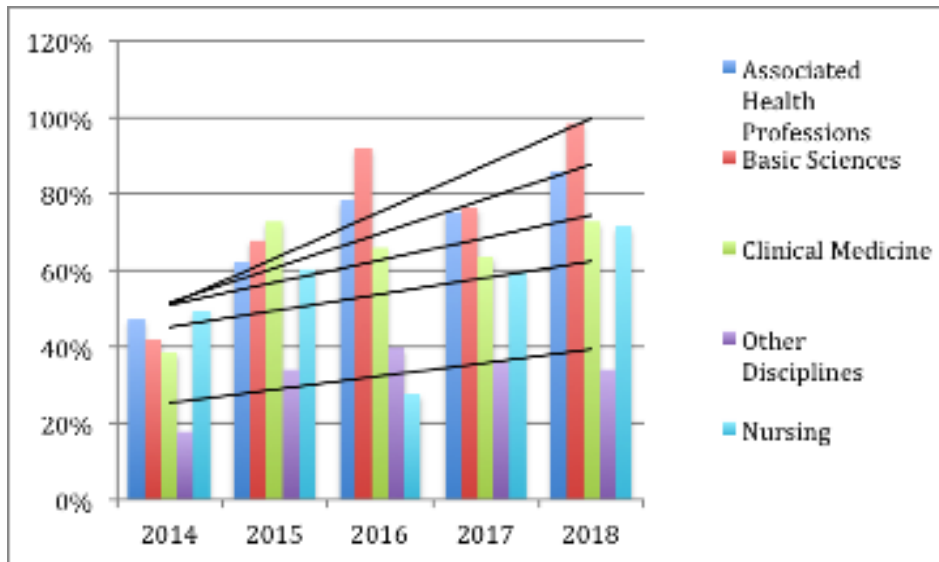


Figure 1: Trend of compliance per sub-specialty, 2014 to 2018

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the research, the following conclusions are offered:

- Twenty-one subjects were 100% compliant while nine were less than 50% compliant to DCT 2018. Books corresponding to the courses offered by the Institute are likely to be selected to support the degree programs and thus, the tendency for high compliance.
- Basic Sciences was the strongest sub-specialty where most of the subjects were 100% compliant while the weakest subject areas with the lowest compliance to DCT 2018 were Clinical psychology, Oncologic surgery, History of Medicine, and Ambulatory (Nursing). Basic Sciences subjects were taught across most of the programs and books for these subjects are likely to be selected by many faculty members. Subjects with low compliance correspond to courses not offered by the Institute. Unavailability of books listed in DCT as well as lack of awareness and appreciation of faculty members to DCT when selecting books may also be among the factors in the low compliance.
- All sub-specialties showed an increasing trend of compliance for the last five years from 2014-2018, showing the Library's efforts to improve the quality of the collections by prioritizing DCT-listed books in selection.

The study recommends that collection assessment using DCT must be continued to monitor the quality of the print collections and ensure that they improve over time.

Steps must be taken to maintain the strong subject areas and develop the weak subject areas by continuously prioritizing titles listed in DCT and helping faculty members to choose DCT-listed titles during selection. Other collection assessment methods may also be employed in the future to achieve a more holistic view of the state of the collections. Formats other than print collections may also be considered in the next round of collection assessment, such as electronic books and journals.

Enriching the library collection through regular collection assessment is one way to respond to the needs of the users for quality and authoritative content. The use of industry and professional standards, such as Doody's Core Titles, enables the library to anticipate the resources that would be helpful and relevant to them and thus, close the gap between what the library has and what the user needs. It is a proactive way of serving users and a reflection of the library's commitment to take the extra mile and do more than what is expected. When collection development is guided by the use of industry and library-accepted standards, libraries are able to contribute in the development of literate and competent medical and allied health learners and educators who shall become professionals who are instrumental in nation-building and social transformation through health and education.

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