

## Acquisition Process

The selection process -

- Books are purchased after reading reviews from one or more accepted selection tools towards the intersecting requirements of our student body and Gavilan's SLOs, as listed in Curricunet.
  - Candidate books are placed in bins related to courses. Further, bins are priority ranked .
  
- We try to find at least two reviews for each title selected since reviewing tools do not always agree.
  - Keeping the collection current
    - ALA publications *Choice Reviews* and *Booklist*
    - *Library Journal*
    - *NY Times Book Review*
    - *Times Literary Supplement*
    - *New York Review of Books*
    - Bibliographies & reviews published by various groups or publications
      - Outstanding books in *College and Research Libraries*
      - Sources listed above
      - *Chronicle of Higher Education*
      - Specialized publications, e.g., *College English*, Allied Health lists
      - *AAAS Science Books*
      - *Economist*
      - *Nation*
    - "Further reading" suggestions in the subscription item *Opposing Viewpoints* are reviewed, thus assisting in noting key topics that tend to appear in student assignments.
    - Librarians and teaching faculty routinely identify areas needing development as well as suggesting specific titles.
    - Publishers catalogs are scanned. These are of mixed value, but some publishers, e.g., Cambridge, Oxford, University of Chicago, University of California, McFarland, Salem, offer a heads up important forthcoming titles.
    - Maintaining currency. We routinely remove outdated materials. Librarians are assigned areas to and deselect outdated, worn and materials no longer supporting the current curriculum. The process is continuous.

Student demographics affects selection.

- Our students balance courses, a work schedule ( most of our students work at least part-time) family life, many with toddlers to care for, and the usual recreational interests of college-age

students. Gavilan students are the first generation that has enrolled in a college. A third is working in English as their second language. They exhibit decreased interest and motivation to attempt full-length books. Our Google-trained world engenders a need for all but instant-retrieval when searching for materials.

#### Gift items

Gift items receive a review process similar to other acquisitions. Gift items judged out of scope or out of date are disposed of by two methods. They are offered for sale to our library community or if we view the materials valuable enough offered to another institution. Eventually, unsold materials are pulped

#### Format

There are several reasons that ebooks, often a third more expensive than the paper copy, are acquired. One is simply the sociology of our students. They are impatient to get on with an assignment, and the idea of schlepping themselves all the way over to the library and going through the check-out process seems archaic. Further, in a brilliant add-on to the OPAC, not only can students locate ebooks online (as well as magazine articles, of course) but the system notes the most relevant pages of an ebook, a remarkable time saver, and remarkably accurate. Another major reason to acquire ebooks over a paper copy is the ebook allows distance-neutral access. We have several branch locations and are anticipating still another

There are several reasons, as well, to buy paper copies. One is, it is simply a pain for most of us to read fiction online. Further, our fiction collection is broad enough so that if you need to write a paper on, for example, the expatriate experience and author x are in circulation; you can go to author y.

#### Fiction

A large research library such as UC Santa Cruz or the San Jose State University has an acquisition budget that allows it to be almost definitive in selecting important fiction. With our budget parameter, we select representative titles.

Our collection supports specific instructional objectives. We attempt to select authors who lend themselves to student investigation along various themes. We try to acquire at least two titles by the same author. Such a method offers a student the opportunity to compare and contrast the two books. (Often, comparing the two books, techniques and themes become evident.) A variant of this process is that students being students, (not fond of long and involved reading projects) we try to place in the collection one or more short story collections by the same author. This

comparison allows a quick and dirty method for a student's grasping a writer's unique style.

#### Faculty focus

A fact of life in a community college is that a particular discipline may have only one or more faculty teaching an introductory course that makes up our curricular offerings. Working at the reference desk, we learn about an individual faculty member's approach. Thus we try to select titles that will augment that instructors' teaching approach. One obvious area here at Gavilan is woman's experience in the modern world. Another is the expatriate experience, those writers who look at our cultures from a unique perspective.

#### Intersection of interests

A third of our students attend college while working in English as a second language. They operate between two cultures, speaking English in class, often another language at home. Still another factor to consider is that their year or two at Gavilan is a unique cultural experience. For most, this will be their only exposure to an institution of higher learning. Few come from homes where their parents attended college. We suggest that reading how others cope in alien environments is particularly useful.

#### Reading Levels

We delimit selections to those whose materials judged appropriate for at the first two years of undergraduate work, or at the high school reading level. (An exception a, of course, is ESL materials.) *Choice Reviews* is particularly useful as it always indicated the reading level.

#### *Choice Reviews*, the good and not-so-good

The *Choice* reviewers are subject experts, teaching in the reviews discipline, and most if not all are PhDs. Thus, they are offering an educated, current assessment as to the quality of a book and with it, the appropriate audience level. Unfortunately, some of the reviews are on arcane aspects of a discipline better suited to higher level classes, or out of scope for the SLOs our faculty has selected. No matter how fascinating and well written a book may be about Adolf Hitler or the Battle of the Bulge, It is not going to be read at Gavilan. Our courses are surveys, and World War II is rushed by in a survey course; there is no time to pause and examine details about the major actors in that event. This is a brutal fact of life; we must forgo those brilliant and bestselling "buzz books."

## Santa Clara Public Library

We recognize our symbiotic relationship with the Santa Clara Public Library System. It offers in Gilroy and elsewhere in the county, effective physical plants that invite visitors, and well-managed collections, collections where one can find both the current best sellers and discussions on topics Gavilan's budget and selection process disallows.

## Marketing information

We must be marketers, as Philip Kotler explains marketing. To that end, we attempt to find fascinating vistas on various topics. An example of such a book is *Banana* by Dan Koeppel. The author, a talented science writer, touches on Latin American foreign policy, business history, former "Banana republics", and health issues related to chemical suppression of various plant diseases. One of our goals has to be ease of access; geographic, electronic, comprehension-wise, and bureaucratic. Such things as a redesigned web page contribute to that goal.

## Journalists as authors

Professional journalists are remarkably good at writing for our college demographic. Their prose is informal, pocked with telling incident, and often of remarkable research scope. If we were to pick a book in the Gavilan collection, that best shows the research, topicality, and fascinating detail, it would be Isabel Wilkerson's *The Warmth of Other Suns*. Students reading that book will simply absorb in the telling, a spectrum of race issues, like no other title. Journalists put together a story written in concise, understandable prose.

## Reference services

We have witnessed a dramatic reduction in fact-look ups once housed in a massive reference collection. Instead, students use our extensive online resources, or simply "ask Siri" or find the topic via a Google Search.

Prepared