

## Determining and Allocating Book Funds for Current Domestic Buying

*A device is outlined to help formulate the annual book budget request. Courses described in the college catalog are matched with the books listed in the American Book Publishing Record, BPR, Cumulative 1965. Courses, treated as if monographs, are assigned Dewey classification numbers and arranged in decimal sequence by groups. Books in BPR falling into the groups are tallied; the DC groups are then rearranged by departments and the number and cost of books in each are totaled. Results are sound estimates of each department's probable current domestic book needs for that year and may be applied to the subsequent year as an estimate of what will probably be needed. They may be used as factors in an allocation formula.*

FOR GENERATIONS, academic librarians have been trying to formulate realistic budget requests. Annual figures presented to presidents, administrators, and other authorities have usually been mere estimates or guesses. Requests do not always reflect actual needs and are often unconvincing. If such figures were more soundly generated, as Ralph Ellsworth<sup>1</sup> points out, libraries would have more success in getting what they need.

Two useful figures might be (1) the number and (2) the cost of books published each year in the United States having immediate relevance to each of an institution's academic departments. These figures, if available, could be used in at least two ways. One, already stated, would be to make possible a better estimate of an institution's total current domestic book needs, and another would

be as factors in allocating the book budget among the several academic departments.

In the past, such figures have been hard to find, but since the publication of the 1965 cumulative volume of the *American Book Publishing Record, BPR*, they have existed. If for this purpose libraries can accept the arbitrary limits provided by *BPR*—for example, that books must be of forty-nine pages or more—and can assume that United States publishing accurately reflects current academic interest, then *BPR* is a highly useful tool for determining the annual funds needed for current domestic books, and for determining appropriate distribution of these funds to academic departments.

*BPR's* arrangement provides a ready made and convenient device—the Dewey Decimal classification—for relating or matching its contents to a curriculum. As an experiment, the library of the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology employed this device to match 10,873 *BPR* titles<sup>2</sup> to the school's aca-

<sup>1</sup> Ralph Ellsworth, "The Legislature Is Not Convinced," *Library Journal*, XC (May 15, 1965), 2199-2203.

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<sup>2</sup> Total number of titles in the 1965 *BPR* cumulation: 28,595.

TABLE 1  
DEWEY DECIMAL GROUPS, AND THEIR  
DEPARTMENTAL LABELS—PARTIAL LIST

DC Groups	Departments
511-514	Mathematics
515	Civil Engineering
516-518	Mathematics
519	Computation Center
526.8	Geology
526.9-526.98	Civil Engineering
530-531.37	Physics
531.38	Mining
532	Civil Engineering
533-536	Physics
537-538	Electrical Engineering
539	Physics
540-541.344	Chemistry
541.345	Metallurgy
541.346-542	Chemistry
543-545	Experiment Station
546-547.133	Chemistry
547.134	Metallurgy

demic departments. Each of the courses listed in the college catalog was assigned one or more Dewey numbers. (The Library uses the LC classification system but this did not affect the project.) The DC numbers were then arranged in sequence (Table 1). The subjects covered were sufficiently broad so that most numbers fell into groups—thus keeping the list of numbers small. In many cases, substantial spans of DC numbers were created by these groups. Each number, or group of numbers, was labeled by the name of the department. Since the courses were already arranged by departments, the DC numbers, in effect, classified each department. Departmental overlapping was anticipated (two or more departments receiving the same DC numbers) but little occurred. When it did occur, the duplicate numbers usually fell into the same department.

All titles in *BPR* falling within each group of Dewey numbers were then tallied. Where two prices were given—for example, hard cover and paperback—the highest price or hard cover price was tallied. Where no price was indicated, the table was still counted.

After the two counts (number of books and cost) were completed, the groups containing them were rearranged according to the original listing—that is, by the academic departments (Table 2). The counts in the DC groups under each department were then totaled. The results, shown in Table 3, are the number of books and their cost published in the United States having potential relevance to the work in each department. The figures, though of the previous year, were then applied to the current year as an estimate of what would probably be needed for the new year's domestic output. The assumption was made that the number and cost of books as well as subject emphases change gradually, not drastically, from one year to the next. If this were so, the figures would remain meaningful and usable.

Criticism of the tabulation could cite its lack of serials, reports, and books of forty-eight pages or less. Much of this material, of course, comes to the library at little or no cost and therefore does not greatly affect the budget. If serials must be tabulated, however, *New Serial Titles, Classed Subject Arrangement* presumably might be used in the same manner as *BPR*.

TABLE 2  
DEPARTMENTS AND THEIR INCLUSIVE  
DC GROUPS—PARTIAL LIST

Department	DC Groups
Chemistry	540-541.344
Chemistry	541.346-542
Chemistry	546-547.133
Civil Engineering	515
Civil Engineering	526.9-526.98
Civil Engineering	532
Experiment Station	543-545
Geology	526.8
Mathematics	511-514
Mathematics	516-518
Mathematics	519
Metallurgy	541.345
Metallurgy	547.134
Mining	531.38
Physics	530-531.37
Physics	533-536
Physics	539

TABLE 3  
 NUMBER AND TOTAL COST OF BOOKS RELEVANT TO  
 EACH DEPARTMENT PUBLISHED IN UNITED STATES IN 1965

Department	Number of Books	Total Cost
Biology	249	\$ 2,374
Chemical Engineering	114	1,397
Chemistry	274	4,619
Civil Engineering	292	2,780
Computation Center	73	611
Electrical Engineering	268	2,418
Engineering Exp. Station	36	440
Geology	126	1,245
Social Science & Humanities	8,040	45,296
Math	316	4,917
Mechanical Engineering	291	2,843
Metallurgy	41	1,231
Meteorology	94	392
Mining	21	243
Paleontology (Museum)	26	186
Physical Education	110	644
Physics	362	4,287

Another potential criticism is that courses described in the college catalog do not necessarily encompass faculty research. To avoid this dilemma, DC numbers could be assigned to research in the same manner as for courses. One might assume, of course that unless demonstrably otherwise a research project would fall into, or close to, the same DC groups as a course caught by the researcher.

BPR's deliberate limitation to domestic coverage forbids any extrapolation of tabulations made from it to foreign publishing. Although there is little evidence that world-wide publishing emphasis is significantly different from that indicated by BPR, neither is there evidence that it is similar. Therefore, foreign and out-of-print titles would still be handled on an *ad hoc* basis.

Some interesting observations can be

TABLE 4  
 NUMBER OF BOOKS, AVERAGE COST,  
 AND THEIR PERCENTAGE FOR AN ALLOCATION FORMULA

DEPARTMENT	BOOKS		COST	
	Number	Percentage	Average	Percentage
Biology	249	2.29	\$ 9.54	5.53
Chemical Engineering	114	1.05	12.26	7.10
Chemistry	274	2.52	16.86	9.77
Civil Engineering	292	2.69	9.52	5.51
Computation Center	93	.67	8.33	4.83
Electrical Engineering	268	2.47	9.03	5.23
Engineering Exp. Station	36	.33	12.22	7.08
Geology	126	1.16	9.88	5.52
Social Science & Humanities	8,040	73.95	5.63	3.26
Math	316	3.55	12.74	7.38
Mechanical Engineering	291	2.68	9.77	5.66
Metallurgy	41	.38	9.58	5.55
Meteorology	94	.87	13.10	7.59
Mining	21	.19	11.61	6.72
Paleontology (Museum)	26	.24	7.16	4.15
Physical Education	110	1.66	3.58	2.07
Physics	362	3.33	11.84	6.86

made of the tabulation. For example, it suggests one possible answer to a problem which has bothered many librarians who allocate to departments: why have some departments, over the years, consistently not spent the money allotted to them? A frequent answer has been "departmental negligence," but it may sometimes be—as Table 3 shows—that not many books having relevance to their work have been published each year.

The technique is of course not infallible, but if it fails as an argument to controllers of the purse, then the tabula-

tions—number and cost of books—could at least be helpful as two factors in an allocation formula. In this situation, the tabulation could be converted to percentages as in Table 4, and the percentages used as scores. At any rate, it appears clear that such tabulations as these, drawn from *BPR*—or in similar ways from other listings—can serve as one more device to aid library management in the ever-recurrent and knotty problem of determining appropriate book funds and their allocations. ■■

## CARRELS . . .

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the students spent ten hours a day or more listening to lectures, participating in seminars, away on field trips, or working in the laboratory, there was little formal studying. Library facilities were practically non-existent, and the students were so worn out learning that they had no time for studying. They considered this program a tremendous learning experience, which they attributed to the availability and proximity of resource people and living in a total marine environment. This was an instance where, to use Marshall McLuhan's<sup>7</sup> apt phrase, environment becomes information with the emphasis on discovery rather than instruction. The students did not read in the context of an environment but explored the environment itself using

all the senses and various tools which became extensions of themselves.

In this article the authors are less concerned with this educational philosophy than in making clear the distinction between studying and learning. They question the assumption, made by some, that new trends toward individual learning require the sort of study spaces provided by carrels. To be sure, there is no contrary evidence, but the unclarity of the situation does seem to warrant serious exploration of various methods of learning without unnecessary assumptions about the prerequisites for learning. Clearly a variety of study spaces is required to meet the needs of extroverts as well as introverts, lone studiers as well as group studiers, people who like to type as well as those who want to read in easy chairs. Existing data do not appear to justify placing as much emphasis upon individual study carrels as it is, in some quarters, currently receiving. ■■

<sup>7</sup> Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965).