Revising, Improving and Using a Locally-Developed Worksheet for Multiple Journal Requests to Simplify the Review Process

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OBJECTIVE

•To implement revisions to a previously developed worksheet used to aid in more effectively and expeditiously making collection development decisions by committee.
•The worksheet as originally developed was used effectively, but subsequent questions and further input encouraged the developer to identify alternative parameters to measure, thus improving on the original worksheet.

METHODOLOGY

•Sixty-four new journal requests from twenty departments were received through a faculty survey.
•Microsoft Excel was used to determine the review order based on the number of current subscriptions by department versus the number of MEDLINE-indexed journals in that department's corresponding MeSH subject heading list in NLM's Broad Subject Terms for Indexed Journals (http://wwwcf.nlm.nih.gov/serials/journals/index.cfm).
•This evaluation metric was originally based on journals per faculty in each department.
•To prioritize departments with weaker journal coverage, departments were listed on the spreadsheet in order of lowest to highest departmental coverage compared to coverage of all journal titles in that subject area as identified through the Medline listing.
•Survey return rate was included for reviewers' reference.
•Departmental journal requests were listed on the worksheet with entries for price, vendor, indexing, Eigenfactor and other notes that were essential to making a sound collection development decision.
•Journals that were requested by multiple departments were prioritized at the top of the list and relisted again for reference under each individual requesting department.

RESULTS

•Analysis of the revised worksheet indicated that the parameters used in the first version remained useful for review.
•While not used for review prioritization, the ratio of journal coverage per number of faculty in that department remained useful for awareness in review.
•Use of the MEDLINE-indexed metric moved the review prioritization of ten departments higher and nine lower than in the initial review based on journals-per-faculty ratio.
•Not all departments matched up well with MeSH Headings, requiring additional attention in review of the titles making up the journal counts for some departments.

CONCLUSION

•Both metrics provide valuable options for review of large batches of journal requests.
•For purposes of review prioritization, the MEDLINE-based metric better indicates the degree of subject need.
•The faculty-based metric measure better indicates which departments have fewer titles by size of the department and may require augmentation.
•The collection development worksheet can be updated easily and expedites quality committee review with all parameters easily available.