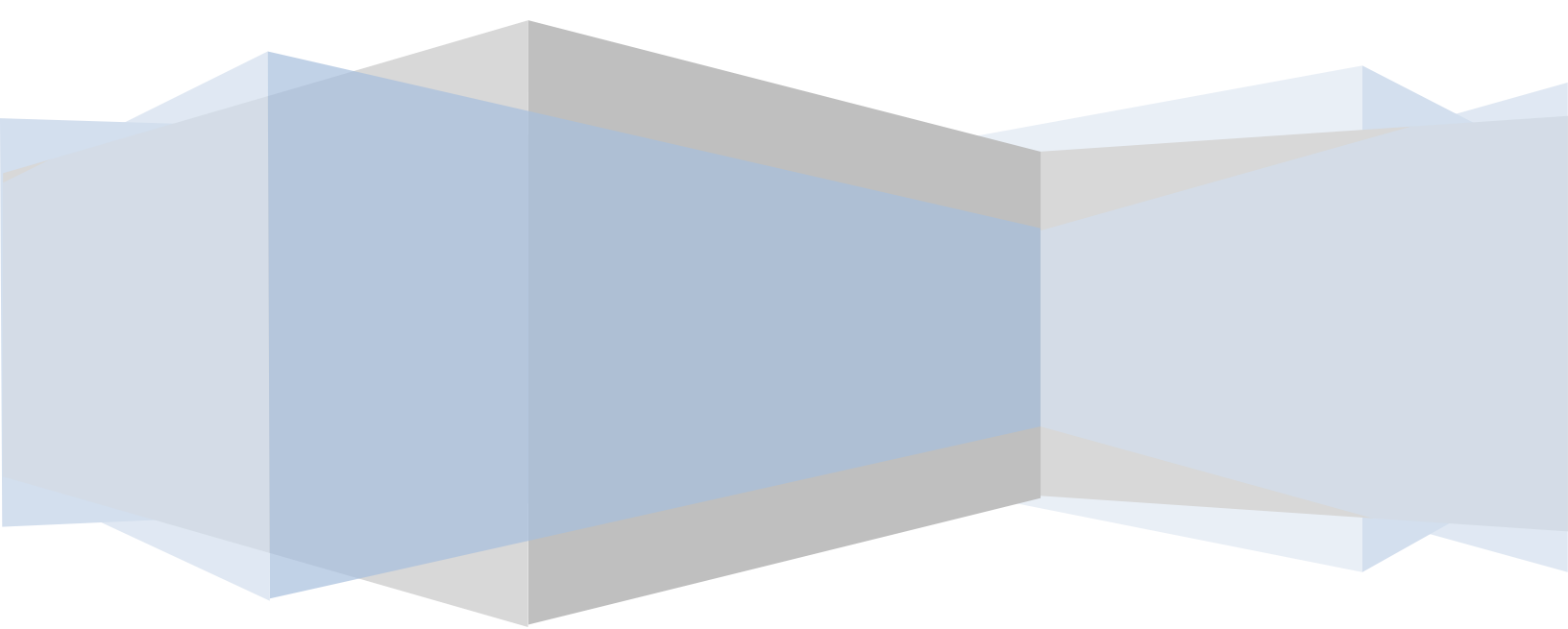


College Center for Library Automation

Edison State College

Technical Services Program Evaluation

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Edison State College Library Technical Services Evaluation

Introduction

CCLA was asked to evaluate the Technical Services (TS) program at Edison State College (ESC) in March 2010 to identify areas to improve TS efficiency and effectiveness, including workflow within LINCC (the Library Information Network for Community Colleges) that utilizes the Aleph Library Management System provided by Ex Libris.

This evaluation will assist the library in reviewing current TS processes, reviewing TS functions occurring at the central versus campus locations and identifying ways in which CCLA can help automate TS functions. All agreed that the review was an opportunity to look at their processes with fresh eyes.

The Evaluation Team consisted of Linda McCarthy, Director, Customer Services and Relations; Dave Whisenant, Library Services Consultant; and Cherie McCraw, Library Services Consultant, all of whom are CCLA employees with Technical Services and evaluation experience and expertise.

CCLA was provided with a packet of information containing a procedure manual, staffing chart, job descriptions, and TS policies and procedures. The Evaluation Team visited Edison State College in March 2010 and met with the director and all staff in several focus groups, interviewed staff on their workflow and observed staff performing various TS functions. Staff who were unable to attend the onsite meeting were later contacted via telephone. We also included interlibrary loan as part of the study.

CCLA examined the TS workflow from start to finish. The start is considered selection of materials to be ordered and finish is considered shelving newly arrived items. Additionally, one CCLA team member conducted a "be the book" exercise which enabled ESC staff to process them as though they were an item that was ordered, received, invoiced, processed, circulated, interlibrary loaned and shelved. CCLA extracted Aleph data from the Oracle database to substantiate staff perceptions and the team's recommendations. Lastly, the Evaluation Team reviewed current library literature to cull best practices in Technical Services workflow. Details and an analysis of what was learned in relation to the outcomes and the specific issues will be discussed in the remainder of this report.

The desired outcomes identified before the evaluation are:

- Review staff deployment
- Review technical services workflow and efficiency
- Maximize the use of available technology for TS functions
- Identify and implement new technology and policies if needed

A few additional outcomes were identified during the discussion: how to simplify and use tools efficiently, how to implement formal policies for easier transitions later and how to make interlibrary loan more efficient. The current staff working in interlibrary loan is retiring soon which makes change in that area inevitable.

The priorities for technical services as identified by staff were to have the best possible access to materials for student self empowerment and to have ebooks integrated as much as possible. Also mentioned were collaboration among staff and support of student assistants.

In general, Technical Services processes are running smoothly. The staff seem to be very knowledgeable about the processes they are operating and have a positive outlook regarding their work. The strengths include a good force of student assistants, staff who are cross-trained to work in several areas to back each other up, documented processes, and responsiveness to the changing environment and user needs. The campuses, while operating very independently, have good relations and cooperate well.

There are a few areas that could be targeted to improve operations. Since the onsite visit, CCLA and Edison staff have already begun to address several key areas. Collection management needs to be better coordinated among campuses and internally, and policies and procedures should be aligned across campuses so that the student has a seamless experience when dealing with the library. Also mentioned were inventory, weeding and OCLC batch holdings as priorities that were not getting the attention needed.

Additional staff for Circulation was also noted as the entire time the team was onsite, we could see that the students who were for the most part staffing the circulation desk had many questions and needed direction from regular staff members. Coverage of the Circulation desk could be formalized with a printed schedule of which staff member is responsible at any given time which could help the Technical Services plan their work more efficiently. Keeping the actual DVDs behind the circulation desk seemed very labor intensive and is a practice that is not in use at most of the institutions the team has visited. Since the cost of media materials is similar to print materials for the most part, there seems to be less of a reason to maintain this practice. One option if loss is a concern may be to look at acquiring security cases and/or security strips for the materials or keeping just the most expensive or likely to be stolen materials sequestered.

Technical Services Workflow and Efficiency

Acquisitions Overview

Staff identified the acquisitions function as one that is working especially well. Edison primarily uses Amazon and staff have been extremely satisfied with the arrangement. Materials are received quickly, there are no shipping charges, and Amazon charges for materials quickly. The response time from order to receipt is excellent. Amazon doesn't support Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and staff wonder if this could make their workflow more efficient.

The college is planning future expansion of BAS programs to other campuses and this is having an impact on ordering materials at all the campuses. All agreed that collection development needs to be coordinated better and that standardizing between campuses so that everyone is following the same procedure would be helpful.

One thing that we found out was that the perception is that the funds for the collection are distributed 60% Lee and 20% each for the other campuses. In reality, the distribution, based on

various reports run by CCLA staff, was 83% for Lee, 7.5% for Charlotte and 9.5% for Collier. Although it does not appear to be an issue, this may warrant further discussion.

Selection

Staff at all the campuses use the wish list feature in Amazon and send the information to the Acquisitions clerk at the Lee campus who orders the material. Faculty bring paper with their requests listed or otherwise identified. Staff at all campuses try to order materials during the beginning of each semester so that materials can be processed and funds expended by the college deadline of June 1.

Currently, staff are keeping up with weeding. The campuses are doing independent collection development and provide the acquisitions clerk with lists of new titles they want to order. There was some concern expressed that collection development needs to be better coordinated among the campuses, particularly as the new BAS programs are approved.

Recommendations:

- **Coordinate collection development across campuses.** Edison State College can get more bang for the buck if staff are aware of what is being purchased at the other campuses that could be relatively easily checked out by ESC students. This could be accomplished by viewing the “wish lists” in Amazon or Yankee Book Peddler which can be seen by all ESC staff regardless of campus. Meetings can also be held annually to set collection priorities, review collection policies, and create an annual plan.
- **Use the reports identified in a new Collection Development package on the LINCC Reports Service (LRS) to assist with collection development.** Staff routinely use reports available on the LRS. CCLA will soon be releasing a “package” of reports that have been pre-selected as useful for collection development. Additionally, a new campus-level report that will be released soon, T029 - Age of Collection by Call Number Range, will be useful for collection development.

Ordering

The volume of ordering is constant up to the June 1st deadline. Edison has a book budget of \$200,000 that covers all campuses. This includes purchases of books, e-books, databases, etc. They try to buy costly books, such as for the nursing program, as e-books. The library has an open \$10,000 purchase order with Amazon, sometimes orders from Amazon sub-vendors, and occasionally uses other vendors such as Alibris and Gale. Staff purchase individual e-book titles from ABC-CLIO, Netlibrary, and eBrary. Edison also has an account with Yankee Book Peddler that they have used infrequently. They do not have a p-card. However, one typical reason for using a p-card – to speed up the receipt of orders – has not been a problem at Edison.

The Acquisitions module in LINCC is not used to manage the budget. Instead, staff use Banner and spreadsheets kept by accounting.

Staff have ordered quite a bit of audiovisual material recently. They email a list of the materials desired to School Media Associates, and School Media arranges everything about the purchase of the materials, including finding the lowest price videos available and managing copyright.

Recommendations:

- **Consider expanding the use of their Yankee Book Peddler account.** Staff began to explore services offered through their YBP account that they cannot do with Amazon. Since the consultative visit, Edison and CCLA staff held a conference call with YBP to discuss configuring GOBI and GOBI Export so that bibliographic records could be exported from GOBI and to configure Edison's YBP profile for EDI. Configuration of both has been completed. Staff are experimenting so that they will be familiar with both processes when the new fiscal year begins.
- **Eliminate re-keying order records.** CCLA offers two options, both of which staff have begun to explore since the consultative visit.
 - Batch loading carts of orders from Yankee Book Peddlers online ordering product, GOBI, into Aleph. CCLA has just released a new service that enables staff to download a file of bibliographic records from a vendor's online ordering tool and load the file into Aleph to create order records by batch. Batch loading order records can be done in such a way that the order is sent to the vendor by EDI.
 - Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) would enable staff to enter orders in Aleph and send them electronically to Yankee Book Peddler. Orders sent electronically appear in the GOBI administrative area.
- **Begin using the budget feature in LINCC.** Staff will need to continue to reconcile funds in Banner, since it is the authoritative source for their budget. However, to take advantage of EDI with Yankee Book Peddler, they will need to create budgets in LINCC.

Receiving

Staff at all campuses have been extremely satisfied with the delivery timeframe for materials ordered from all their vendors, but especially Amazon. Usually materials arrive in a week.

Recommendations:

- None

Invoicing

Staff do not use the invoicing feature in LINCC. When the paper copy of invoices are received, copies are made for purchasing. A monthly bill is received from Amazon. Staff keep their paper copy of the invoice until the bill has been processed in purchasing, and then dispose of it. This process has been working fairly well. The invoices received from Amazon tend to fade with time and, as with ordering, staff wonder if EDI invoicing would streamline their workflow.

Recommendations:

- **Use EDI invoicing.** This may speed up the invoicing process and free up staff to work on other priority activities. As with EDI ordering, staff at Edison have worked with CCLA and YBP to configure LINCC and establish EDI profiles to use this feature.

Cataloging and Processing

Once materials are invoiced, they are sent to cataloging for processing. Staff at the Lee campus order all materials and receive and process materials for all campuses as well. Because the college does not outsource any of its technical services functions, all materials are processed manually by staff. This involves searching LINCC to see if any other college library has already cataloged the item. If someone has, they edit the record as necessary and then create an item record with a barcode and a holdings record. If a record is not found in LINCC, then staff search OCLC for a record. If one is found there, they import it into LINCC and then process it normally. If no record is found in OCLC, then the item is originally cataloged in LINCC. All holdings are updated on OCLC manually.

After the materials are cataloged, the technical services staff create spine and pocket labels by using the "Print Item Labels" feature in Aleph. The materials are split into groups of twelve (because there are twelve labels to a sheet) and are assigned to a student assistant to physically process. Using a specially-designed checklist, the student assistant affixes a spine and pocket label for each item, attaches a security strip, stamps the item several times, and creates a book cover for it, if need. The items are then double-checked by the technical services staff and then either made available in the Lee campus collection or boxed up and sent to one of the other college campuses.

The evaluation team observed several innovative techniques for processing materials that were very impressive. These included:

- The specially designed template the staff use to print spine and pocket labels
- The checklist student assistants use to ensure that the physical processing is done correctly,
- The guidelines for assigning call numbers for the fiction materials for Children's Literature, Education Curriculum Lab, and the Edison Collegiate High School
- Searching LINCC using the UPC number in finding records for CDs and DVDs.

The last example, searching by UPC number, was especially interesting, as the use of this feature was never mentioned to CCLA staff before. Technical services staff were searching LINCC using common-command language, which is a somewhat cumbersome. After the visit, CCLA staff incorporated this search feature into the Advanced Search screen of the Aleph client, thereby making it much easier to perform the search.

Recommendations:

- **Participate in CCLA's OCLC Setholdings Program.** CCLA provides a service that identifies new items added to the database by a library. A file of these records is created and sent to OCLC on a regular basis (twice a year) in order to update their holdings using a batch process. This service would allow ESC to skip this step in the cataloging of new materials. At present, 12 of the 28 community colleges in Florida are using this service, and have found it very useful and efficient. There is no additional cost for this service.

[Note: ESC has already requested to participate in this program. However, CCLA is currently investigating a new method of updating library holdings in OCLC that would

identify new items added to the database as well as those that have been deleted. When this new method is in place, ESC can be included in this new procedure.]

- **Use the Batch Delete feature in LINCC.** One of the issues mentioned as being very cumbersome by the technical services staff is deleting withdrawn items from LINCC. Staff must delete the item, but also the corresponding holdings record, and the bibliographic record if no other library is attached to it. In May 2009 with the upgrade to Aleph version 19, LINCC now supports an automated method of deleting items. The library simply runs a report that lists the items they wish to delete. They then fill out an “Item Deletions” form referencing the name of the report and submit it to the Service Desk. CCLA staff will run a process using the items listed on the library’s report that will delete each item record, its corresponding holdings record (if no other item is attached to it), the ADM record (if no other items or orders are attached to it), and the bibliographic record (if no other college’s holdings are attached to it.) This service can be run on a monthly basis, or ad hoc when needed.
- **Take advantage of the Z39.50 access to external databases in the LINCC client.** The ESC Technical Services User Manual references using the Mercury Z39.50 client to search external bibliographic database for MARC records. This functionality also exists in the cataloging module as the links to the Library of Congress bibliographic database and the Library of Congress authority file are Z39.50 connections. Copying records from remote catalogs via the client is much easier than using a separate Z39.50 client, saving the record to a file, and then importing it into LINCC. CCLA already supports links to all of the state university catalogs as well as to several other databases throughout the U.S. If there are specific catalogs that ESC would like access to through the client, contact the Service Desk and simply submit a request.
- **Discontinue the use of “c.1” in item records.** Most libraries have stopped putting “c.1” in the description field of the item record for items that they only have one copy. This information was used at one time to identify exactly which item was being checked out. With the advent of automated systems and barcoded items, this designation is no longer useful.
- **Check-in materials before sending them to other campuses.** Currently when the technical services staff finishes processing materials for other campuses, they box them up and ship them via the college courier to the proper campus. When they arrive, campus library staff unpack the materials and shelve them appropriately. While the materials are in transit, they display in LINCC as if they on the shelf. A solution to this problem is for the technical services staff to check-in each item using the Circulation module before the materials are sent. When each item is checked-in, the system will note that it does not belong to that campus and will automatically mark the item record as “In Transit.” When the materials arrive at the campus library, the staff there should check each item in as well, which will take the “In Transit” status off the item. At that point, the item is ready to be shelved.

Serials

Serials at ESC are well-maintained and there are very few problems. Staff have recently reorganized and weeded the popular periodical titles and arranged them in a new leisure area of

the main floor of the library. They feel they have attained a more user-centered collection of fifty popular titles. This collection also includes some foreign language items. The academic serials are supportive of the curriculum. Staff are slowly weeding the academic serials collection through cooperation with faculty reference librarians, and weed only at faculty request. Weeding the periodicals also includes examining the titles available electronically. They have a few locally purchased online journal subscriptions in addition to the titles available through the statewide collection. Reference librarians review the list of databases and contact faculty to see if any of the titles are needed in print. Staff are not using the Overlap Analysis Report available from the CCLA Service Desk to assist with the review. Renewing subscriptions through EBSCO works well and staff have good communication with EBSCO.

Staff use the Serials Claim Report available on the LINCC Report Service to track down issues which have not arrived. Staff believe that since they are paying for the issues, they have a responsibility to either obtain the missing issue or try to get a credit applied to next year's subscriptions. Serials data at Edison is well-maintained, as evidenced by the fact that the most recent claim report for Lee campus is only one page long. Keeping the data maintained makes it easier for patrons to find what they need in the catalog. Staff pointed out a problem with the Serials Claim Report that has recently appeared. It is a very long report with many columns of data. There used to be grid lines which have disappeared, and the font has gotten smaller, making the report difficult to read. *[Note: CCLA is addressing this issue.]*

Periodicals Processing

The serials clerk keeps an Excel spreadsheet with a list of all the serials titles held, a general holdings statement for each title (e.g., 6 months, 1 year, etc.), the LINCC system number, the ISSN number, and the EBSCO order number. The list is used to access the titles in LINCC by the system number for check-in. Staff have learned that using the system number is the most effective way to go to the title on which they have holdings. Check-in is a smooth process. Staff have very few problems with the check-in process, opening new items once the current volume is complete or with editing a prediction pattern if it changes.

As soon as issues are checked in, they are shelved in the appropriate area. When a new issue is shelved, the oldest issue is withdrawn. The periodicals area is neat, clean and easy to use.

Recommendations:

- **Discontinue claiming.** Many institutions have discontinued claiming because the value of an issue declines with its untimely receipt and the cost/benefit of claiming is not advantageous.

Interlibrary Loan and Requests

The interlibrary loan operation seems to be running very smoothly overall with the staff onboard at the time of the study. The staff is diligent about checking for new requests. There was a slight workflow change recently when the Lee campus became the sole courier hub for the college. The Lee campus must now check materials being returned by the courier and sort them by owning campus, routing those not owned by Lee to Collier and Charlotte. That was the only issue which rose to our attention.

One ILL issue across LINCC is the huge number of requests that expire at the lending library because it does not respond within three days. On a statewide level, CCLA has been working with the Access Standing Committee and individual institutions to lower the number of expired ILL requests. In a review of Edison's ILL activity for the year, only 48 lending requests expired due to no response, which is fairly good for the number of total requests received.

Another focal point for ILL service is the number of unfilled requests, and the reasons for answering no. The most common reason why Edison's lending requests were not filled was "other", which is the system's automatic response when there are no available items to satisfy the request. After "other" the most common reason for not filling requests was "not owned". This is likely a system mistake, matching on the wrong title. The next was "non circulating". This is common, since the system is not capable of distinguishing which parts of your collection are available for ILL. Only one request was answered unfilled because the item was missing. Overall, this shows that Edison is very responsive to lending requests when items are available to supply.

There is some staff frustration with students who request materials and do not pick them up. This occurs with both hold requests (on Edison material) and interlibrary loan requests. Edison staff are both calling and emailing students to pick up their requested material.

- For interlibrary loan requests: it is possible to limit the number of active requests for each student (on the Global Patron Information screen in the Circulation module). A student recognized for a pattern of not picking up requests could have his ILL activity restricted.
- For hold requests (on Edison material): it is possible to set up the system so that it is not possible for students to place hold requests on available material. Thus if the item is on the shelf, a student would not be able to place a hold request on it. While this might positively affect unclaimed hold requests, it would certainly have a negative effect on distance learning students, and those placing hold requests from off-campus. For this reason we have always left the hold request functionality on for available items. A change might be worth considering at Edison.

The most important aspect of interlibrary loan operations at Edison will be training for new and existing staff. New staff will be coming on board soon, and they will need training. Because of the new workflow caused by the single courier point, staff at all campuses should also be included in the training to ensure seamless service for students, regardless of their home campus. Backup staff should also be identified and trained at each location to ensure continuity of service.

Recommendations:

- **Schedule interlibrary loan training this summer.** The training should include staff who do interlibrary loan at all campuses and backup staff.

Summary

The team looked at ways that Edison State College can improve their Technical Services program to meet the needs of their users and the institution. Much of the work towards this goal has already begun in the time since the onsite visit occurred. The goals as outlined in the desired outcomes to: review staff deployment, review technical services workflow and efficiency, maximize the use of available technology for TS functions and identify and implement new technology and policies if needed were met, but the Evaluation Team did not find a large number of substantial issues that needed to be addressed. Overall, the processes at Edison appear to be working well. We have offered some alternative strategies for ordering materials which may be considered, a few improvements for greater efficiency are recommended, and we could see that more staffing is needed in Circulation, as many staff from Technical Services and other areas are in constant demand to try to serve students in the midst of completing other tasks. The other main two issues seemed to be a more cohesive approach to collection development and more consistent application of policies between the campuses. There is no lack of up-to-date policies, they are well documented, but they are not consistently applied at all times. Edison is doing a good job of managing Technical Services and only a few small tweaks to current processes are recommended.

To review, CCLA recommends the following:

Acquisitions

- Coordinate collection development across campuses.
- Use the reports identified in a new Collection Development package on the LINCC Reports Service (LRS) to assist with collection development.
- Consider expanding use of the Yankee Book Peddler account.
- Eliminate re-keying order records.
- Begin using the budget feature in LINCC.
- Use EDI invoicing.

Cataloging

- Participate in CCLA's OCLC Setholdings Program.
- Use the Batch Delete feature in LINCC.
- Take advantage of the Z39.50 access to external databases in the LINCC client.
- Discontinue the use of "c.1" in item records.
- Check-in materials before sending them to other campuses.

Serials

- Discontinue claiming

Interlibrary Loan

- Schedule interlibrary loan training.

Other Issues

- Ensure that staff at all campuses are following the same policies for seamless service to students
- Have quarterly meetings with staff from various campuses to ensure updated policies and procedures are handled uniformly.
- Add another Circulation staff member.
- Create a schedule for circulation desk coverage.

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