On May 16th Cindy Campbell from the Rush Library on Lee Campus and Arenthia Herren from the Hendry Glades Center library attended a training session hosted by EBSCO at Hodges University in Fort Myers. As a district, the libraries are looking to enhance the eBook collection. The EBSCO training session offered us the opportunity to look into new software and features that would allow Edison’s libraries to purchase EBSCO eBooks and better manage the eBooks we already own.

We went into the training session interested in learning more about Patron Driven Acquisitions. In a Patron Driven Acquisitions system, a student or faculty member would be able to purchase an eBook directly from the library’s chosen eBook vendor. This model allows for the on demand purchase of materials that patrons feel best fit their information needs. In theory it would shape our eBook collection to exactly match the needs of Edison students and faculty. It may also save the libraries money by only purchasing eBooks that will be actively checked out.

In the training session we learned about the EBSCO Collection Manager and how the system works with Patron Driven Acquisitions. EBSCO’s model allows for librarians to pre-select lists of materials for patron purchase. This way, nothing enters the collection that a librarian has not already approved. Additionally, the system has in place “list builders” and “approvers”. Anyone can become a “list builder” and create a list for patron acquisitions but it must be sent to an “approver” before it is released for purchase. The system of approvals and a set deposit for purchases safeguards the library against both purchases made outside the scope of its mission and purchases made outside its budgetary allowances.

The Collection Manager also features selection lists for a wide variety of subject areas. As the session facilitator pointed out, these lists were created by EBSCO’s team of librarians and reflect current trends in scholarships and the latest hot topic issues. Using selection lists can be a great asset in quickly updating and expanding certain sections of the libraries’ collections. Selection lists can also be a great way to get faculty in put on collection development.

Overall, the training session gave us some excellent ideas and ways to get started in expanding the eBook collection that Edison offers to its students and faculty. We gained a greater understanding of how the Collection Manager’s ordering system works and the kinds of materials available. In addition, we had many of our questions regarding Patron Driven Acquisitions answered and we are looking into whether this system will be a good fit for Edison’s libraries.