

Assessment of Library Collections  
Academic Program Review

**Criminal Justice**

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The spreadsheets of this report are not on the web site of the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness—but may be requested from the library.

While the library will go forward, as annual budgets allow, with acquisitions recommendations of program reviews, a more durable approach is the comprehensive collection development plan set as a university Millennium Strategic Goal. That planning process will broaden the library's collaborations with each program, identify resources needed to build research-level collections, and provide a framework for long-range budgeting. This report lays some of the groundwork.

**SUMMARY**

**Collection Development Initiatives with the Faculty.** Discussion of the draft library report in fall 2003 lead to three decisions, all of which have been implemented:

- the library would acquire the *Criminology SAGE Full-text* online-journal package when budgets permit—done May 2004;
- Criminal Justice journals at Biscayne Bay campus would be shifted to the University Park campus—to be completed shortly;
- the library would add to the catalog appropriate (stable, long-run) Criminal Justice titles in aggregator databases (e.g., Pro-Quest)—under way.

Given this program's interest in developing a Ph.D. program, the library looks forward to a new round of collaborations to strengthen Criminal Justice resources. For example, the approach to evaluate the journal collections, based on citation-ranked literatures, is somewhat conservative—with its focus on established journals, it generally does not account for newer titles that, though lacking a certain impact in the scholarly system, may be relevant on campus. For such breadth in collection development, the library relies on faculty input.

**Books.** In Criminal Justice and other social-behavioral fields, the library automatically receives through an approval plan all U.S. and U.K. academic- and professional-level books. This scale of coverage appears to be above to that of other doctoral-extensive universities of FIU's size.

**Journals.** For seven citation-ranked journal literatures taken together, the library has 273 of the 355 titles (77%). Of the 82 titles not held by the library, just two—*Journal of Law and Society*, and *Social and Legal Studies*—are directly relevant to Criminal Justice.

**Online Resources.** The library's collections of online resources (about 275 in number) includes all the core ones for Criminal Justice with the addition of the *SAGE Criminology* online-journal package.

## MAIN REPORT

**SCOPE.** This report for Criminal Justice focuses on books, journals, online resources, and government documents. Nine spreadsheets are appended: the first outlines the framework of book acquisitions, the next seven are journal-collections evaluations, the last outlines the *SAGE* online-journal package.

**METHOD.** As a rule, it is not feasible to make a comprehensive assessment of “all” library resources that may be relevant to a particular program or literature, given the interdisciplinarity of programs and literatures alike, as well as library budget lines.<sup>1</sup> The method for structuring this situation in the sciences and social sciences is to focus on the citation-ranked journals in a field.<sup>2</sup>

## BOOKS

**Current Imprints.** The library has a fairly comprehensive U.S./U.K. book approval plan. Spreadsheet 1 delineates FY02 acquisitions in the social sciences. As shown, the vendor handled a total of 18,594 titles. The library automatically received 36% (6,636 titles); with 852 additional orders, the overall coverage was 40% (7,488 titles) at a cost of about \$261,000.

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Deborah W. Denno, "Indexing of Interdisciplinary Literature on Crime, Violence, and Mental Disorder," *Journal of Information Science* 13, no. 2 (1987): 117-22. Some Criminal Justice faculty have health science affiliations. Journals in those fields that are cross-referenced to the social and behavioral citation-ranked literatures of primary relevance to Criminal Justice are identified in this report. Library reports of allied programs (e.g., Political Science, Sociology) are at <http://www.fiu.edu/provost/aaproreview/prarchives.htm>

<sup>2</sup> The core science and social science titles are ranked in the *Journal Citation Reports* database. Citation-impact analysis is based on Bradford's Law, that most of the important papers in a given field appear in a relatively small set of journals. See Hans Verner Holub et alia, "The Iron Law of Important Articles," *Southern Economic Journal* 58 (1991): 317-28; and Richard A. Wright and David O. Friedrichs, "The Most-Cited Scholars and Works in Critical Criminology," *Journal of Criminal Justice Education* 9 (Fall 1998): 211-42.

Overall, such coverage appears to be above average for that of doctoral-extensive universities of FIU's size.<sup>3</sup> Additional sources of FIU's strength in this regard include the plan's coverage of all adult-level titles in *The New York Times Book Review* or *Times Literary Supplement*, and its extensive coverage of Latin American/Caribbean and other area studies.

Categories of book output *not* received involve non-academic levels (e.g., popular literature) and unsuitable formats (e.g., unrevised dissertations). Since the plan has no substantive subject restrictions in the social sciences, variations in coverages are largely a function of the proportion of academic-level titles to total book publishing output per field (e.g., 70% coverage in political theory as against 3% in physical education).

**Retrospective Book Acquisitions.** As part of its comprehensive collection development plan, the library will likely acquire all relevant university-press books of the postwar decades (before FIU existed) that are still in print and focus in depth on subjects treated in bibliographic essays.<sup>4</sup>

**Online Books.** Of the 27,280 *NetLibrary* electronic books owned by the library, 171 titles have *crime* or *criminal* as a keyword descriptor. The library relies on package acquisitions through a regional network. The *NetLibrary* portal is at <http://www.fiu.edu/~library/elibrary/ebooks.html>.

## JOURNALS

The journals fund for criminal justice is \$22,922 (\$4,620 for University Park campus, \$18,302 for Biscayne Bay—the latter's budget covers a wide range of cross-disciplinary interests. The fund includes 60 titles: 34 print and 26 online. The collections at the Biscayne Bay campus of specific interest to this program are being phased out; back-runs transferred to University Park. Since it is not possible to identify all of the journals relevant to a field (given interdisciplinarity), the question is whether the library is missing needed or important journals. *Need* is based on local (campus) demand, according to interlibrary loan data.<sup>5</sup> *Importance* can be gauged from citation-impact rankings in the *Journal Citation Reports (JCR)* database. Seven *JCR* lists are used in this report.

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<sup>3</sup> The supporting data are of low precision but broad reliability. In the 1980s, university libraries generally acquired 35% of academic-level books in the social sciences. That level was a salient decline (of 25 points) from the 1970s in the financial capacity of academic libraries to maintain book collections in the wake of journal inflation. Thus, it is reasonable to see FIU's roughly 40% coverage of the social sciences as being above average for research libraries now. Charles A. Schwartz, "Modeling Scholarly Literatures," *Publishing Research Quarterly* 10 (Summer 1994): 29-35.

<sup>4</sup> For example, Richard Arens, "Administration of Criminal Justice," *Choice* 9 (July / August 1972): 611-18.

Comparison of the library's collections to the citation-ranked literature core journals of **Crime and Penology** is shown in [spreadsheet 2](#). Of the total 22 titles, the library has 18 (82%). Of the four titles not in the collections, one may be of direct interest: *Social and Legal Studies* (ranked 13<sup>th</sup>, and 76<sup>th</sup> of 99 in Law, and 24<sup>th</sup> of 55 in Interdisciplinary Social Sciences).

The citation-ranked literature of **Sociology** is shown in [spreadsheet 3](#). Of the total 93 titles, the library has 53 (57%). Of the 40 titles not in the collections, one may be of direct interest: *Journal of Law and Society* (ranked 42<sup>nd</sup>, and 74<sup>th</sup> of 99 in Law). Three others are of general interest for the collections as a whole: *Discourse and Society* (5<sup>th</sup>; and 13<sup>th</sup> of 100 in Psychology, Multidisciplinary; and 1<sup>st</sup> of 43 in Communication); *Sociology of Health and Illness* (8<sup>th</sup>; and 11<sup>th</sup> of 54 in Public, Environmental, and Occupational Health; and 5<sup>th</sup> of 24 in Social Sciences, Biomedical); and *Work and Occupations* (18<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> of 17 in Industrial and Organizational Relations).

The citation-ranked literature of **Public Administration** is shown in [spreadsheet 4](#). Of the total 24 titles, the library has 21 (88%). Of the three titles not in the collections, two are of interest for the collections as a whole: *Governance: An International Journal of Policy and Administration* (ranked 7<sup>th</sup>); and *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* (8<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup> of 48 in Environmental Studies).

The citation-ranked literature of **Law** is shown in [spreadsheet 5](#). Of the total 99 titles, FIU has 87 (89%). Of the 12 titles not in the collections, the only two are of direct interest are noted above: *Social and Legal Studies*, and *Journal of Law and Society*.

The citation-ranked literature of **Social Issues** is shown in [spreadsheet 6](#). Of the total 33 titles, the library has 30 (90%). Of the three titles not in the collections, one is of interest for the collections as a whole: *Journal of Medical Ethics* (ranked 6<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> of 21 in Biomedical Social Sciences, and 4<sup>th</sup> of 30 in Ethics).

The citation-ranked literature of **Interdisciplinary Social Sciences** is shown in [spreadsheet 7](#). Of the total 55 titles, the library has 40 (72%). Of the missing 15 titles, the only one of direct interest is noted above: *Social and Legal Issues*. Two others of interest for the collections as a whole are *Theory, Culture and Society* (ranked 16<sup>th</sup>); and *Future of Children* (2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> of 32 in Family Studies, and 7<sup>th</sup> of 39 in Health Policy and Services).

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<sup>5</sup> To assess local demand, the library identified the journals most often requested through interlibrary loan over the past three years. In terms of access-versus-ownership economics (royalty payments compared to subscription prices), 18 titles of the total set of 135 proved to be more cost-effective to own. Those subscriptions began January 2003. None of the 135 titles are in Criminal Justice or other social-behavioral fields. On that single measure of cost-effectiveness, the collections in this program review do not require immediate attention.

The citation-ranked literature of **Mathematical Methods in the Social Sciences** is shown in [spreadsheet 8](#). Of the total 29 titles, the library has 24 (83%). One is of interest for the collections as a whole: *System Dynamics Review* (ranked 17<sup>th</sup>).

## ONLINE RESOURCES

The library's collection of electronic resources, about 275 in number, include all of the core ones in Criminal Justice: *Criminology SAGE*; *Criminal Justice Abstracts*; *PAIS: Public Affairs Information Service*; *PsycINFO*; *Sociological Abstracts*; *Index to Legal Periodicals and Books*; *Legal Trac*; and *Statistical Universe*. Descriptions are at <http://www.fiu.edu/~library/subjects/criminalj.html>.

## GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

University Park campus is a selective (partial) Federal depository. In addition, it receives a broad range of publications from Florida state and local governmental agencies. Two milestones were reached last year when FIU was granted European Documentation Center status by the European Union (the only such center in the state, other than the University of Florida) and full United Nations depository status. See <http://www.fiu.edu/~library/internet/subjects/govern.html>.

The library receives nearly all the materials of the Justice Department and related agencies in the depository program. These include the *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*; *Crime in the U.S.*; *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics*; and *National Criminal Justice Reference Service* (print with online access at <http://www.ncjrs.org/>).

## OVERVIEW

With the initiatives undertaken in response to the faculty's review of the draft library report last winter, the collections in Criminal Justice are in good shape, at least in terms of *core* resources. Yet, the essential matter is whether the collections are commensurate with the faculty's needs—and concomitantly, with the university's aim to have research-level library resources and services in appropriate fields.

In terms of core resources, the framework of book acquisitions is fairly comprehensive; and the journal collection in Criminal Justice has no large gaps. For the seven core literatures reviewed, the library has 273 of the 355 titles (77%). Of the 82 missing titles, 11 meet the dual criteria to be priorities for the collections as a whole: *caliber* (in the scholarly communication system) and *relevance* (to campus programs). Two of the 11 pertain to Criminal Justice: *Journal of Law and Society* (\$305) and *Social and Legal Studies* (\$458). However, neither one is a faculty priority.

In terms of building a research-level collection in Criminal Justice, more library assessments should surely be done—particularly to identify needed journals that are not in the citation-ranked literatures.

On a final note, previous collection assessments in the program review process have included a graph of inflationary pressures in the scholarly communication system. Along with such trends “out there” are more direct campus factors that make collection development problematic as an FIU resource-allocation process. Any inventory of such factors would include constant growth of research and curricular interests, program diversification, and the university’s goals for a broad expansion of new Ph.D. programs and now a medical school.

Thus, collection assessments routinely emphasize the importance of each program advising the library on the specific resources and services that would best serve research productivity. Criminal Justice has provided far more attention than other programs to collection assessment and planning. Thus far, with supplemental funding in spring 2004, the library has been able to meet this program’s immediate needs.