

2010-10

Collection Fitness: How the UM Health Sciences Library Is Becoming "Healthier"

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<https://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/94424>

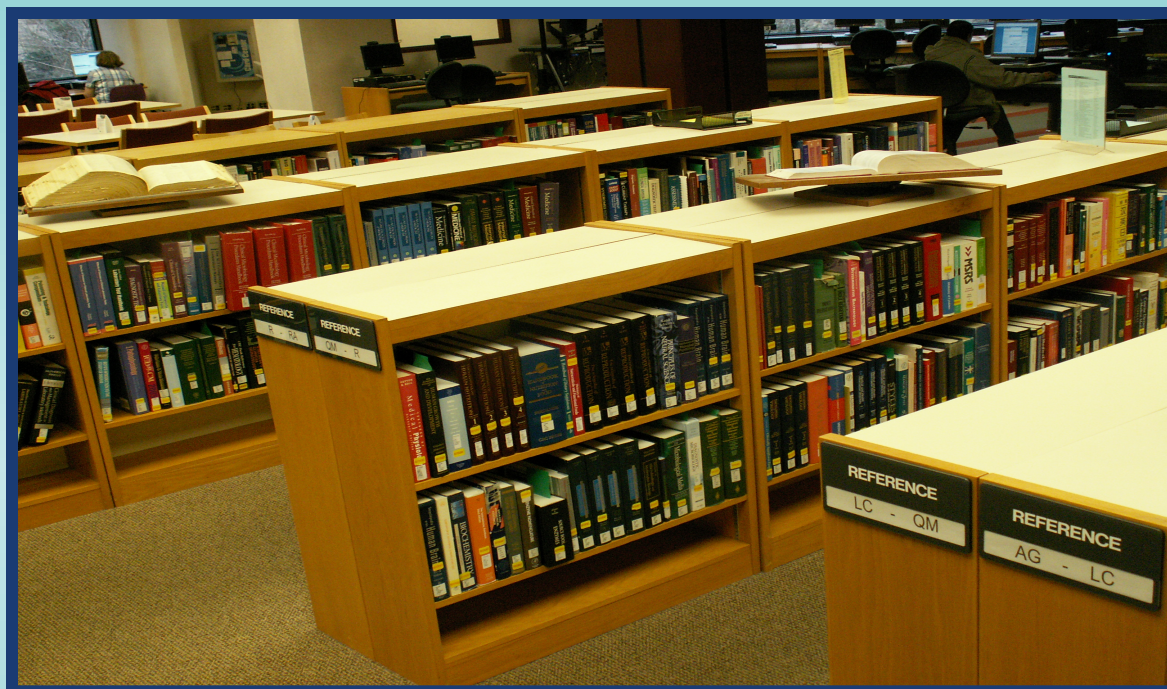
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Collection Fitness: How the UM Health Sciences Library Is Becoming “Healthier”

ABSTRACT: Within the last two years, the physical footprint of the University of Michigan health sciences collections has decreased from three distinct libraries to a single entity. As we have absorbed vast materials into a significantly smaller space, we are defining the University's twenty-first century health sciences research collection in some radical non-traditional ways. Because we serve multiple users from multiple subject fields, both professional (medicine, nursing, public health, pharmacy, and dentistry) and non-professional (social work, gerontology, history of medicine, psychology, etc.) , we wonder if it is possible to sustain a collection that meets the needs of our users and maintain our obligations to health sciences researchers and clinicians in the state of Michigan. We're in the process of finding that answer.

FACTS & FIGURES



courtesy of PF Anderson

- ❖ Established ca. 1854
- ❖ Primary Clientele: Schools of Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Public Health & College of Pharmacy, UM Health System
- ❖ 21,400 walk-in visits¹
- ❖ 755,000 library website hits²
- ❖ 19,559 reference questions³
- ❖ 20,000 print & electronic journal subscriptions (including databases)⁴
- ❖ 548,000 print volumes⁵
- ❖ 500+ e-books

CHALLENGES

- Competing demands for existing physical space due to consolidation of 3 collections (Dentistry, Social Work, and Public Health libraries) with Taubman Medical Library
- Demand for multiple user e-book access regardless of physical location
- Increasing need for e-textbook access (UM-UM Library initiative)
- Confusing array of e-book platforms (MD Consult, Access products, Stat!Ref, R2 Digital Library, ebrary, netLibrary, MyiLibrary, Ovid, Karger, Oxford, ScienceDirect, Wiley, Knovel, Safari)
- No reliable single access point for library collections regardless of format
- Reduced funding for collections
- Lack of perpetual access or archival rights for e-books and e-journals
- State expansion of UMHS with concurrent expectations/assumptions for collection access
- De facto repository for health sciences materials in Michigan

POSSIBLE RESPONSES

- ✓ Deduplication of print journals and monographs with other UM libraries
- ✓ Purchase of e-backfiles → withdrawal of print backruns
- ✓ Limited print retention of journals → share with MCLS, GMR, CIC ????
- ✓ Restrict prints monograph purchases to specific subjects: history of medicine, public health, biographies
- ✓ Purchase monographs on demand regardless of format
- ✓ Continue to purchase unique material not available elsewhere in state or region

REFERENCES

¹⁻⁶University of Michigan. Health Sciences Libraries. *Accomplishments and Activities, 2008-2009.*

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