



# Adapting University of Alberta Library Collections to New Budget Realities in 2020

How the University of Alberta's Collection Strategies Unit planned and worked through a year of reductions to acquisitions, staff, and services.

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# Today's Presentation

1. Collections context at the University of Alberta
2. Examples of Collections Assessment Projects
  - a. Print Serials Review
  - b. Abstracts & Indexes Review
  - c. Education Resources Review
  - d. News Sources Review
3. Communications
4. Lessons & Observations



# University of Alberta by the Numbers in 2020-2021

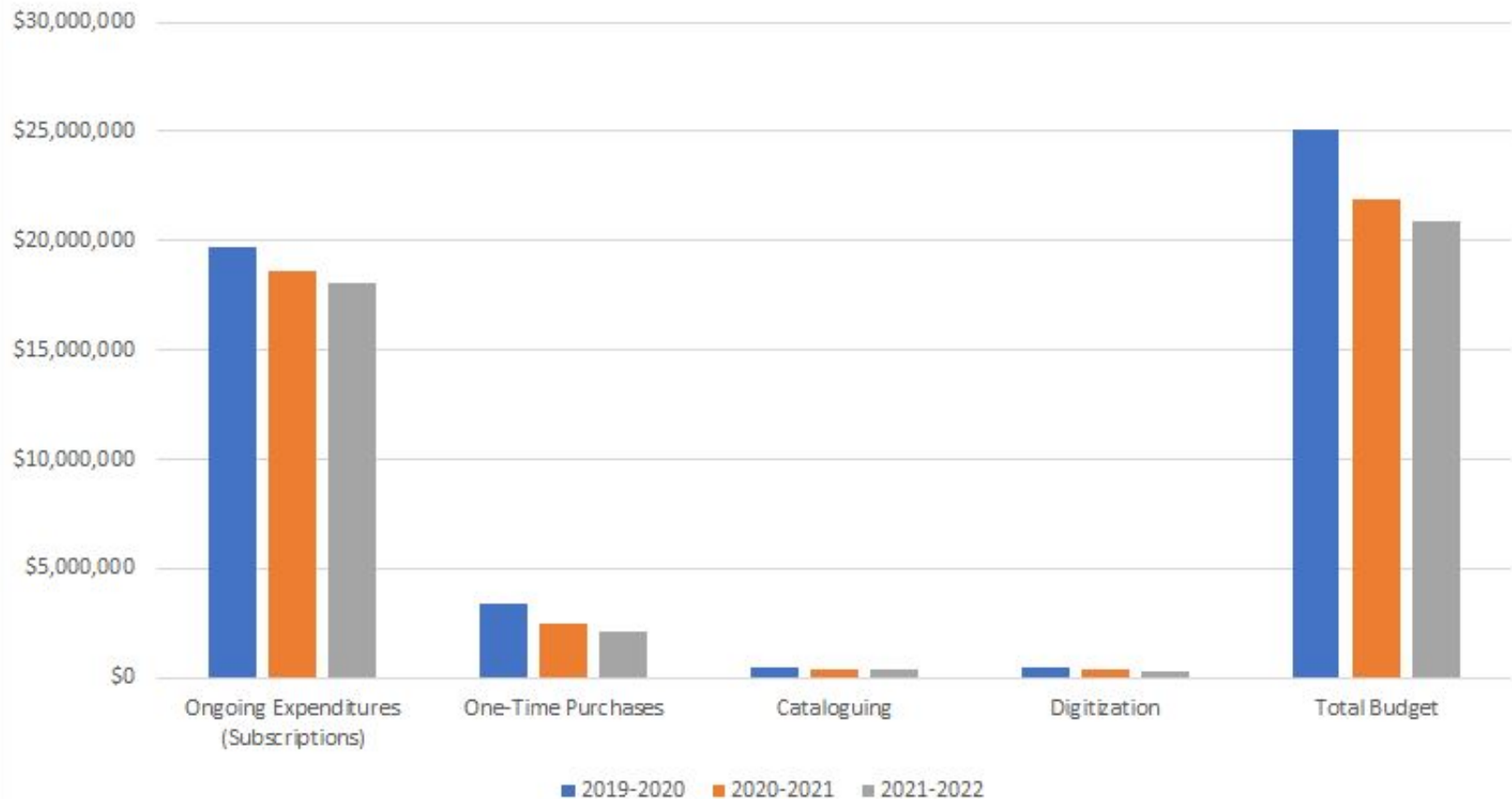
- Students
  - Undergraduate Student Headcount: 33,110
  - Graduate Student Headcount: 8,202
  - Increase of ~2,000 from 2019-2020
- Faculty & Academic Teaching Staff
  - Faculty: 1971
  - Academic Teaching Staff: 799
- Significant reduction in support staff other academic positions



## University of Alberta Library Collections Budget

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Ongoing Expenditures (Subscriptions)	\$ 19,754,342	\$ 18,638,395	\$ 18,081,395
One-Time Purchases	\$ 3,422,451	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 2,100,000
Cataloguing	\$ 500,000	\$ 400,000	\$ 382,000
Digitization	\$ 500,000	\$ 400,000	\$ 300,000
Total Budget	\$ 25,072,451	\$ 21,938,395	\$ 20,938,395

## University of Alberta Library Collections Budget





## The Challenge - Minimizing Harm

- Need to reduce spending on acquisitions by millions of dollars.
- Need to review ongoing subscriptions primarily (vast majority of spending)
- Reduce workloads for library staff - necessitated by reduction of staffing levels.
- **Minimize 'harm' to collection while making these changes**



## Collection Development Policy

“University of Alberta Library **supports the University's teaching and research functions**, and provides information resources for the University community as well as the general public. **As the repository of one of the major Canadian research collections, we also serve the needs of regional, national and international communities.** University of Alberta Library acquires materials appropriate for **both current and future research** or teaching needs at the University of Alberta.”



# Service & Policy Changes

- Format duplication (for reasons of preference)
- Addition of new subscriptions suspended
- Donations program closed
- Closed physical spaces, and consolidated collections
  - Large amounts of material moved off-site
- Reconfiguration of *Collection Strategies Unit*
  - Consolidation of monographs and serials acquisitions assistants into single team
  - Reduced staffing of librarians and support staff





## Case - Reviewing Print Serials

- We've been maintaining many print subscriptions to publications from around the world.
- Many have been ongoing commitments for years (decades), even as we've shifted to digital.
- Many had been selected by subject librarians who are no longer at the U of A, prior to the centralization of acquisitions.
- At the outset, we needed to get a sense of the current importance of many of these subscriptions.



## Case - Reviewing Print Serials

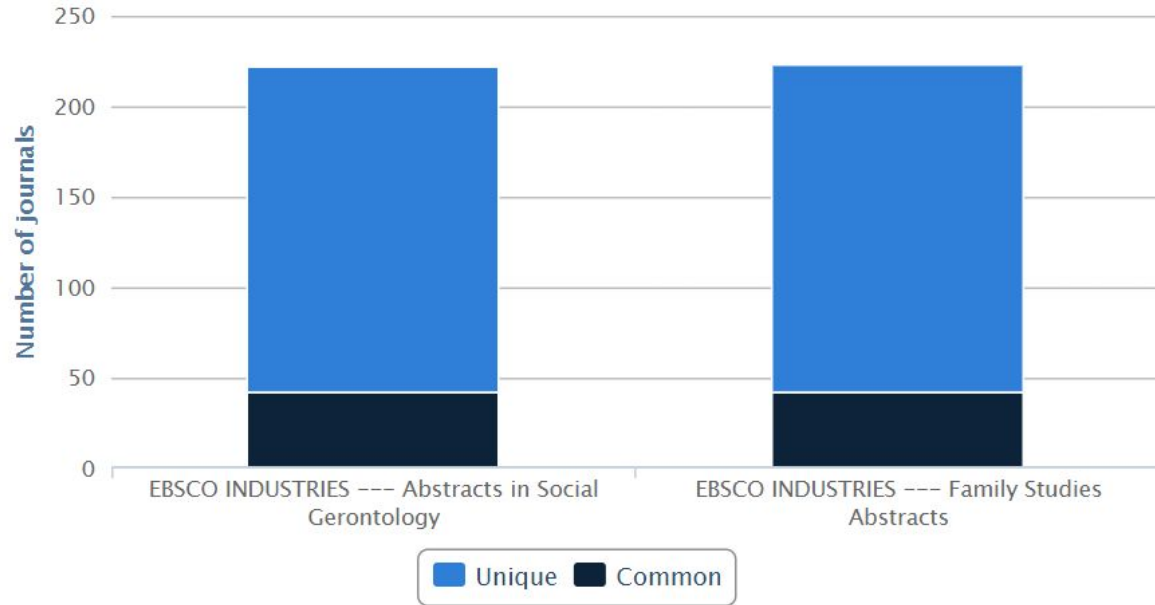
- For example: monographic sets/series: we reviewed **216 sets/series**. Analysis integrated the following:
  - # of volumes added since 2017, and their usage
  - # of volumes added since 2010, and their usage
  - # of volumes added over all time; total checkouts over all time; total number of volumes with zero circs
  - Cost
  - Local & strategic interests and commitments, including known faculty demand
- Analysis revealed:
  - 101 sets/series (47%) had zero circs across their entire lifespan
  - 157 sets/series (73%) had zero circs on all volumes added between 2010 and 2021
  - Many sets/series had been inactive for 5 or more years
- Result:
  - We decided on a metric: **keep all sets/series with 3 or more circs across their lifespan.**
  - We retained **17 set/series (8%)** based on usage; reduction in cost of approx. **\$27,872.87 CAD/year**
  - Reducing number of individual subscriptions means a reduction in labour needed for processing/maintenance



## Case - The 'A&I' Review

- 'Abstracts and Index' category of databases (no direct full-text articles)
- We subscribe to many small subject-specific indexes as well as larger 'Index plus Full-Text' databases from aggregators (EBSCO Academic Search, Web of Science) and full-text databases from major publishers (Elsevier ScienceDirect).
  - Huge amounts of information involved in comparing contents
- Overlap Analysis using *Goldrush Decision Support* database
  - Compare to larger databases, as well as other small indexes in the same subject area

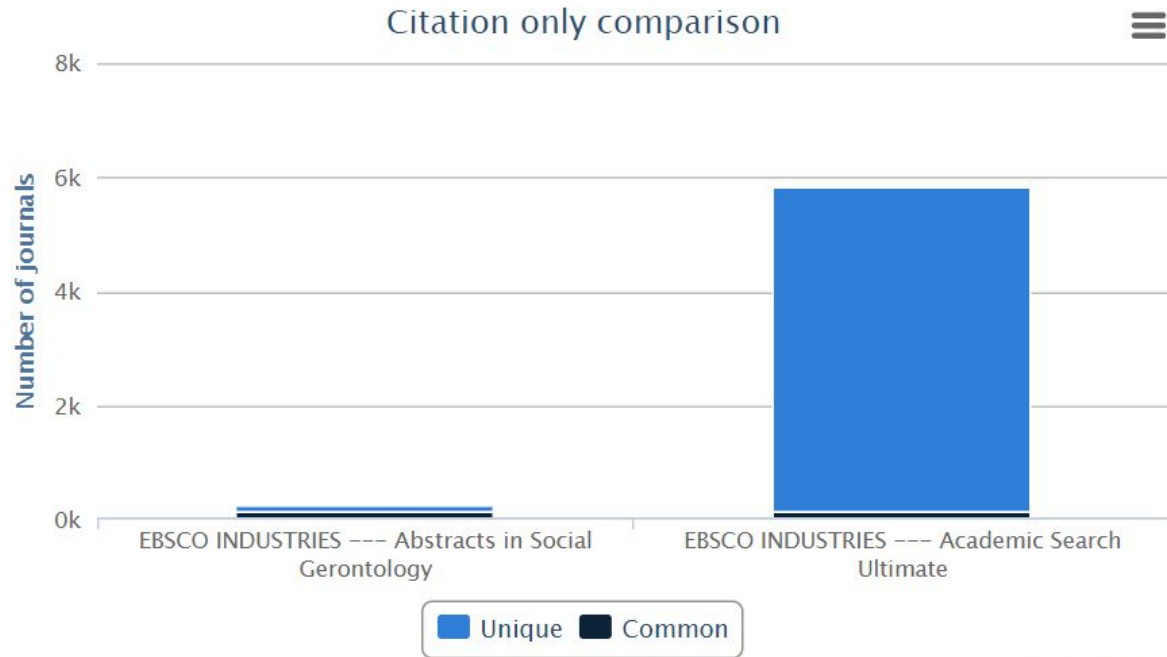
## Citation only comparison



Highcharts.com

**Set 1:** EBSCO INDUSTRIES --- Abstracts in Social Gerontology has 180 unique , with 42 common and a total of 222 journals.

**Set 2:** EBSCO INDUSTRIES --- Family Studies Abstracts has 181 unique , with 42 common and a total of 223 journals.



Highcharts.com

**Set 1:** EBSCO INDUSTRIES --- Abstracts in Social Gerontology has 112 unique , with 110 common and a total of 222 journals.

**Set 2:** EBSCO INDUSTRIES --- Academic Search Ultimate has 5684 unique , with 110 common and a total of 5794 journals.



## Case - The 'A&I' Review

Database Comparisons	Titles Indexed	Common Titles	Unique Titles	Unique vs Big 3 Only	2019 Record Views	Renewal CAD @ 1.41
<b>Abstracts in Social Gerontology</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3,028</b>	<b>\$1,383</b>
vs						
Academic Search Complete	<b>45,757</b>					
Scopus						
Web of Science Core Collection						
Family Studies Abstracts						
Left Index						
Peace Research Abstracts						
Urban Studies Abstracts						
Violence & Abuse Abstracts						



## Case - The 'Education Resources' review

- Thematic approach to resource assessment, grouping a collection of diverse databases used primarily by people in the Faculty of Education.
- Grouping of 33 databases; many different kinds of resources covered:
  - Digital journals and ebooks.
  - Regionally-focused indexes: Australia, Britain, Commonwealth.
  - Streaming video and audio; for Education students and in-classroom use.
  - Related subject areas: Physical education & Sports; Library & Information Studies



## Case - The 'Education Resources' review

- Collected cost and use information, where possible (not always directly comparable)
- Several collaborative consultation sessions with librarians who work directly with the faculty of education, going through each resource and discussing how it is used





## Case - Review of Online News Sources

Process:

1. **Sort out the complexities: what can we actually review for potential cancellation?** Some news resources are outright purchases, some are TAL Core, some are Open Access...
2. **Given what we can review, what *\*should\** we review?** Are there any resources that are so obviously essential that they do not warrant review?
3. **Whom should we consult?** We decided to consult all staff on this one.

TITLE	PLATFORM / PUBLISHER	NEXT RENEWAL DATE	LAST INVOICE PAID \$CAD	USES	APPROX 2019 COST PER USE, \$CAD	UNIT OF USAGE
<u>AllAfrica.com</u>	AllAfrica.com	1 Jan 2021	\$2,395.26	55	\$43.55	Record views
<u>CountryWatch.com</u>	CountryWatch.com	Sept 2020	\$2,221.81	259	\$8.58	Page views
<u>Environment &amp; Energy Publishing</u>	E& E Publishing	June 1 2020	\$7,036.47	484	\$14.54	"Impressions" -- each impression means that a page has loaded
<u>Eureka.cc</u>	NewsScan	June 2020	\$24,480.57	6301	\$3.89	Successful fulltext article requests, 2018
<u>Financial Times</u>	ft.com	Aug 2020	\$18,989.38	322	\$58.97	"Core readers"
<u>Globe Unlimited</u>	theglobeandmail.com	Jun 2020	\$11,040.00	36,569	\$0.30	Visits (each visit may contain multiple pageviews)

Excerpt from "News Sources Review" spreadsheet, shared with all Library staff for input



# Communications

- While communication is key, it's not a simple matter.
- Who should be advised of what, and when? How should communication occur?
- We adjusted our approach, from individualized communication to a monthly all-staff newsletter compiling all cancellations and changes
- The challenge of effective communication is primarily a challenge of reflective professional practice and ongoing commitment to the well-being of our team



# Lessons & Observations

- Challenges:
  - Quantitative: Idiosyncratic usage data; Fluctuating currency
  - Qualitative: Concern for hypothetical future use; Need to balance desire to consult widely with recognition of time and resource constraints
- Unexpected outcomes/surprises
  - Mistaken assumptions spurred by a climate of cuts and fast change

A photograph showing the words "THANK YOU" spelled out using ten light-colored wooden blocks. The blocks are arranged in two groups of five on a rustic wooden plank. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting with foliage. The lighting is natural and bright, highlighting the texture of the wood.

THANK YOU

Thank you for attending, and to the organizers. Time for Q & A!