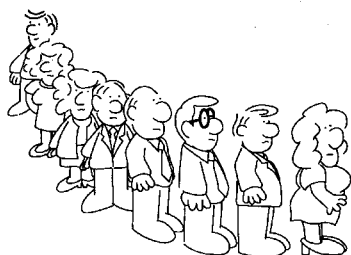




The Business Of Acquisitions 1991

By: Joyce Ogburn

No Abstract



THE BUSINESS OF ACQUISITIONS 1991

by Joyce L. Ogburn

The third ALCTS Business of Acquisitions Institute was held in Boston at Emmanuel College on June 6-7, 1991. These institutes are meant to convey some basic understanding of the complex function of acquiring materials for libraries to beginning acquisitions librarians or professionals with other backgrounds now responsible for acquisitions activities at some level. Like its predecessors, this institute was very successful in meeting its goals.

The institute was structured around sessions (panels, lectures, discussions) for the entire group, combined with focus sessions for small groups. Attendees were given choice of focus sessions in which to participate. This combination permitted practical, personalized interaction that accompanies a small group and broader discussions that tend to occur in large groups. A gathering in the form of a reception at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts provided for more informal communication between the faculty, planners, and attendees.

The large sessions covered topics of publishing, bookselling, automation, and ethics. The information delivered at these sessions was useful to all acquisitions librarians, regardless of their years of experience. The ethics discussion was framed around case studies, which proved a productive approach to exploring the slippery ground of ethical behavior.

The focus sessions included managing finances, approval plans, serials vendor selection and evaluation, media and software purchasing, Asian acquisitions, Latin American acquisitions, serials management, out of print and replacement ordering, firm order, competitive procurement, and monograph

vendor selection and evaluation. Each participant was allowed to attend five of the eleven.

As one can expect, the quality of the instruction in the focus sessions varied. It is very difficult to find knowledgeable and talented faculty for every topic. This problem will face every institute planning committee, since they must select among practitioners whose teaching experience is probably limited. The committee gives guidelines to all faculty, but really don't control the content of their sessions. Overall the evaluations highly rated the faculty and course content.

Lively opening and closing speeches highlighted the institute. **Karen Muller**, in delivering the opening remarks, provided the framework for the institute by providing statistics and quotable quotes about libraries and publishing. **Carol Chamberlain** wrapped up the institute with quotes from the participants and with thoughts for all to take away and ponder.

The institute included a notebook which served as a guide to the sessions, and also served in lieu of handouts. Included were resources for further reading and a draft of a serials glossary produced by the ALCTS Serials Section Acquisitions Committee. Notebooks are valuable in that they give the participant something to take away in a semi-permanent and organized form.

Despite the intention to serve a local audience, the institute attracted participants from across the country. This occurred at the other institutes as well. The participants' years of experience varied from none (students) to more than ten. It was suggested that some old timers attend in order to have their knowledge reinforced and vindicated, rather than to glean new information. Also, some folks attend when an institute is in their area, since the chance won't occur again for some time.

AND THEY WERE THERE

Edited by **Julia Gelfand** (University of California, Irvine) and **Sever Bordeianu** (University of New Mexico)

The next institute is tentatively planned for Richmond, VA in May 1993. Discussion is under way to attempt in the future to locate the institute near library schools. The Boston location and the proximity of Emmanuel College to Simmons gave students the opportunity to attend. The planning committee is also discussing the possibility of developing a core curriculum which would serve as the basis for future institutes.

NEGOTIATING SERVICES AND FEES WITH SUBSCRIPTION AGENCIES

by Katina Strauch

Negotiating Services and Fees With Subscription Agencies was held June 28, 1991, in Atlanta, Georgia. It's the Buzzy Basch seminar and I had a chance to attend so I flew to Atlanta early Friday morning before ALA and encountered a room full of about thirty people — librarians, publishers and vendors. The atmosphere was informal and friendly.

The Negotiating Services and Fees with Subscription Agencies seminar centered around the library subscription market, sales, profit, and marketing by US subscription agencies, calculation of service fees by subscription agents, and ways to negotiate with these agents in order to maximize service and minimize fees. The seminar was very valuable and was chock full of valuable information. Basch's longtime work in the area of serials management came through in his practical advice to his audience. Of special use were the handouts and outline which were distributed to the participants. This printed material was full of basic and not-so-basic information. I found that I knew some of it, but had never taken the time to look at it all in the detail we did during the seminar. Looking at the information in such detail gave me a new sense of understanding which I can bring to the relationship with my serials vendors.