

# Understanding Science Faculty Information-Seeking Behavior to Determine Collection Development Priorities

Jiannan Wang, Systems Librarian, California State University, East Bay

Understanding faculty information-seeking behavior facilitates academic librarians' ability to adjust their collection development strategies and weeding processes in order to provide more effective library services to their university communities. California State University, East Bay's University Libraries stepped up its ongoing weeding project, starting in summer 2008. While print collections were weeded for space reasons, the primary goal was to reduce the online journals and databases to cope with the state budget crisis. In order to determine the weeding project's effect on science faculty's information-seeking behavior, especially the effect on their choices of journals and databases in the online environment, a survey was conducted in summer 2009 to evaluate the impact of the year's decisions.

The survey was mounted on SurveyMonkey, and an email message with URL to the survey page was sent to faculty in College of Science at the end of July 2009. The survey was open for two weeks and responses from 19% of science faculty were collected. Respondents' subject fields included biology, chemistry, computer science & mathematics, statistics & biostatistics, psychology and physics.

The results showed science faculty's preferences in regard to journals they monitor regularly and databases they prefer to search. Findings also included the impact of the library's weeding project had on science faculty's information seeking behavior. These results will guide the development of a priority list of science journals and databases, both for retention purposes and for reinstatement if the budget is sufficiently dire to force deep cancellations. Feedbacks from science faculty also provided directions for the library's web team to further improve the library's redesigned website.