Shifting Priorities
Unlocking your library for 21st-century learning spaces

Sarah Copeland, Chattanooga State Community College
Jen Marx, Cleveland State Community College
What is your role?

Library Director

Library Staff with stacks maintenance supervisory responsibilities

Library Staff with stacks maintenance responsibilities

Library Staff with other responsibilities (but moral supporters of stacks maintenance!)

Other

Um, what is stacks maintenance?

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Not the library’s first time at this rodeo

Setting the Stage
The changing landscape of libraries and building buy-in

Amidst all of the other priorities, why spend resources shifting your collection?
What value do you see in shifting?

It's going to fix ALL of the problems in my library.

I think it looks like a lot of work, and it's a bit intimidating, but it will be so nice when it's finished.

It doesn't quite seem worth all of the work.

NO. WAY. We have way better things to be doing.
The Reasons

• Our Brand
• Access
• Real Estate
The Results

• 48% overall increase in book circulation from 2015-2016

• Well...at least the messy, noisy process didn’t HURT anything, and it enabled other improvements
Transition to Electronic Collections
- Reference
- Health Sciences

Title III Investments
- Reduced collection footprint by ~15%
- Studio, 2013
- Faculty Studio, 2015
- SI spaces, 2015
- Writing/Tutoring Center, 2016

Weeding 2004-2016
- Reduced collection by ~35%
- Freed most space in P-PN, PZ, Q, R, T
So once you’ve decided that your collection isn’t quite distributed the way it should be...

Those books aren’t going to move themselves!

How (and WHERE?!?) do you start?
The Problems

• Lots of space in the middle of stacks
• No “stacks maintenance” student assistants
• No budget
Inputs

• Linear inches of shelf space
• Linear inches of collection, by classification
• Rate of collection growth by classification
Human Resources

- Work-study student assistants
- Partnership with collection services
- Positivity
  - This messy work WILL be worth it!
  - Perseverance
No-Budget Tools

- Painter’s tape
- Excel spreadsheet
- Nylon rope, knotted
- Bucket and rags
- 6x6 lumber, cut into 3”, 6”, 8”, 9”, 12” lengths
Executing the Process
Student Assistants save the day!
A Challenge

• Training, Re-training
• Motivation
• Let Go!
An Opportunity

Building Student Assistant

- Engagement
- Project Skills
- Personal Skills
In Hindsight...

The lessons we learned so you don’t have to
Before

- Communication
- Timing
- Make peace with reality
  - Slow, disruptive, dirty
  - Re-measure. Re-shift.
    Expect it, embrace it.
- Label to the right, not the left!
During

- **Check your plan**
  - Once you are confident in your plan, rely on Excel to tell you whether you are ahead, behind, or on-target. It is easy to confuse falling ahead with getting behind.

- **Shelf read carefully**

- **Clean while you can!**
After

- New signage
- Watch your students grow
- Don’t be afraid of a few strategically-placed empty shelves
Questions?
Email Sarah for a digital, no-budget tool to help plan out your shifting project:

Sarah.Copeland@ChattanoogaState.edu

(Don’t worry - it’s on the handout, too!)