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ABSTRACT

This study assesses acquisitions budget allocation for sustainable support of Indigenous Studies (IS), and the challenge of addressing the needs of an emergent subject area. A survey of collections librarians provided context for library allocation practices of other Canadian institutions offering IS programs. An analysis of titles purchased before and after creating an IS subject fund was performed; results reveal there was an increase in the number of IS titles purchased annually after the fund was created. A defined subject fund allowed flexibility beyond conventional library collections structures to address the unique needs of IS as an academic discipline.

OVERLAPPING CONTEXTS

The purpose of this study was to evaluate Mount Royal University (MRU) Library's acquisition budget allocation practices to determine the effect of creating an Indigenous Studies (IS) subject fund on collection growth in IS and to investigate how other Canadian libraries are supporting an academic discipline that is rapidly growing in response to national Indigenization initiatives.

This study intersects with a variety of overlapping social, higher education, and library contexts.

INDIGENIZATION

Indigenization has become a best practice in Canadian universities, with initiatives ranging from mandatory courses with Indigenous content to supporting Indigenous faculty, staff, and students,

and reconsidering research ethics (MacDonald 2016). As Indigenization aligns with broad patterns in higher education in Canada, it also becomes personal and local, about rooting ourselves in the land where we reside. The ways that Indigenous knowledge is conceptualized in the library should be accountable to the local Indigenous communities and responsive to the ground beneath our feet.

ACQUISITIONS BUDGET ALLOCATION STRATEGIES

At MRU Library, subject librarians are responsible for selecting title-by-title one-time purchases for the collection, and for managing the budget associated with those purchases. Large packages of electronic content are chosen “centrally,” that is, as part of a collaborative process led by the collections coordinator and incorporating advice from subject librarians. Subject librarians are also responsible for selecting title-by-title journal subscriptions that supplement the packages of subscription content licensed by the library.

Subject funds for one-time title-by-title purchases tend to align with the university’s academic departments, programs, or faculties. The library’s subject funds change as programs and offerings change. Like many other academic libraries, especially in undergraduate or teaching institutions, the library uses a formula to allocate dollars for the majority of subject funds for one time purchases (Walters 2011). The wide range of variables used in allocations formulas in other libraries and the challenges associated with allocations formulas have been well documented. Kitti Canepi’s meta-analysis explored 75 funding allocation formulas and found the most frequently used factors included student enrollment numbers, cost/price of materials, use as measured by circulation, and number of faculty (Canepi 2007). While Canepi recommends libraries include these factors in an allocation formula, she is careful to

acknowledge that libraries may find that other factors represent their priorities as well: “the challenge for every library is to create an allocation formula that best incorporates the aspects most important to the specific institution” (p. 21). Others have addressed the problems with allocation formulas. Cross (2011) argues that formulas should be constructed and used with extreme caution, because the inputs libraries tend to use reflect value judgments rather than objectivity.

Certainly no formula is perfect; the library’s allocation formula has undergone many revisions over the years as library and university priorities change. Currently the following data is used in an attempt to capture internal or institutional factors as well as external costs and volumes:

1. Faculty full-time equivalent (FTE) counts.
2. Materials costs and publication volume in the area.
3. Level. The formula reflects whether the subject is a 2-year or 4-year program, and whether a major or minor is offered.
4. The nature of assignments in the subject area. Here, a weighting is assigned by the subject librarian in consultation with the collections coordinator. If students are required to rely heavily on content that exists as one-time purchases (monographic content and some audiovisual content, mostly) to complete assignments, the weighting is higher and therefore the allocation increases.

Applying the formula is not ideal in all subject areas: in some cases, data used in the formula may not exist; or, the area may be new and require extra funding initially to build a solid base of materials. In these few cases, subject librarians and the collections coordinator collaborate to define a reasonable annual amount. Examples of these funds include “Student Wellness” and

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“University Administration”, as well as funds in support of areas on campus including the Academic Development Center and Student Learning Services. There is also a “General” fund for titles that fall into a range of disciplines.

INDIGENOUS STUDIES AS AN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

The themes of IS, as described by one of the founders of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association, include:

a commitment to the fundamental concept of sovereignty; a privileging or centering of Native names, experiences, voices, and narratives; an inclusive orientation that favors multiple, complicating, diverse perspectives over a monolithic ‘one size or story fits all’ approach; a commitment to the health, well-being and vigor of life in Indian country; responsiveness to the central issues and concerns of Native nations; a dedication to transform the institutional structures of the dominant society, such as schools, colleges, and universities – however frustratingly slow and incremental that process can be.

(Lomawaima 2007).

Terminology in this academic discipline shifts frequently, as programs can be named Native Studies, First Nations Studies, Native American Studies, Aboriginal Studies, or, even “Indian-Eskimo Studies,” the original name for Trent University’s 1969 groundbreaking program in Canada (Newhouse, McCaskill, and Milloy 2002). For the sake of simplicity, the phrase Indigenous Studies (IS) is used to refer to all such programs.

INDIGENOUS STUDIES AT MOUNT ROYAL UNIVERSITY

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MRU is an undergraduate institution in Canada, offering 50 programs, including 12 bachelor's degrees, 2 diplomas, and 5 certificate programs. Approximately 12,000 students attend either full-time or part-time. The first IS courses at MRU were approved in 2010; additional courses from other disciplines that had significant Indigenous content rounded out the requirements for a minor. The academic discipline of IS has been rooted in the History department in this institution; the first faculty member hired to teach the first courses was hired by History in 2011.

CHALLENGES IN COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT FOR INDIGENOUS STUDIES

This is an academic discipline that “disrupts the certainty of disciplinary knowledges produced in the twentieth century, when the study of Indigenous peoples was largely the knowledge/power domain of non-Indigenous scholars.” (Moreton-Robinson 2016). While many materials are published with Indigenous content (“about Indigenous people”), few are concerned with Indigenous peoples as their audience (“for Indigenous people”) and fewer still are written by Indigenous authors (“by Indigenous people”). Recognizing that the discipline is concerned with querying the structures of the academy, library collection development strategies should not rely solely on major vendors and conventional collection development tools; as disciplinary structures these tools will be inadequate because they fail to capture or handle the variety of resources that are core to IS: oral histories, non-print objects, and community-created content.

The relative newness of the academic discipline belies the extensive knowledge systems that make up Indigenous ways of knowing: what Pelletier and Gercken refer to as “old ways as new methods” (2006). Battiste notes that Indigenous knowledges are transmitted in a variety of ways beyond the written word (2002); this discipline uses a distinct lens to identify credible, authoritative works differently than many other areas of study (Tuhiwai Smith 2012; Roy 2015).

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While the field is “multicultural, multinational, and multidisciplinary,” and therefore well served by collecting in adjacent disciplines, there is no certainty that titles will be purchased through an adjacent discipline’s subject fund, particularly around oral histories and “Indigenous-centered approaches to knowledge...where the object of study is colonizing power in its multiple forms, whether the gaze is on Indigenous issues or on Western knowledge production” (Moreton-Robinson 2016). With these challenges in mind, purchasing titles requires creative solutions to find materials not found in the offerings from mainstream academic publishers: working directly with tribal colleges, investigating self-published community materials, and tracking down out of print titles (Peterson, 2004; Kelly, 2016). For librarians collecting in IS, autonomy and flexibility are essential.

SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS STUDIES AS AN INTERDISCIPLINARY AREA OF STUDY

Before 2011, subject librarians at MRU Library purchased Indigenous-focused content using a range of subject funds. When the IS minor was first offered in the 2011/2012 academic year, the History librarian took the lead in collecting in support of the courses while librarians collecting in other areas also identified titles for purchase. In 2012-2013, an IS librarian completed an Indigenous content gap-fill assessment. As a result of that assessment, it was clear that ongoing focused collecting in this area was necessary to maintain a strong and responsive library collection, and therefore a dedicated budget line was created for IS acquisitions in the 201/2015 academic year, and again in 2015/2016. In 2016-2017, the IS subject fund was incorporated into the one-time acquisitions budget formula alongside most other subject areas.

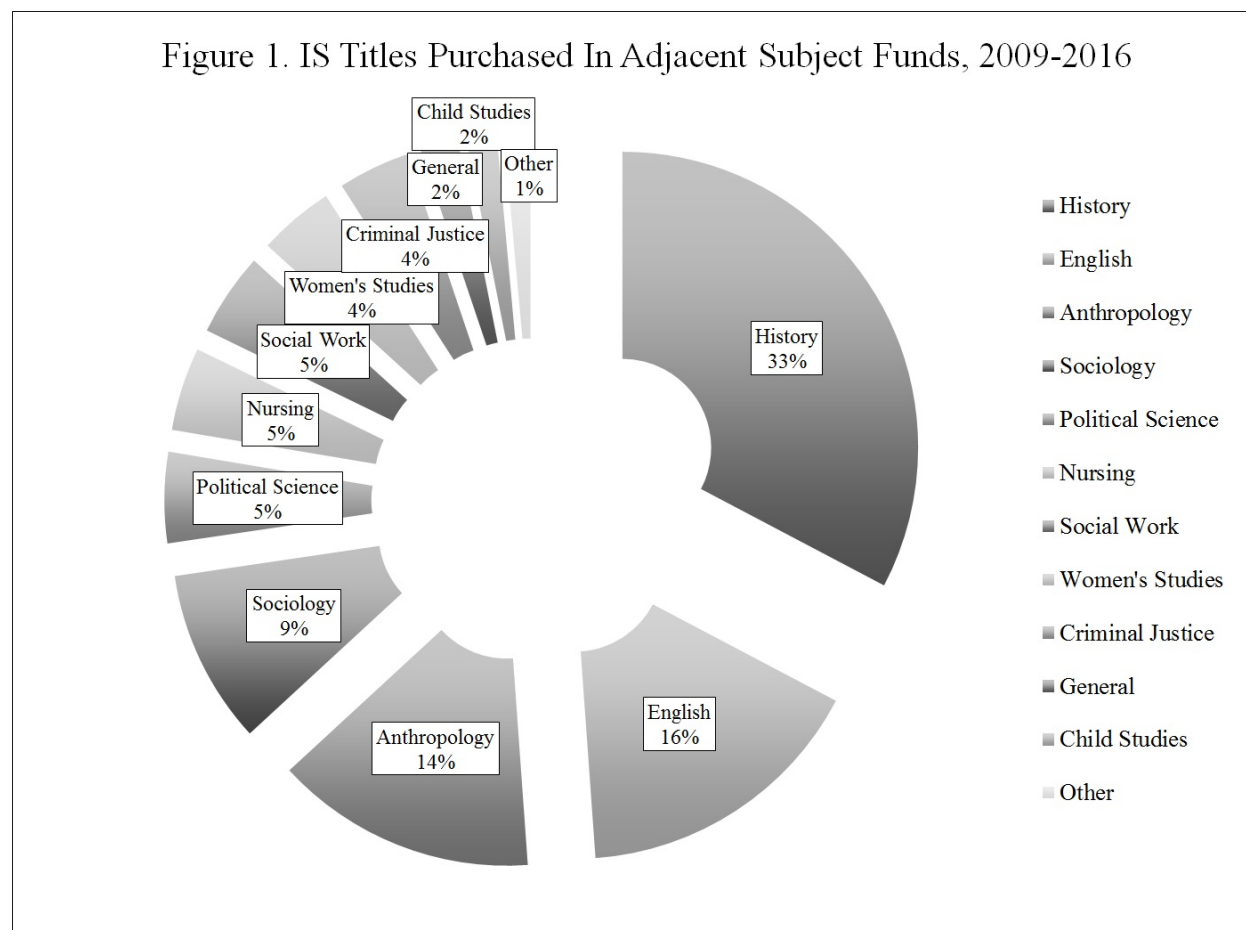
INTERNAL COLLECTIONS ANALYSIS: METHODOLOGY

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Collections data from MRU Library was analyzed to assess how changes to IS allocations strategies over time affected the collection particularly with respect to annual growth rates. Title reports across subject areas were generated going back to 2009, five years before an IS subject fund was created. A qualitative content analysis strategy that included segmenting line items using a pre-set coding criteria was applied, coding a score to all titles that fit within IS call number ranges and key words, using Merriam's methodology (2009). Coding criteria included select Library of Congress call number ranges unique to IS, in combination with text search keywords (including Indian; Metis; Inuit; Eskimo; Coloni*; Native; Indigenous; Aboriginal; First Nat*; as well as individual nations like Cree, Blackfoot, Innu, Mi'kmaq). The numbers of titles purchased that met criteria across subject funds were calculated within each subject fund and also totaled annually to determine whether there was growth in the IS collection over time and specifically whether defining an IS subject fund affected annual acquisition rates in IS content.

RESULTS

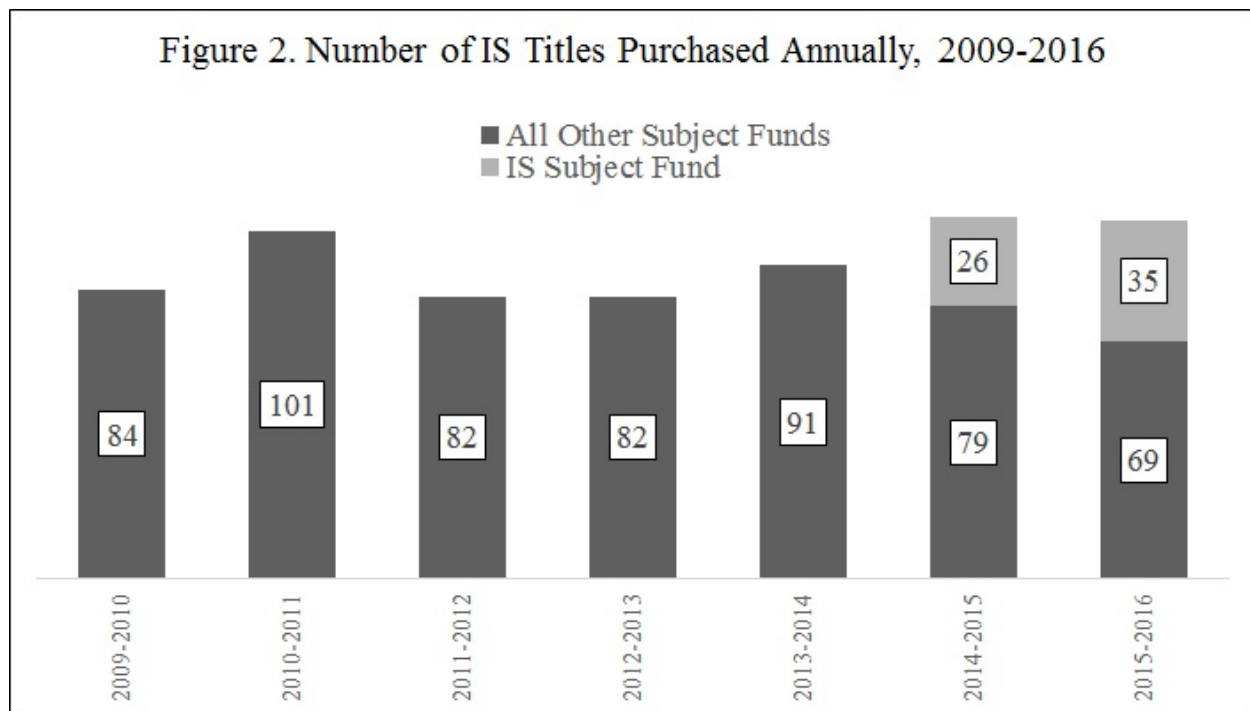
Adjacent subject funds that supported IS from 2009-2016 were History (158 titles), English (78 titles), Anthropology (69 titles), Sociology (46 titles), Political Science (24 titles), Nursing (22 titles), Social Work (22 titles), Women's Studies (20 titles), Criminal Justice (19 titles), General (10 titles) and Child Studies (8 titles) (See Fig. 1).



105 titles were purchased for the collection in the first year that IS was defined as a subject fund (2014/2015), representing a 19.3% increase over the previous 5-year average of 88 titles. The following year (2015/2016) was almost identical: 104 titles were purchased.

In the 2009-2010 budget year, 84 titles were purchased that met the criteria. There was an increase in the number of titles purchased the following year (101 titles), which was likely due to a library impact assessment conducted by the History librarian and the History department in preparation for the IS minor. In the following three years, the number of titles purchased annually hovered between 82 and 91 (82 titles purchased in 2011/2012; 82 titles in 2012/2013; 91 titles in 2013/2014.). The five year average, before defining an IS subject fund, was 88 titles

per year. After creating that fund, annual acquisitions numbers rose significantly to 105 titles in 2014/2015 and 104 titles in 2015/2016 (See Fig. 2.) .



Does the establishment of a dedicated subject fund affect the number of IS titles collected in adjacent subject areas? Numbers of IS titles purchased annually in other areas decreased only slightly after creating an IS subject fund. In 2014/2015, librarians in adjacent subject areas selected 79 IS titles, a decrease of only 10.2% from the previous 5-year average of 88 titles per year; in 2015/2016, they selected 67 titles. The decrease in IS titles acquired annually in adjacent areas was small enough to suggest that creating a fund did not simply transfer the work of IS collection to this new fund; rather, the IS librarian was able to select titles that other librarians would not have purchased. A cursory look at specific titles collected using the IS subject fund suggests that they will fall within Lomawaima's (2007) definition of IS as a unique academic discipline rather than supplementing anthropological or historical perspectives on Indigenous peoples. Other factors could have influenced growth, including increased volume of publication,

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increased awareness of publication in IS, or subject librarians responding to the emphasis on Indigenization on campus. Having a dedicated subject expert collecting in the discipline and collaborating with other librarians is likely a significant factor in the growth as well. Overall the growth in the collection after establishing a dedicated subject fund is encouraging and scalable.

EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN: METHODOLOGY

In order to determine the Canadian academic context of library acquisitions budget support for IS, determining how other Canadian institutions with IS offerings were supporting their programs through library acquisitions was necessary. In Canada, which institutions' websites provide details about their programs of study? Evaluating web content has its idiosyncrasies and each website poses potential challenges for researchers. A lack of commonly imposed design and usability standards resulted in investigators evaluating the website as a whole since individual or intuitive pages which would present the desired data are not uniform (Weare and Lin 2000). In Fall 2016, institutions' websites were analyzed by utilizing a traditional approach of selecting a sample in accordance with the research question, defining categories for coding, and creating and implementing a method for each researcher to check the reliability of how the websites were coded. Three units of analysis were identified, attempting to align with a traditional content analysis approach (Krippendorff 1980): the sampling unit (academic institution in Canada), the recording unit (programs of study offered at the institution) and the context unit (levels of study the institution offers in relation to IS). Developing a mutually exclusive scheme of categorization was paramount: clear parameters were developed for coders to evaluate the site, having two coders review all sites to increase the reliability of the interpretation of results to add a layer of reliability and validity in formulating the survey sample pool (Julien 2008). Certain

institutions were excluded from the analysis based on program rigidity (for example, theological institutions that offer programs with a narrow focus), but did include technical schools and art schools as preliminary observations found that they did offer accreditation in areas relating to IS or Indigenous culture as well as tribal colleges who offered programs of study that remained consistent with how Lomawaima defines IS (2007) (See Table 1).

Table 1: Canadian Academic Institutions Offering IS Programs			
Province	Number of Academic Centres	Number Offering IS	(Number Surveyed)
BC	30	18	18
AB	29	16	16
SK	10	5	5
MB	13	8	8
ON	50	30	24
QC	44	17	14
NB	14	3	3
NFLD	3	1	1
NS	12	8	8
PEI	4	0	0
YK	2	1	1
NWT	1	1	1
NT	1	1	1
Totals	213	109	100

The website content analysis identified 109 Canadian academic centers as institutions who offered IS programs. Nine of these institutions were excluded from the survey pool because library contact email information was unavailable on their website or not discoverable through internet searches. An online survey was distributed to collections librarians at 100 academic institutions across Canada. The survey was open for two weeks and received 30 responses (30%

response rate). There are a variety of factors that influence survey response rate, such as length of survey, establishing the correct contacts for deployment and survey design (Sheehan 2001).

Acquisitions budget allocation may be political and many librarians may not have been forthcoming in disclosing their practice.

The goal of the survey was to investigate two main areas of inquiry:

1. Do academic libraries within institutions allocate subject funds specific to their IS programs and
2. If they do not, how are they supporting IS through other funding strategies?

An additional question about the type of program the respondent's institution offered acted as a mechanism of confirmation that they did indeed offer credit programs in IS and gave additional context to how they responded to fund allocation questions. Mixed methods were applied in deploying a survey asking three questions designed to elicit both quantitative and qualitative responses:

1. "Describe what type of Indigenous Studies programs your institution offers?"

Multiple response question (respondents could choose more than one option)

2. "Does your library currently allocate acquisition budget dollars to a fund specific to Indigenous Studies programs?"
3. "If no, describe how you support Indigenous Studies programs through library acquisitions?"

The rationale for mixing qualitative and quantitative data within one study is grounded in the fact that neither quantitative nor qualitative methods are sufficient, by themselves, to capture the trends and details of a situation (Ivankova, Creswell and Stick 2008). Acknowledging this, the survey was designed to give respondents a venue to explain how they were supporting IS

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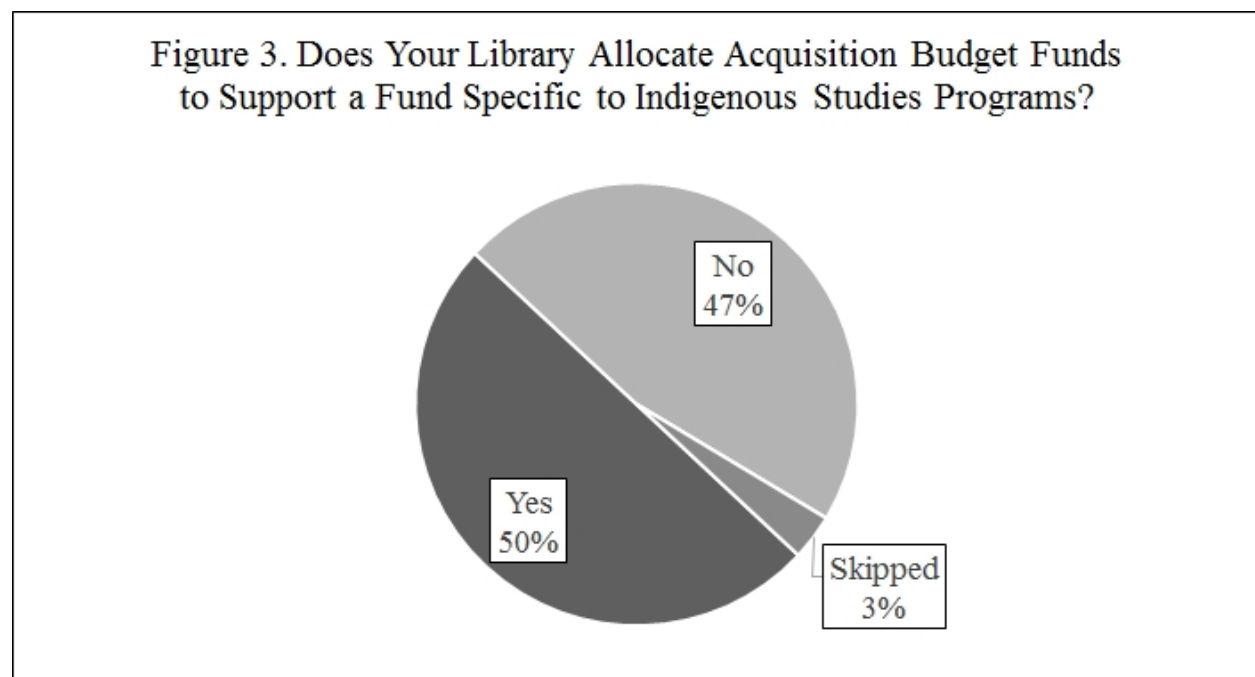
outside of yes or no responses. Qualitative responses were coded using an identical methodological approach as in establishing the survey pool through web content analysis (see above). Sub-codes parsed out other trends in qualitative responses received.

TYPES OF INDIGENOUS STUDIES PROGRAMS OFFERED: RESULTS

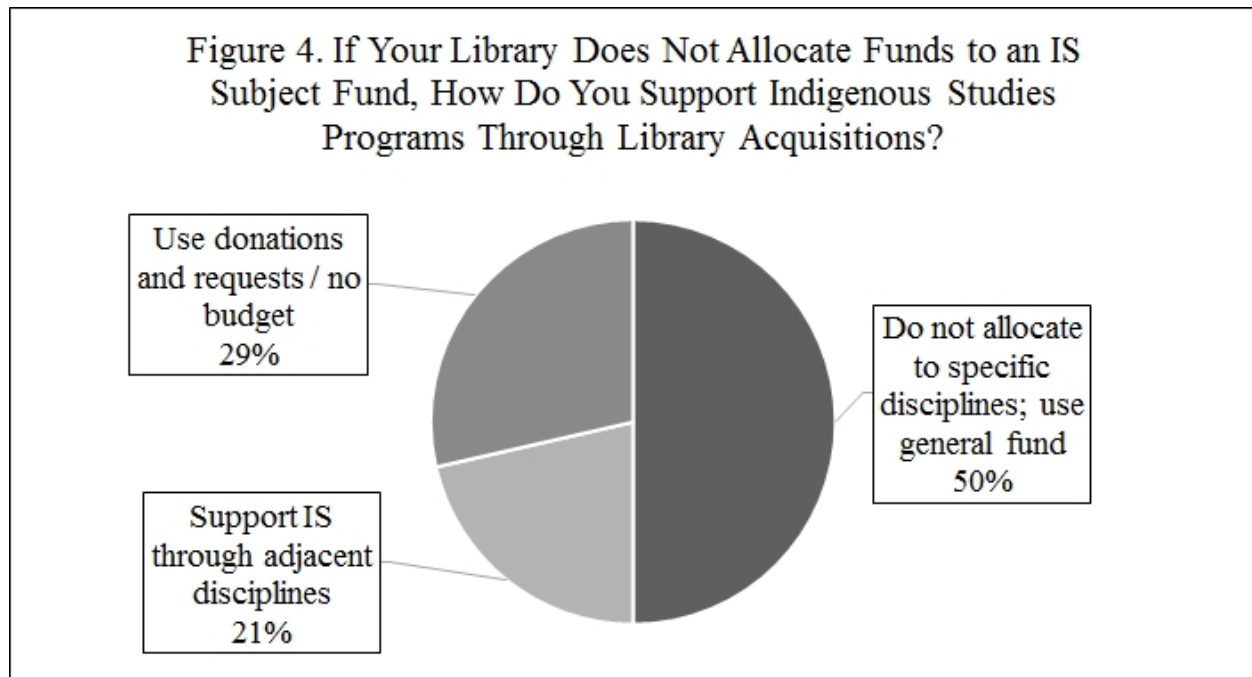
Respondents could choose more than one option for this multiple response question. From 30 respondents, 20 institutions offer a certificate or diploma, 11 offer a minor, 10 offer a major or a Bachelor's degree, 7 offer graduate programs, and 2 offer other coursework or areas of concentration in IS.

ALLOCATING TO A SPECIFIC INDIGENOUS STUDIES FUND: RESULTS

Half (n=15) of all 30 respondents allocate acquisition budget dollars to a fund specific to IS. 14 respondents do not, and 1 skipped the question (See Fig 3).



Respondents who indicated that they did not currently allocate acquisition budget funds to an IS subject fund were asked to elaborate on alternative ways they support IS at their institutions (See Fig. 4).



All 14 respondents who answered that they do not allocate acquisition budget dollars to subject fund specific to IS provided a qualitative response to describe how they support IS through their acquisitions budget. In coding these free text responses, three major trends emerged (See Fig 4):

1. “Libraries that did not allocate funds specific to any disciplines at their institution but relied on a general fund”
2. “Libraries that relied on adjacent disciplines’ funds to support the interdisciplinary nature of Indigenous Studies”
3. “Libraries that had no monograph funding and relied heavily on donations or acquired materials by request from department or faculty or on an ‘as needed’ basis”

DISCUSSION

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Half of university libraries who did not allocate to an IS fund indicated that they also did not dedicate money specific to any discipline, but rather, all their collection development flows from a general budget; one library indicated that they had recently shifted from subject allocation to a broader general budget allocation practice. In the literature on allocation practices, a number of libraries report a similar strategy of moving away from subject fund allocation in order to increase fluidity and flexibility across their funds by aggregating fund lines into general clusters to encourage interdepartmental and multidisciplinary resources (Weston 2004). Holistic Collection Development (HCD) is also prevalent in fund allocation discussions, in that university libraries are focusing on curriculum-driven, rather than format driven collections practices (e.g.: separating monograph budgets from serials budgets) in part because of the rising cost of serials in relation to monograph spending, and have revised their allocation practices based on institutional priority rather than discipline priority (Kusik and Vargas 2009; Bodi and Maier-O'Shea 2005). Discipline-focused fund allocation may not necessarily be the only model to sustainably support new programs.

Sustainable collection building is a rather loose term that had been addressed in discussions most recently driven by the serials crisis, as a push to shift emphasis to Open Access publishing (Walters 2008; Frazier 2005; Mitchell and Lorbeer 2009) or challenges related to shifting to patron driven acquisition models (Walters 2012). A library collection is sustainable when it upholds the current curricula and can be maintained without significant degradation over time (Walters 2008). Specifically, subject fund allocations may be a mechanism to ensure that areas of studies offered by will receive equitable and consistent – equity meaning funds are distributed equitably based on applied consistent variables (Walters 2011). The MRU Library's internal analysis on allocating dollars to a defined subject fund supports this definition of

sustainability. This approach aligned with half of survey respondents who support IS in a similar manner with a defined subject fund; the other half described alternatives that fit their institution's needs.

Three libraries who do not allocate to an IS subject fund responded that they support IS collections through other subject funds, similar to MRU Library's practice prior to the creation of an IS subject fund in 2014/2015. Collection development for IS through adjacent subject funds was effective initially, but the question remained: was it efficient for IS to remain the responsibility of librarians managing other traditional subject funds? At libraries with multiple subject librarians seeking to maximize the impact of limited budgets, a constant redrawing of boundaries between one's subject domain and another's often ensues and a subject can easily be neglected or lost (Searing 1996). It is unclear if relying on adjacent budget lines can effectively support burgeoning subject areas in perpetuity.

What happens when librarians have a limited acquisitions budget to support institutional directions? There is often disconnection between approval of new programs and a sustained increase to funding to libraries to support such programs (Chan 2008). Four survey respondents indicated that they only acquired material upon request or through donation or endowment. Many academic library administrators have discarded the concept that funding solely from the operating budget allocated by the campus is sufficient and they have accepted the need to supplement it with from external sources such as grants, donations, and endowments (Simmons-Weldon, Donovan and Bender 2008). One respondent specifically noted that due to insufficient institutional support they no longer supported departmental monograph purchasing at all. This speaks to larger concerns: flat or zero increase library budgets cannot sustain responsive collections and librarians may need to support collections creatively through external measures.

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Due to the interdisciplinary nature of IS, collection development in this area benefits institutional initiatives beyond curricular activities. Two survey respondents made reference to their own efforts to support Indigenization beyond IS as an academic discipline: “Currently we are actively selecting materials to support our First Nations Initiative as part of this college-wide mission” and “We have been actively purchasing content in other subject funds and are now using endowment funds to purchase additional material.” Though the focus on internal collections analysis was IS as an academic discipline, collection development at MRU Library in this discipline also supports university-wide Indigenization efforts.

The institution’s Indigenous Strategic Plan, approved in 2015, sets five goals: Indigenizing the university, culturally respectful research, bridge-building with Indigenous education stakeholders, support for Indigenous learners, and respectful and inclusive curricula and pedagogies. The library sees itself playing a prominent role in each of these goals of Indigenization. The physical spaces of a library, cataloguing and classification (Lee 2011; Loughheed, Moran and Callison 2015; Doyle, Lawson and Dupont, 2015), and the way information literacy is taught can reflect Indigenous ways of knowing (Lee 2008; Roy, Lilley and Luehrsen 2011); collection development, particularly how sustainable funding is created for and committed to certain areas and programs, is an often-overlooked space for this work.

Defining a dedicated subject fund for IS helps ensure that the program receives continuous support with collections and further aligns collections practice with the wider Indigenization initiatives taking place on campus. This is a growing academic discipline, particularly on Canadian campuses. There are unique challenges for collection development in IS; ensuring librarians have autonomy and flexibility in making collection development decisions is one way to address some of these challenges.

MRU Library has tried a variety of strategies over time to sustainably support the Indigenous collection through budget acquisitions allocation, beginning with relying on adjacent subject funds for purchasing IS materials, to defining IS as a subject fund. Internal collections analysis confirmed that the most recent approach to addressing the needs of this program was effective: one-time monograph spending on IS titles and the number of titles acquired annually increased after defining IS as a subject fund, suggesting that dedicating funds and resources to areas of study contributes to the growth of the collection. In surveying Canadian academic collections librarians, libraries were using similar strategies to support their IS programs. IS as an academic discipline should be supported through a sustainable acquisitions model that fits the needs of the institution.

If this study were revisited, specifically referencing sustainable models of allocation would provide a clearer analysis of respondent's alternative strategies. As well, collections data at other libraries could be incorporated: with a dedicated IS subject fund, did acquisitions rates improve or did their collection grow or become richer? While collection size or annual growth rates are not always indicators of collection strength, they are not insignificant measures. Because this study found only a small decrease in IS titles being ordered in adjacent disciplines after establishing a dedicated IS subject fund, it seems likely that both defining the IS subject fund and hiring a dedicated IS subject librarian enabled the addition of content that otherwise would not have been purchased. This overall growth may be due as well to the growth of IS as an academic discipline and the subsequent growth in publishing in this area: there are simply more titles available now. Another follow-up to this investigation will be to continue to evaluate internal collections data to measure if there are differences in IS collecting patterns when IS is fully integrated into the acquisitions budget allocation formula.

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