A. Introduction

NBCG continued to fulfill its role as the forum where New Brunswick selectors meet to discuss and resolve common problems across the full spectrum of collection development functions, and to share ideas about future directions for collection development. As usual our major concerns focused on the collection development budget, its magnitude, its mode of distribution among the various subject categories, and identification of specific areas of budget inadequacies requiring remedial action. Indeed, budget developments dominated our agenda, as is reflected in the narrative below. We started the year with considerable apprehension about the possibility of impending major budget cuts, which, fortunately, did not materialize, and end on a note of cautious optimism about future support.

B. Collections Budget Overview

This year’s collections budget evolved in a particularly complex fashion reflecting incremental infusions of funds from several sources at different times of the year. We especially wish to acknowledge a major contribution from Dr. Furmanski to our state funds base budget totaling $950,000 (an increase of $200,000 over the previous year), and a transfer of $150,000 to our non-state funds pool from the University Librarian’s Development Funds, early in 2005, authorized by Marianne Gaunt. And an additional $30,000 was made available for our collections from the salary savings account.

The attached spreadsheet provides an overview of our collections budget very near the end of the fiscal year. Because this is not the final close-out summary, these numbers are subject to some revisions, but we anticipate nothing major that would significantly alter the observations noted below.

1. State Funds

* The overall RULS collections budget for FY 2005 totaled $7,587,000 which is an increase of $134,000 or +1.8% over last year. [Note: all figures listed here are SIRSI allocation figures, as adjusted for residual +/- free balances].

* By year-end, New Brunswick’s share of the total collections budget reached $3,081,000, up $42,000 or 1.4% higher than 2004. However, this should not be considered in isolation from Central’s budget, which provides access to resources that benefit not only New Brunswick but the entire university, and Central’s funding increased by $263,000 or 7.8% this year.
Monograph purchases for the New Brunswick libraries via firm orders plus the New Brunswick approval plan totaled $450,000, which is a decrease of $53,000 (-10.5%) from the prior year, a drop that would have been particularly damaging to the humanities and social science sectors had it not been compensated by incremental non-state funds as detailed below (note: the sciences do not participate in the NB approval plan, with the exception of psychology, and for a number of years now all state funds for the sciences have been dedicated to the purchase of journals and monographic series). However, the overall level of monograph purchases (state plus non-state), both in the sciences and the humanities, is still considered inadequate to the requirements of the university’s research and teaching missions, and the continuing trend toward ever greater reliance on non-state funds (phonothon, gifts, endowments) for this purpose is viewed with increasing concern by NBCG which advocates recognition by the university of the need for an expanded base state funds budget.

Current periodical costs for New Brunswick totaled $2,155,000, up $118,000 or 5.8%, which represents basically the inflation factor covering a static number of titles. As our budget picture improved during the year, the ever present threat of the need for yet another wave of journal cancellations dissipated. However, as previously noted, the funding picture for periodicals is complicated by the ongoing transfer of titles and their associated subscription costs from print to online access, most of which is paid for out of a separate budget controlled by Central (ELPX, the fund in question, grew by $288,000 or 9.3%, reflecting both the acquisition of new online resources as well as inflationary increases). Here again, in the case of periodicals, there is an urgent need, especially in the sciences, to provide additional funds for the acquisition of cutting edge new journals that are in demand by our faculty and researchers. This need was documented by NBCG in the form of a “wish list” for serials and related resources across the full spectrum of academic subject areas represented in the university, totaling $217,566 (see appended document; this is the amount that would be needed as a permanent addition to our base state funds budget allocation). The pace of innovation and development is so rapid these days, that this list is already in need of revision.

2. Non-State Funds

New Brunswick’s overall use of non-state funds totaled $1,189,000 this year, an increase of $42,000 or 3.7% over the previous year. Total state plus non-state funding for New Brunswick collections came to $4,374,000 which is up by $188,000 or 4.5% over 2004. In accordance with established practice, and in the interests of prudent money management, nearly all of the non-state funds are earmarked for the purchase of monographs (i.e., one time purchases, as opposed to journal subscriptions which comprise an ongoing monetary commitment), and to cover bindery costs. However, in a few select cases involving non-state accounts whose income from year to year is very predictable, limited application of funds has been sanctioned for the acquisition of some critically needed subscription resources. Finally, because of the improved budget situation, less had to be taken from the Van Wagoner endowment capital than was required last year: only $77,000 in 2005 vs. $219,200 in 2004.

3. Actions of NBCG’s Budget Allocation Committee

NBCG’s Budget Allocation Committee (BAC) is responsible for allocations of state funds and
certain non-state funds among various fund codes and selectors, and broadly oversees expenditures on collections throughout the year, including transfers of funds among codes as may be required as the year progresses. Membership was comprised of the following:

Howard Dess, Chair, NBCG
Mary Fetzer, Chair, Social Sciences Subgroup
Jackie Mardikian, Chair, Sciences Subgroup
Kevin Mulcahy, Chair, Arts & Humanities Subgroup
Jeris Cassel, Chair, Reference Subgroup
Gracemary Smulewitz, Assistant Head, Access/Collection Services

* State Funds

Nearly all of the state funds were already earmarked for distribution to specific purposes, primarily current periodicals, the approval plan, and standing orders. As a consequence, minimal action was required by the Budget Allocation Committee at the start of the year. Later, however, especially during the second half of the year, as imbalances began to appear in various accounts, corrective action was required involving fund transfers almost on a routine basis.

* Non-State Funds

a) Phonothon

A total of $200,000 in new phonothon funds was received this year, double the amount obtained in 2004, and this was a welcome development indeed. The BAC split these funds as follows: 34% for the sciences ($68,000) and 66% for social sciences and humanities ($132,000). These amounts were then distributed among various individual fund codes by the BAC.

b) Gift and Endowment Funds

Science gift funds available for distribution among various subject funds codes amounted to $93,506 this year. A total of $203,181 in gift funds was available for the social sciences and humanities. In the sciences, special arrangements were utilized to distribute funds available from several endowed accounts in a manner that helped science selectors augment their very lean monograph budgets.

c) Special Development Fund Accounts (New)

The $80,000 received from the University Librarian’s Development Account was split 40/60% between the sciences and the social sciences/humanities ($32,000 and $48,000 respectively). This money was then distributed by BAC among a group of newly created fund codes, distinguished by the initial identifier “D” in SIRSI.

C. Strategic Planning

NBCG accepted the challenge of preparing a strategic plan for our library collections. The resulting document was submitted to CDC and the Strategic Plan Steering Committee, and is
appended herewith. Major points stressed:

* The need for new funding sources in support of collection development, both print and electronic.
* Closer alignment of collection development with university designated high priority areas.
* Development of a new collection development organizational model that more effectively addresses the rapid growth in interdisciplinarity in academia.
* Continuing expansion of access to e-resources.
* Increasing emphasis on diversity.

D. NBCG Organizational Matters

The following individuals were newly elected to two year terms this spring:

Chair, NBCG: Kevin Mulcahy  
Science Subgroup Chair: Rebecca Gardner  
Social Science Subgroup Chair: Ryan Womack  

By special arrangement, and the approval of NBCG, Lourdes Vazquez has agreed to chair the Arts & Humanities Subgroup position vacated by Kevin. During the period of her sabbatical during the first half of 2006, Kevin will temporarily reassume the responsibilities to chair this subgroup again until her return.

Finally, Jeris Cassel continues as Chair of the Reference Subgroup to the completion of her term of office.

In accordance with NBCG rules and procedures, these individuals also comprise the membership of the Budget Allocation Committee, along with Gracemary Smulewitz, Assistant Head, Access/Collection Services.

E. Other NBCG Focus Areas During the Year

1. YBP Approval Plan

Selectors became increasingly familiar with the operational aspects (and some quirks!) of the YBP approval plan. A series of NBCG discussions throughout the year addressed problems encountered by selectors that required further fine tuning of profiles in a number of cases. These discussions were greatly aided by consultations with Mary Page, Janet Howard, and Steve Hyndman of YBP. In a related area, selectors gained experience and proficiency in the use of YBP’s order system, GOBI. Although many operational questions arose about GOBI, they have gradually been answered until we are now at a point where selectors are much more comfortable with this system and even devising creative new ways to utilize it.

2. Weeding

The LSM weeding project has progressed steadily, and the separate weeding project for LSM’s
special collections room has been completed. Plans are now in progress to implement weeding operations at the Chemistry and the Physics libraries.

3. Disaster Planning for Collections

The subject of disaster planning for collections was introduced to NBCG via a presentation by Ian Bogus. The key question to be addressed here is establishment of an order of priority for remediating damage to various classes of library resources in the wake of any disaster. We await additional guidance before proceeding with more substantive actions.

4. Global Outreach Program

Thelma Tate was the guiding spirit behind our participation in the Global Outreach Program and her tragic loss now necessitates consideration as to how best we might continue this work or some equivalent program that is dedicated to transferring books no longer needed by our library system to libraries in third world countries. Mei Ling Lo has studied this operation and offered recommendations concerning its continuation, at least on a temporary basis. However, a longer term solution is required, and NBCG is expected to revisit this matter in the near future.

5. Dealing with Donors of Collections

A number of questions have been raised by selectors about donated collections, and in particular about how to deal with demands made by the donors regarding special treatment of their collections and ways to express acknowledgement of such gifts. It was concluded that all of these matters need to be standardized throughout the entire Rutgers Library System under the rubric of a master gift policy and that formulation of such system-wide gift collection policies were more appropriately the responsibility of CDC. A summary of this discussion was therefore submitted to CDC for further action.

Acknowledgements: As I wind up my final term as Chair of NBCG, I wish to express my thanks to the New Brunswick selectors for your support and spirit of collegiality. At long last we have really learned to work together! I am also particularly grateful to my colleagues on the Budget Allocation Committee for all your hard work in helping NBCG make the best possible use of the funds available to us. It has been a pleasure working with you all.