

Guidelines for curriculum materials centers

Approved by ACRL and ALA, January 2003

by the EBSS Ad hoc Curriculum Materials Centers Standards/Guidelines Committee

Curriculum materials centers are essential to the instructional and research needs of students and faculty in programs preparing educators for P–12 schools. These guidelines describe essential elements of administration, services, and collections for curriculum materials centers in all university and college settings.

These guidelines are intended for administrators at all levels of post-secondary education, particularly education deans or department chairs; library deans or directors; librarians responsible for curriculum materials centers; and accrediting and licensure agencies.

Definitions

- *P–12* refers to preschool through 12th grade.
- *Curriculum materials* are educational resources that provide curriculum and instructional experiences for P–12 students. These materials are used by educators to develop curricula and lesson plans and may also be used in actual instructional situations with P–12 students. These materials also provide information for those doing research.
- *Curriculum Materials Center (CMC)* refers to a physical location of a curriculum materials collection. Curriculum materials centers are often housed in a main campus library, a branch library building, or in an academic building housing the campus education academic programs.
- *CMC users* are education students and faculty, and may also include P–12 educators, other students, and community members as defined by the CMC's mission.
- *Director* refers to the librarian who has primary responsibility for the CMC: its facilities, administration, collection, personnel, and services.

Administration

Mission/Goals

The CMC should have a written mission statement with articulated goals that reflect these guidelines.

- *Collaboration*—The mission statement, goal setting, and planning should be jointly developed by the CMC director, an administrator from the unit to which the CMC administratively reports, and faculty representatives from the college or department of education.
- *Review*—The mission statement and goals should be regularly reviewed and updated as needed.
- *Compliance*—Goal setting should be in compliance with this document of CMC guidelines and appropriate accreditation standards.

Budget

The CMC should have a budget that adequately addresses its needs.

- *Funding responsibility*—The CMC director and the administrator(s) responsible for budgeting the unit to which the CMC administratively reports should jointly plan the CMC budget.
- *Funding level*—The CMC budget should be adequate to ensure compliance with the state department of education and other accrediting bodies' standards, college/department of education program needs, as well as particular guidelines in this document in the areas of collection, facilities, services, and personnel. It should be reflective of the college of education or department of education enrollment.
- *Funding source*—The CMC budget should be funded as part of the unit under which the CMC is administered. This does not preclude additional funding from other units or sources.
- *Administration*—The CMC budget should be administered by the CMC director.

About the guidelines

Curriculum materials centers have been present in libraries and in departments or colleges of education as resources to support educators since the early part of the twentieth century. Calls for standards for CMCs have been made almost from those beginnings. Since these centers have developed from a variety of origins and may serve many different groups and needs, providing guidelines for such centers has been a challenge.

In 1999, ACRL's Education and Behavioral Sciences Section (EBSS) suggested the formation of an ad hoc committee to develop standards or guidelines for curriculum materials centers. An informal survey of state education agencies and accrediting bodies was conducted by the Curriculum Materials Committee to determine if such standards

already existed. None were found. In 2000 the committee was formed and charged with "developing published standards or guidelines for curriculum materials centers in the areas of, but not limited to, collection, services, management, budget, personnel, and facilities."

These guidelines were reviewed by the ACRL Standards and Accreditation Committee and approved by the ACRL Board of Directors at the 2003 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia.

EBSS Ad hoc Curriculum Materials Centers Standards/Guidelines Committee: Ann Brownson and Gary Lare, co-chairs; Beth Broyles, John Hickok, William Meloy, Elizabeth Raum, Yvonne Roux, and Dorothy Schleicher, members.

Personnel

The CMC staff should include a director and support staff sufficient to maintain the CMC and all services.

- *Director*—The CMC director should have a master's degree from an ALA-accredited program or equivalent and have preparation in curriculum, teaching methodology, media, and technology. The director should be assigned no less than half time to the management of the CMC.

- *Support staff*—The CMC should have sufficient support staff to maintain the CMC and all its functions. The support staff may consist of paraprofessionals or clerical aides, with at least one being a permanent staff member, and graduate assistants and student assistants. Support staff should have sufficient training to provide a basic level of assistance to CMC users or refer users, as appropriate.

- *Continuing education*—The CMC director should have regular opportunities for continuing education so that the CMC reflects current trends in curriculum materials and technology. Continuing education opportunities should extend to support staff as needed.

Facilities

The CMC should be a distinct facility that provides for effective use of its resources.

- *Location*—The curriculum materials center should be located in proximity to the education holdings of the college or university library or it should be in the building that houses the college/department of education. The location should be

completely accessible as detailed in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

- *Hours*—The CMC should, if housed in the college or university library, be open the hours of that facility's operation. If housed separately, or with the college/department of education, it should be open enough hours to meet the needs of its users. Evening and weekend hours should be included, if needed.

- *Size*—The size of the public area of the facility should be adequate to comfortably hold all materials, associated equipment, user study areas, and workstations. Room for collection growth should be available. Staff workspace should be adequate to complete work activities efficiently and effectively, including technical library functions, when necessary.

- *Seating*—There should be enough seating in the CMC to allow users to work individually or collaboratively. Sufficient seating should be available to accommodate the students in an average-sized class in the teacher education program. A variety of seating types may be available, including, but not limited to, study tables, carrels, and lounge seating. If the CMC will be used by small children, appropriately sized seating for them may also be available.

- *Maintenance*—The facility should be maintained in such a way as to ensure the security and safety of materials, staff, and users. There should be an adequate number of electrical connections and computer ports to meet user and staff needs.

- *Classroom*—The CMC should have its own classroom or have a convenient space available for for-

mal instruction. This classroom, or its equivalent, should have adequate seating for the average-sized class in the teacher education program. It should be equipped with technology appropriate for demonstration (and, if possible, hands-on practice) of electronic and media resources.

Publicity

The CMC should have a plan for publicizing the CMC, its services, and its collection. Publicity should be directed toward all CMC user groups and should include both formal and informal means.

- *Web site*—A Web site should be used to publicize the CMC, and should be linked to and from the library site and the education site. The Web site should include, but not be limited to, the resources and services of the CMC and links to appropriate curriculum materials sites, such as teaching activities, standards, children's literature, publishers, etc.

- *Printed brochures/guides*—CMC brochures/guides should be available in the library publicity area, the college/department of education office area, and appropriate distance locations.

- *Informal campus contacts*—The CMC director should make use of faculty liaison activities mentioned in this document to informally publicize the CMC.

- *School contacts*—The CMC should be promoted to appropriate personnel in local schools/districts.

Services

Reference

The CMC staff should provide reference service to its users.

- *Delivery of service*—Reference service should be available during all hours the CMC is open, and may include face-to-face, telephone, e-mail, or other appropriate methods of delivery.

- *Staff*—CMC staff should be trained to conduct an effective reference interview. They should also have knowledge of the CMC's collection and of external resources in order to provide both ready-reference and in-depth research assistance. CMC student assistants should be knowledgeable about the CMC collection and be trained to provide basic assistance. A professional librarian located in an adjacent area may be called on if the curriculum materials center is not otherwise staffed.

Instruction

The CMC should have a program for instruction in the use of curriculum-related resources.

- *Collaboration*—The instruction program should be developed in collaboration with education faculty, librarians and others, as appropriate.

- *Setting*—Instruction may take place within the CMC, in the classroom, or in a virtual environment.

- *Delivery*—Instruction should include all appropriate techniques such as guides, lectures, Web pages, tutorials, bibliographies, workshops, orientations, tours, and point of need instruction.

- *Content*—Instruction should include research strategies and the selection and evaluation of resources, as well as the use of the CMC collection and services, and instructional technology.

Faculty liaison

The CMC staff should seek out and maintain professional contact with teacher education instructional units and with individual faculty members.

- *Faculty contact*—Faculty contact should be maintained through both formal and informal means, including, but not limited to, telephone, e-mail, attendance at faculty meetings, instructional sessions, and specialized programming.

- *Accrediting bodies*—CMC staff should prepare documentation for visiting accrediting organizations as needed and requested.

- *Collection development*—In collaboration with faculty, CMC staff should develop the CMC collection to meet the instructional and curriculum materials research needs of both faculty and students.

Outreach

The CMC should have a program for serving off-campus users.

- *Collaboration*—The off-campus program should be developed in collaboration with off-campus faculty, librarians and others, as appropriate.

- *Users*—Off-campus users should include distance learning faculty and students, whether courses are offered in an off-campus classroom, through teleconferencing, online, or by other means. Other off-campus users may include students from other universities, P-12 educators, those who home-school, and other community members.

- *Services*—Services offered should be equivalent to services at the main campus and should include reference, instruction, and access to CMC materials.

- *Delivery*—Off-campus services should be provided by various means, as appropriate. Electronic means are particularly well suited to off-campus situations and should be used to their best advantage. These include, but are not limited to: Web pages, CMC online catalog, online

CMC instruction, e-mail/ mailing lists, online discussion groups, and access/subscriptions to online databases. Other means should be used as appropriate and may include librarian visits to off-campus classrooms, interlibrary loan, document delivery, and agreements with other libraries/CMCs.

Production

The CMC may provide modern, high-quality equipment and supplies to meet user needs for production of instructional materials.

- **Equipment**—The equipment provided for production should allow users to create instructional materials similar to those currently being used in schools, utilizing both traditional and emerging technologies. The equipment should be kept updated, well maintained, and in sufficient quantity to meet typical demand levels.

- **Supplies**—Supplies necessary for production of instructional materials should be provided to users, either for free or on a cost-recovery basis and in sufficient quantity to meet demands.

- **Assistance**—CMC staff should provide ideas and basic assistance to users, although the responsibility for creating the materials remains with the users.

Collection

General characteristics

The CMC collection supports the college or university's education curriculum with an organized collection of current and high-quality educational materials created for use with children from preschool through grade 12, and adult education materials, when appropriate.

- **Selection**—The selection of curriculum materials should be the responsibility of a professional librarian specifically charged with building the curriculum materials collection.

- **Collection development policy**—The CMC should have a written collection development policy, as described in the policy section of these guidelines.

- **Organization**—The CMC collection should be organized in accordance with current national standards and practices, as described in the access section of these guidelines.

- **Location**—All of the collection should be available in the CMC.

- **Size**—The size of the CMC collection should be sufficient to meet the needs of its users, as well as to ensure compliance with the state department of education's standards.

- **Format**—These resources should represent a variety of formats including print, non-print, and electronic.

- **Funding level**—Funding level for collection materials should reflect the enrollment of education majors and pre-service teachers in comparison to other majors within the institution.

Collection categories

The CMC should collect materials in a variety of categories, including, but not limited to, textbooks, curriculum guides, children's literature, professional literature, reference materials, education periodicals, media materials, educational tests and measures, and Web sites.

- **Textbooks**—Current textbooks in all major curricular subjects and in levels P–12 should be collected. Several publishers should be represented for each grade level in major curriculum areas. This collection may reflect the texts used in the public schools in the region, and schools in which the teacher education students receive field placements. The scope and depth of each subject area should depend upon each institution's needs.

- **Curriculum guides/courses of study**—Curriculum guides, preschool through grade 12, should be collected annually on the local, state, and national levels. All major curriculum areas should be represented, with emphasis on the certification programs of the college/department of education of the institution.

- **Children's and young adult literature**—This collection should include fiction, nonfiction, picture books, folk and fairy tales, plays, and poetry appropriate for preschool through grade 12. The collection should be consistent with the recommendations of standard reviewing tools and include annual acquisition of award books, such as Caldecott, Newbery, and Coretta Scott King.

- **Teaching activity materials**—Professional teaching materials that provide ideas and activities for lesson planning and curricular development should be collected. All major curriculum areas and grade levels should be represented in accordance with the needs of the college/department of education.

- **Reference materials**—Current reference materials, in print and electronic formats, should be acquired. These include materials related to other resources in the CMC (children's literature indexes and bibliographies, educational software directories, etc.), as well as reference works intended for use by children and young adults.

- **P–12 magazines**—Magazines intended for use by children and young adults should be included. Professional education periodicals that provide teaching ideas and review curriculum materials, educational media, and children's and young adult literature may also be represented.

- *Media materials*—A variety of formats, in both traditional and emerging technologies, should be acquired annually. A range of curriculum concepts, skills, topics, and trends in P-12 curricula should be represented. Materials collected may include instructional games, posters, kits, transparencies, models, flat pictures, videorecordings, sound recordings, computer-based instructional materials, and miscellaneous instructional materials such as puppets, manipulatives, rock collections, etc.

- *Tests*—Educational tests and measures that support education courses may be collected.

- *Web sites*—The CMC Web site should include links to the vast array of online resources available to teaching professionals for lesson planning and curricular development.

Collection development policy

The CMC should provide a written collection development policy that guides the selection and acquisition of materials.

- *Mission statement*—The policy should reflect and support the mission of the curriculum materials center.

- *Users*—The policy should include a statement concerning those served by the curriculum materials center and the extent of that service.

- *Collaboration*—The policy should be developed in collaboration with the education faculty.

- *Objectives*—The policy should identify the scope and objectives of the collection.

- *Format*—The policy should identify the formats in which materials are to be collected.

- *Tools and criteria*—The policy should identify selection tools, criteria, and processes to be used in choosing materials.

- *Categories and balance*—The policy should set forth the categories in which materials will be collected, such as textbooks, media materials, periodicals, etc., and give guidance for allocating budget resources among the categories.

- *Compliance*—The policy should address compliance with state standards and appropriate treatment of gender, racial, ethnic, and cultural issues. The policy may address maintenance of a collection of less appropriate materials for research and teaching purposes

- *Maintenance and weeding*—The policy should address regular maintenance of the collection and weeding, as appropriate.

Access—Physical Organization

The CMC collection should be displayed in an organized manner that makes it easily accessible to users.

- *Arrangement*—The collection should be arranged in the CMC in a systematic pattern with some mate-

rials inter-shelved while others are shelved as distinct collections within the CMC.

- *Access*—The collection should be organized in such a way as to make it physically and easily accessible and ADA compliant. All collection materials, except reserve or historic, should be openly available rather than remotely stored.

- *Storage*—The shelving should be appropriate for the various types, sizes, and shapes of materials and sufficient to accommodate all items.

- *Signage*—Adequate and appropriate signage should be clearly posted and visible to direct CMC users to the various areas of the collection.

Processing

The CMC collection should be processed to promote easy access.

- *Preservation*—The collection items should be processed with appropriate reinforcement so that the items are preserved for multiple circulation transactions, yet convenient enough for easy access.

- *Integrity of unit*—Packaging of multiple-piece units should be sturdy and easily maintained to keep the various pieces intact; the multiple-piece containers should be labeled with numbers and types of items contained within; when appropriate, individual pieces should be marked with identifying call numbers so that they can be readily returned to their appropriate container when separated.

- *Item labeling*—Collection items should be clearly and consistently labeled to promote easy retrieval from shelving areas.

- *Security*—Theft detection devices should be used whenever possible.

Circulation policy

The CMC should provide a written circulation policy.

- *User groups*—The policy should identify the various user groups served, noting restrictions and privileges for each group.

- *Circulation periods*—The policy should identify circulation periods and restrictions for each type of material.

- *Penalties*—The policy should state the penalties, if any, that are imposed.

- *Other policies*—The policy should state other regulations, including, but not limited to, those concerning holds, recalls, interlibrary loan policies, and distance learning students.

- *Automation*—The policy should support or encourage use of an automated circulation system.

Equipment

The CMC should provide updated, appropriate equipment in close proximity to the CMC non-print materials and in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of users to access all of the various non-print materials available in the collection.

- *Appropriateness*—Appropriate equipment should be provided so all types of non-print media in the CMC collection can be accessed.

- *Quantity*—A sufficient quantity of equipment should be maintained to meet typical demand levels.

- *Location*—The equipment should be in close proximity to the CMC non-print media collection so that access is convenient.

- *Maintenance*—The equipment should be regularly maintained and kept in good working condition, with a budget and technical support to ensure this.

- *Updating*—The equipment should be regularly updated to meet the needs of new technologies.

Access—Bibliographic

Cataloging

The CMC collection should be cataloged in accordance with current national standards, including full subject access.

- *Description and subjects*—The physical description of items should follow currently accepted models (i.e., AACR2R) to include uniform information (title, author, etc.) and subject headings.

- *Classification*—The call numbers on items should follow a nationally accepted classification scheme (e.g., Dewey, LC); the choice of scheme and call numbers can be tailored to fit the CMC's needs. The CMC collection should be cataloged in a timely fashion, with sufficient levels of support.

- *Cataloger support*—Because CMC materials often require longer cataloging time, a model timetable and dedicated time/librarian should be provided for cataloging.

- *Equipment supplies*—Sufficient equipment and supplies for cataloging and processing should be maintained.

Indexing

Bibliographic and holdings information about the CMC collection should exist on the same retrieval mechanism as other library materials.

- *Electronic and remote access*—The CMC (and its parent institution) should have, or strive to have, electronic and remote access to the collection, with sufficient terminals in the CMC.

- *Indexes for uncataloged items*—The CMC shall have indexes, preferably electronic, to access non-cataloged items (e.g., curriculum guides on microfiche, etc.).

Evaluation

The CMC should have a plan in place for evaluating the achievement of its mission and goals.

- *Plan*—The plan should focus on how well the CMC is meeting its goals and objectives relative to its collection, administration, facilities, and service.

- *Frequency*—The evaluation should take place on a periodic basis.

- *Methodology*—The method used could be accomplished through focus groups, surveys, questionnaires, or other evaluation strategies and should include participation by all user groups. (See Appendix I)

- *Resources*—A variety of published materials related to the management of CMCs are available and should be consulted regularly. (See Appendix II)

- *Results*—The results of the evaluation should be recorded and used in reviewing the viability of the current goals and objectives with changes being made where appropriate.

Appendix I

Adequate and appropriate documentation is vitally important to evaluation of the CMC. Following are examples of types of documentation that may be gathered to show compliance with the guidelines: budget reports, calendars, collection development policy, floor plans, inventories, policies and procedures, publication examples (handouts/bibliographies/pathfinders), publicity materials, schedules, statistics: reference statistics, user statistics, usage statistics, Web sites.

Appendix II

Bibliography of resources that are recommended for consultation by CMC directors.

Curriculum materials center collection development policy. Developed by two joint subcommittees of the Problems of Access and Control of Education Materials Committee, Beth G. Anderson, chair, and Curriculum Materials Committee, Virginia Nordstrom, chair, of the Education and Behavioral Sciences Section. Chicago, IL: Association of College and Research Libraries, American Library Association, 1993.

Directory of curriculum materials centers (electronic resource). Compiled by the Curriculum Materials Centers Directory Revision Ad Hoc Committee of the Education and Behavioral Sciences Section; edited by Fred Olive. 5th ed. Chicago, IL: Association of College and Research Libraries, American Library Association, 2001. <http://acrl.telusys.com/cm/index.html>.

A guide to the management of curriculum materials centers for the 21st century: The promise and the challenge. Prepared by the Ad Hoc Management of Curriculum Materials Committee, Education and Behavioral Sciences Section; edited by Jo Ann Carr. Chicago, IL: Association of College and Research Libraries, American Library Association, 2001.

Gary Lare. *Acquiring and organizing curriculum materials.* Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1997. ■