

Holistic Collection Development for Philosophy

Introduction

Our project is designed to assist the new Philosophy subject liaison to meet the information needs of library users in that subject area. Our project comprised three separate but related components:

- Assessment of current Philosophy collection
- Analysis of user needs
- Revision of collection development policy

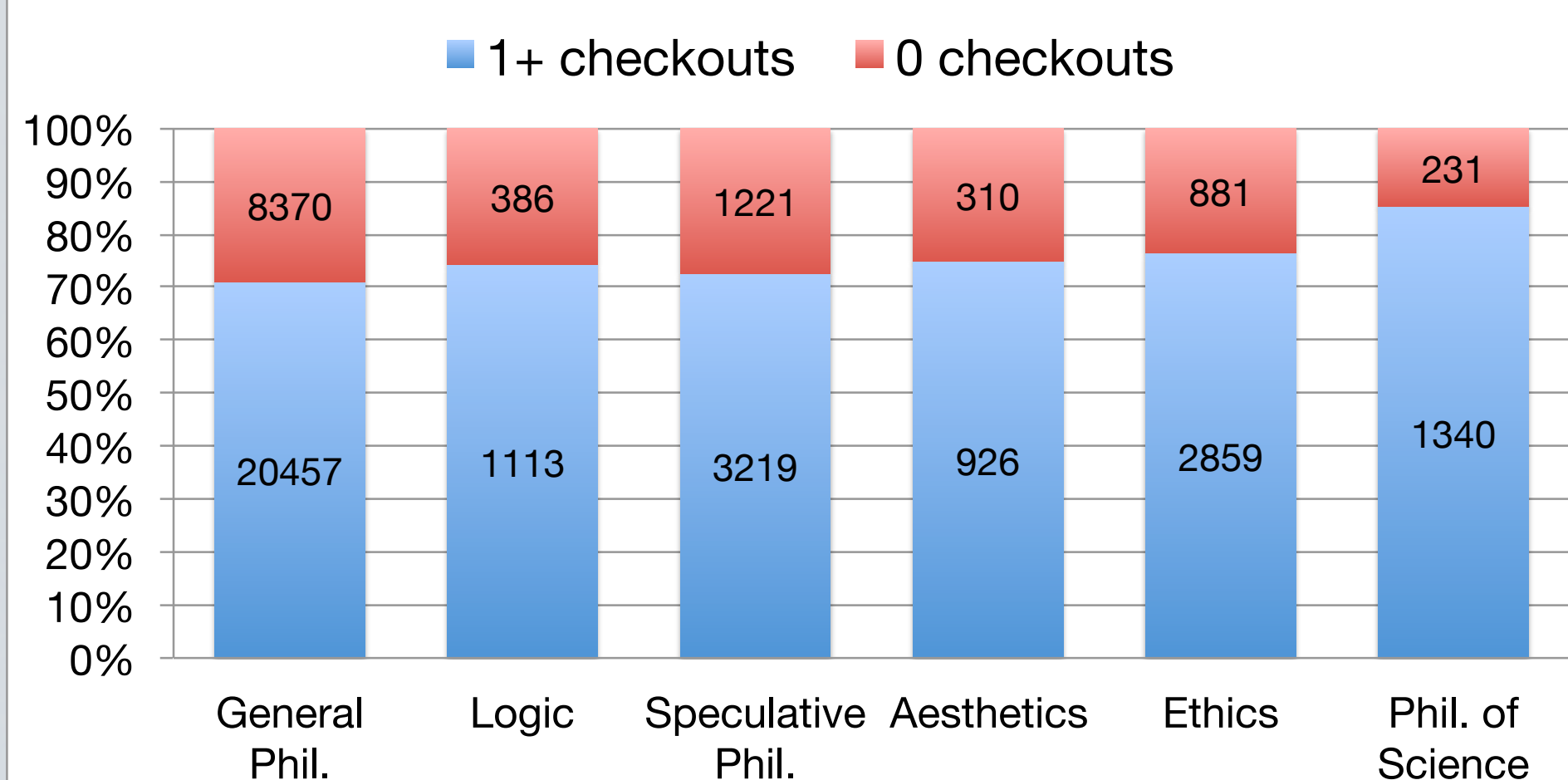
Our policy will allow the Libraries to better manage this portion of their collection and thus serve their users efficiently and effectively. Our project may possibly serve as a template for future collection development projects at the Libraries.

Collection Assessment

Our assessment was based on circulation data from the Millennium ILS, covering January 1993 to June 2013.

- We identified patterns in the types of books that have never been checked out.
 - Some outmoded areas of the collection, such as Communist Philosophy, suffered from low checkout numbers.
 - Foreign languages, especially Slavic languages, were highly likely to have 0 checkouts.
- Emerging subject areas, such as Philosophy of Science and Feminist Studies, had relatively higher rates of circulation.

Circulation Data by Subject Area



Acknowledgments

Special thanks to Faye Christenberry, Helene Williams, Jackie Belanger, Corey Murata, and Steve Hiller for their support and guidance.

User Needs Survey

We surveyed Philosophy graduate students and faculty members with an anonymous eight question survey.

Overall Impressions:

- Comments verified collection assessment data that foreign language materials were rarely used.
- Concerns on upcoming PhilPapers switch to a paid resource.
- Requests for more access to electronic materials.

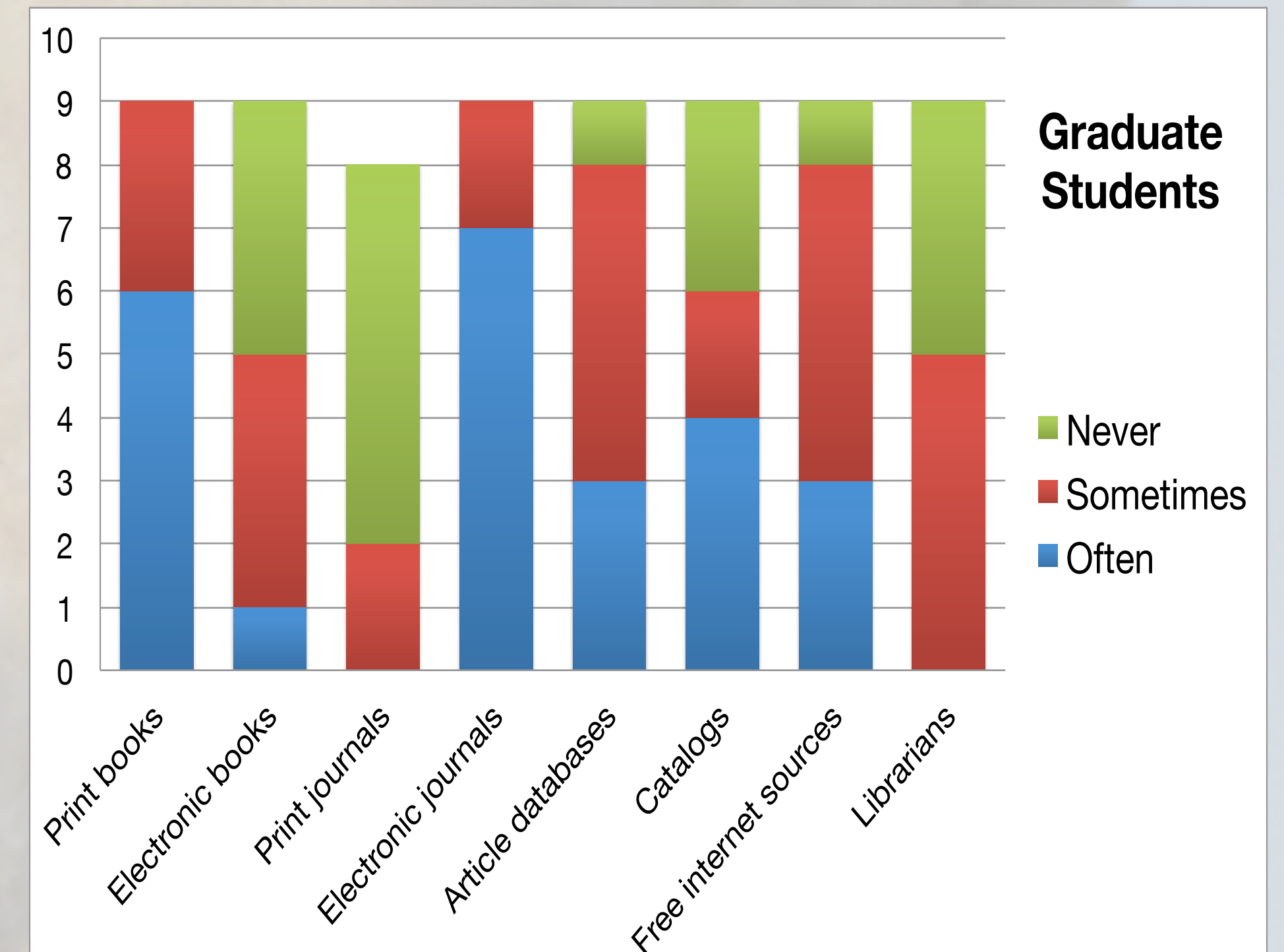
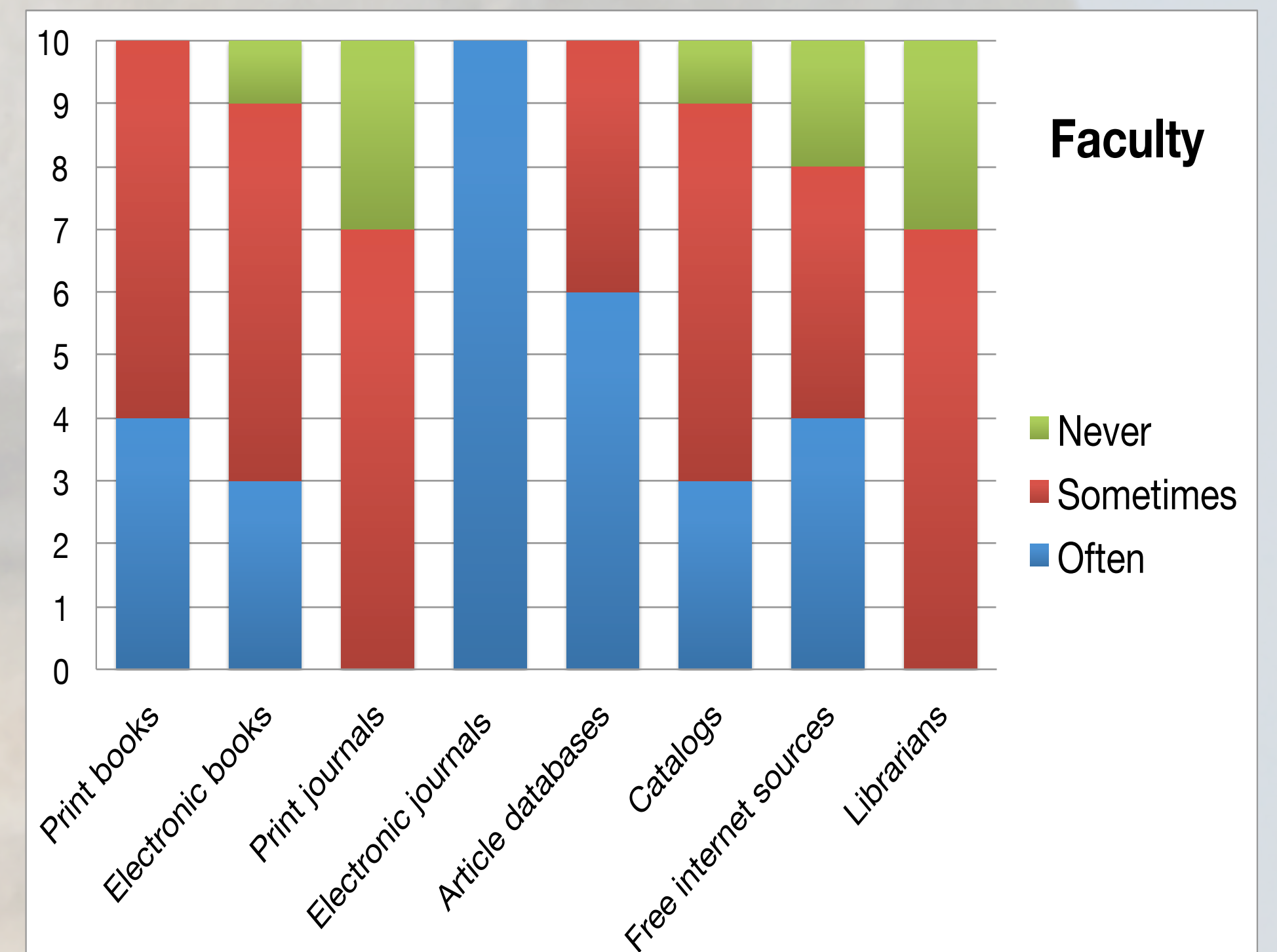
Comments:

“My perception is that the library is light in journals in political philosophy and environmental ethics, especially when it comes to electronic access.”

“By far the best online resource in philosophy is philpapers.org.”

“Given that [the Philosophy] department emphasizes that we are benefitted by how much teaching we do, it seems that we should have electronic access to journals about teaching philosophy.”

How often do you use the following library resources for your research or teaching?



Policy and Implementation

The policy that we started this project with had not been updated for 30 years. The Philosophy department's focus has shifted, necessitating an update to the collection's scope. There has also been a growth in the availability of electronic resources. We updated the policy to reflect these changes and adjusted the foreign language purchasing guidelines. Additionally, we created a public facing version of the policy that will be hosted using the Libraries' LibGuides platform.

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Philosophy Guide

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About This Guide

Subject Definition

Philosophy is the study of thought concerning nature, metaphysics, ethics, aesthetics, being, knowledge, logic, and all manner of theory.

Subject Classification