

COLLABORATIVE ADAPTATION OF PRESERVATION PROCESSES: Redefining the Workflow for Circulating Books

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Introduction

Colorado State University Libraries has developed a new method for treating damaged books from the circulating collections. Prompted by organizational change and the desire for preservation procedures to reflect collection development priorities which favor the acquisition of electronic resources, the workflow incorporates information from multiple sources to determine the most appropriate conservation action for each volume. It also serves as a tool for collection development by identifying electronic versions and updated editions of books. This process enables the library to make strategic decisions about the conservation of its print collections, enhance its electronic collections, and to more efficiently use limited resources.

E-Resource Development

The new workflow integrates e-resources into the preservation process for circulating books. Damage to these materials is usually identified following patron use, and this demonstrated value makes them good candidates for acquisition as an e-book or updated version. Lab staff search for electronic formats and new editions selectively, depending on the level of damage to the original book and circulation data. Identified e-books and updated editions are forwarded to Acquisitions for purchase, and the original volume is repaired or withdrawn.

Evaluation Criteria

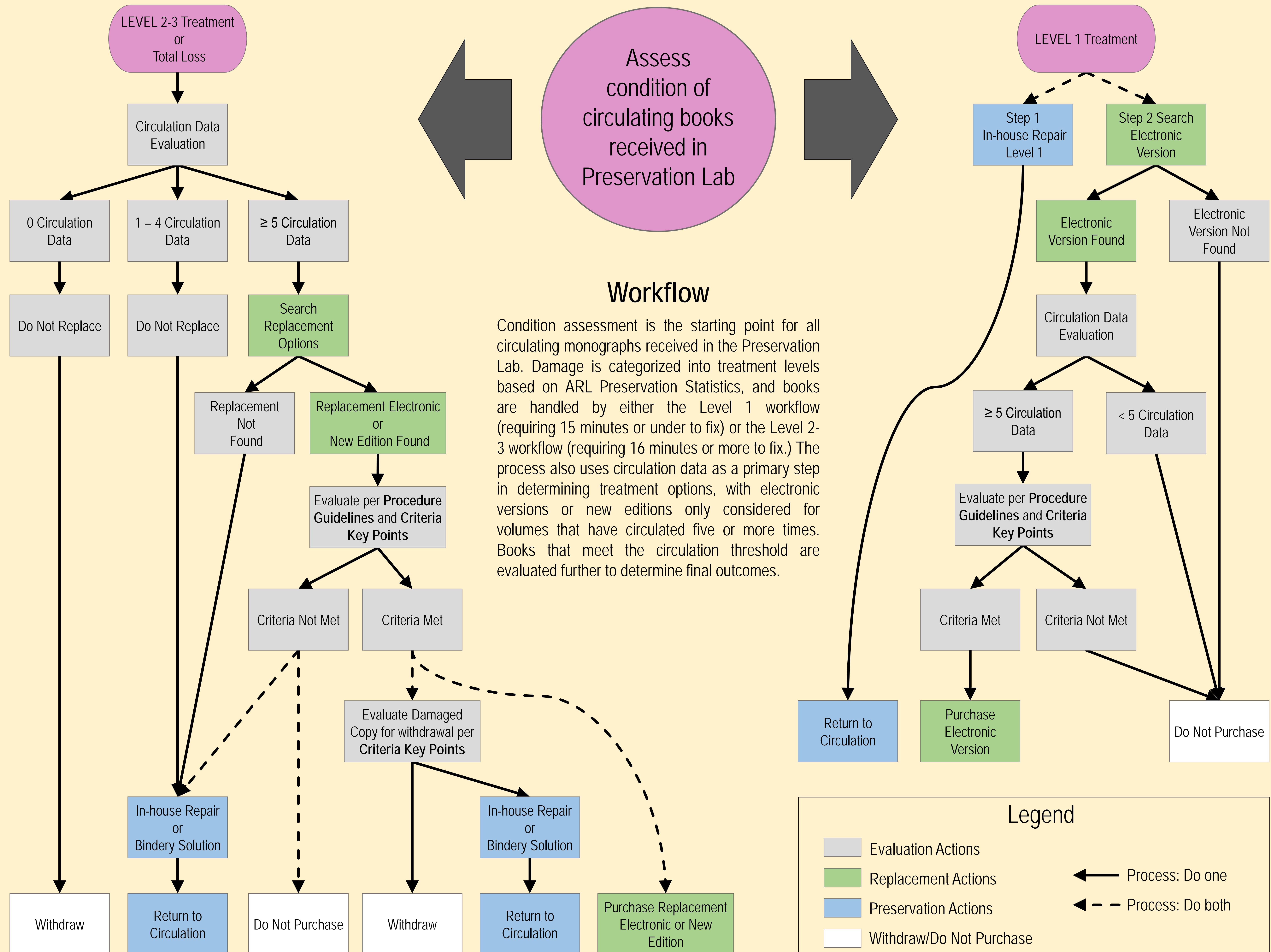
Lab staff assess each damaged book and its preservation options using a series of steps outlined in the workflow, along with additional factors called the *Procedure Guidelines* and *Criteria Key Points*. Criteria under consideration include, among others:

- Level of physical damage
- Circulation data
- Library & consortia holdings
- Disciplinary preferences in information use
- E-book availability on various platforms
- Cost considerations

Repair & Bindery

Splitting the workflows for Level 1 and Level 2-3 repairs maximizes the efficient use of resources by ensuring that lightly damaged materials are quickly repaired and returned to circulation. Repairs for books with Level 2-3 damage fluctuate between in-house repairs and commercial bindery options depending on variables such as:

- Collections budget priorities
- Staffing resources
- Volume of incoming materials
- Complexity level of repairs



Collaboration

The collaborative efforts of several library departments contributed to the evolution of the workflow. The first version of the workflow incorporated input from CSU's subject librarians to determine important factors for retaining or withdrawing print materials, such as differences in information use by discipline and which materials had time-limited value. Acquisitions provided guidance on the e-book vendors and platforms to consider. When it later became apparent that the budget would not support the number of materials being identified for purchase through the process, Preservation, Collection Management, and Acquisitions collaborated to alter the workflow in a manner that accommodated both the budget and the goal of growing the Libraries' e-book collections. These ongoing efforts have been integral to improving the efficiency and outcomes of the workflow.

Conclusion

The development of this workflow has led to improvements in the overall quality and usefulness of the CSU Libraries' collection through physical repairs, purchases of new editions, and expanded access to e-books. The Libraries adapted the workflow to meet budgetary challenges by using a combination of continuous evaluation and interdepartmental collaboration, resulting in an innovative method for managing print assets and incorporating electronic resources into the preservation process.