

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Statement of Freedom of Inquiry

All resources selected for inclusion, whether purchased, donated, or free of charge, must be clearly related to the general educational mission and stated goals of The University of Memphis. The University Libraries subscribe to and act in accordance with the Library Bill of Rights, as developed by the American Library Association, and support the principles of freedom of inquiry. Because the University of Memphis is dedicated to the principle of unrestricted inquiry into and scholarly examination of all ideas and current knowledge relevant to any discipline, the staff of the University Libraries take very seriously its efforts to assure patrons that no form of censorship, whether based on personal or ideological bias, will be allowed to influence the development of the collection.

Overview

Collection development is the process whereby decisions are made concerning additions to and deletions from the University Libraries' collections, encompassing resources in all available formats to support the undergraduate and graduate curriculum of the University of Memphis. Periodic and systematic review of the process is held annually to examine the relevance and timeliness of this policy.

Authority to make purchases for the library collection is specifically delegated to the University Libraries. All the documents created in this process are public records and are subject to regular examinations by Internal Auditing and unannounced audits by State of Tennessee auditors. The department maintains all necessary files and records to provide acceptable audit trails for each transaction. While these records are public documents, Acquisitions staff members are expected to defer questions from auditors, reporters, or other outside persons to the Head of Acquisitions, Associate Dean of Libraries, or Dean of Libraries, unless otherwise instructed by one of these administrators. Likewise, questions from faculty, students, or outside parties regarding fund allocations, prices of individual titles ordered, and other related concerns are to be referred to these same administrators.

Librarians (and other designated staff) have been assigned as liaisons to one or more academic department(s). The departments, in turn, have designated one from their faculty ranks to serve as the library representative. The library liaison is expected to establish and maintain a working relationship with the library rep and the other faculty in the department(s) to which he/she is assigned. The liaison is expected to become familiar with the needs of the department(s) and to use that knowledge in decisions about the collection. He/she will also be expected to be familiar with the libraries' collections that are relevant to his/her department(s) and to use that information in his/her dealings with the faculty.

Under this model, collection development is a shared responsibility. The library faculty works with the classroom faculty to build collections that meet the needs of the students and faculty of the institution. Classroom faculty is encouraged to make recommendations for purchases. The library faculty takes the lead in managing the collections, maintaining overall knowledge of the collection, and evaluating that segment of the collection in relation to other library collections. It is the responsibility of the library faculty to make sure that the collection grows in accordance with collection development policies, which have yet to be developed. They take the lead in ensuring balance in the collection and making sure that gaps and weaknesses in the collection are addressed.

The liaison receives purchase requests from the faculty in the assigned departments. He/she brings specific resources to the attention of the classroom faculty. He/she works with departments as they prepare for accreditation reviews, program evaluations or new course development. He/she might provide discipline specific research assistance to faculty and graduate students in the subject of his/her specialty. The liaison keeps the department(s) informed of library news and other developments. He/she is also responsible for working with classroom faculty in making decisions about what should be withdrawn for the collection. The liaison will initiate action when lost items are to be replaced, and when preservation care is needed for materials.

Requests for additions to the periodical holdings of the University Libraries are encouraged under these same guidelines, provided that the Faculty Representative is clear that the current policy requires that a journal title(s) of equal or greater price must be dropped before a new title can be added. This request must be received in sufficient time to revise the subscription status of the affected titles, so it may be up to one year before the University Libraries receive the new title.

Once the fitness of an item is assured, the Library Liaison will fill out a Request Form for the item, taking care to provide accurate information in the fields for ISBN/ISSN, publisher, format, price, and edition. To evenly distribute ordering of resources and ensure that funds are spent or encumbered before the end of the fiscal year, a calendar of request submission deadlines is established.

Selection Criteria for Library Resources

Duplicate titles: to ensure the greatest value from the funds allocated for library materials, the University Libraries do not normally purchase multiple copies of a work. Except for reference works, the purchase of the same work for different branches or departments of the University Libraries is discouraged.

Textbooks, workbooks, or laboratory manuals: such items will not be purchased unless justification is presented to the appropriate Library Liaison and/or Collection Development Librarian for consideration, in which case they will determine any exceptions.

Subscription sets/services or individual titles of exceptional cost: these will not be purchased except following consultation with the Faculty Representative who has presented justification that meets the approval of the Library Liaison and Collection Development.

Unique Classes of Materials and Collections

Government Publications: the University Libraries house the regional depository for federal and state documents in Tennessee. While a major requirement in the acquisition of government documents is relevance to the curriculum, there is also the charge to meet needs of the general public. The Head of Government Publications, in consultation with teaching and library faculty, selects resources; further relevant information is supplied by the Superintendent of Documents and the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications.

Special Collections : as the manuscript depository and rare books room for the University of Memphis Libraries, Special Collections includes personal and organizational papers, books, maps, photographs, oral histories, and some University archives. The largest portion of these materials form the Mississippi Valley Collection, which focuses on the history and culture of the region surrounding Memphis, particularly west Tennessee, north Mississippi, east Arkansas, and southeast Missouri. Topical areas with strong holdings include African American history, the Civil War, and American popular entertainment, especially the early 20th-century circus.

Gifts

A complimentary copy of an individual book or series of books is solicited only when it is a publication known to be free, or a publication believed to be available without charge. Complimentary subscriptions for periodicals are requested only through the Collection Management Department [formerly Periodicals] and should be directed to the Collection Management for processing. Periodicals is responsible for acknowledgement, checking-in, and claiming.

In all instances, the ultimate decision to accept or reject gifts rests with the University Libraries. Except as authority has been specifically delegated, no commitments should be made without consultation. When

approached by a potential donor, University Libraries personnel are directed to secure the donor's signature on a copy of the Gift Policy, indicating the donor's awareness and compliance with terms. University Libraries personnel will not give evaluations or appraisals to any donor for any gift.

Departmental Policy Statements

These statements will describe existing strengths of collections, current levels of collection activity, and desirable levels of collecting to meet user needs. They will ultimately serve as planning documents and working tools for selectors, so the policies will be drafted in a cooperative effort between Faculty Representative and Library Liaisons. The first step will be the analysis of their respective subject(s) to include (but not be limited to) a brief history of the program area for context, purpose of the collections, kinds of instructional and research programs and user needs supported, general subject boundaries, forms of material collected or excluded, language, geographical, and chronological parameters, storage and weeding criteria, and resource sharing agreements which complement the collecting emphasis.

The analyses will be formulated in collection development statements for each subject and specialized format. As part of the analysis of subject boundaries, criteria for de-selection should be described if relevant. For instance, in some subject areas, older editions or resources that do not circulate may be candidates for discard. The Faculty Representative and Library Liaison will present collection development policies to Collection Development and, upon review, the policy will be submitted to the Dean of Libraries for final approval. The end result of this multi-step process will be a comprehensive statement for the University Libraries that will provide an in-depth survey of the strengths and limitations of the overall collection development program.

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Please send questions comments/suggestions to
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