

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

UAB LIBRARIES, UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM, NOVEMBER 2022

PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE POLICY

The purpose of this Collection Development Policy (“Policy”) is to provide principles and guidelines for UAB Libraries to follow when selecting, acquiring, and evaluating library materials in print and non-print formats. The primary goal of the UAB Libraries’ collection development and management efforts is to meet the curricular, research, and scholarly needs of UAB students, faculty, and staff.

There are more specific collection development policies for the Reynolds-Finley Historical Library, the University Archives, and the Alabama Museum of the Health Sciences. Liaison librarians may also establish individual discipline or department collection development policies that provide more detailed and nuanced accounts of collection development practices.

VALUES

UAB Libraries, as a leader among Alabama academic and medical libraries and archives, are committed to the values of diversity, equitable access to information, excellence in service, community collaboration, academic integrity, materials stewardship, and respect for all users.

GENERAL SELECTION GUIDELINES

General selection criteria

General selection criteria may include, but are not limited to, the following considerations: relevance to the UAB curriculum and usefulness to the University audience; timeliness of content and suitability of content to the available format(s); strength of holdings on the same or similar subject; price and relative cost of material in relation to collections budget; holdings of other libraries in appropriate resource-sharing networks; and frequency of document delivery, interlibrary loan, or similar requests on same or similar subject.

Format

The UAB Libraries acquire content in the most appropriate format, taking into consideration the available budget, the effectiveness of the format type, and the format most useful for library users. There is no explicit preference for print over digital material, although certain types of materials (e.g. reference materials) and disciplines tend to lend themselves better to the digital environment.

Hardback vs. Paperback

When a title is available in both hardback and paperback format, the hardback format is generally preferred. However, if the price difference between the two formats is significant, the selection of the paperback may be warranted.

Language

Preference is given in all selections to English editions or to those works translated into English. Exceptions include, but are not limited to, works intended for the world language and culture programs. Refer to the subject collection policies for information pertaining to language coverage for each discipline.

Duplication

In general, multiple print copies of materials are not added to the collection, whether through purchase or by gift, unless the item is heavily used, has a special value to the UAB community, or multiple copies are required to meet curricular needs. E-book content should not duplicate print holdings although print and electronic versions of the same title may be acquired to meet demand or patron preference at the discretion of Liaison Librarians. Exceptions to this general rule must be clearly stated when orders for duplicate materials are placed.

Textbooks

With the exception of materials for the Juvenile Textbook Collection, the acquisition of textbooks is strongly discouraged. Purchases of textbooks may be allowed at the specific request of an instructor or when the work itself is of a seminal, historical, or other significant nature.

Serials / journals

Electronic journals are preferred over print journals. Backfiles for existing print journals are encouraged to provide better access to content.

Replacement

Lost or damaged items will be replaced if they are considered appropriate to the library collection and replacement is allowed by the budget. Replacement decisions are made by Liaison Librarians.

Collection Evaluation and Deselection

Criteria for deselection (weeding) of print or other non-electronic materials are generally the same as those used in selection: physical condition and age of the item, obsolescence of information (in general or as it relates to current curricular and research needs), circulation and reshelving counts, number of copies in the collection, coverage by other material in the collection, availability from other libraries, and other relevant factors. Deselection decisions are made at the discretion of Liaison Librarians.

Preservation

Preservation of library material may be necessary when the physical integrity of the item has been compromised or the content is important to the mission of the UAB Libraries or the University. When a damaged item cannot be repaired, liaison librarians are notified and should

determine whether the item should be discarded and/or replaced, returned to the shelf in its current condition, or transferred to the limited circulation collection.

Donations / gifts

Gifts of materials that significantly enhance the strength of the libraries' collections and support the instructional and research programs of the University of Alabama at Birmingham are welcome. Unsolicited gifts are typically not accepted, and the UAB Libraries reserve the right to dispose of unsolicited gifts in any manner deemed appropriate. The Reynolds-Finley Historical Library, the Alabama Museum of the Health Sciences, and the UAB Archives maintain separate gift policies and procedures based on the nature of their collections.

Faculty works

The Library will purchase monographs written, edited, compiled, translated, or illustrated by UAB faculty subject to review by Liaison Librarians and availability of funds.

(updated 11.3.22)