

Lee and Jim Vann Library

“The library collection should be continually evaluated against standard bibliographies and evolving institutional requirements for purposes both of adding new titles and identifying for withdrawal those titles which have outlived their usefulness. No title should be retained for which a clear purpose is not evident in terms of academic programs or extra-curricular enrichment.” (Standards for College Libraries, 1986: approved by the Association of College and Research Libraries Board of Directors, 1986.)

Consistent with the standards adopted by the ACRL and the USF Collection Development Policy, the Library will maintain an ongoing evaluation of the collection that will provide for the removal of outdated and worn-out materials, ensuring the currency and quality of the holdings.

The library staff will be responsible for the overall evaluation and weeding of the library collection. When materials need to be recataloged for any reason, they will be evaluated for retention by those on the library staff with the most expertise in that subject area. In some cases, knowledgeable faculty members may be asked for help. Materials that have been returned in poor condition after circulating will be similarly evaluated for retention, replacement, rebinding or withdrawal.

Materials to be withdrawn will be marked and placed in a designated area. In instances when there is a question about whether to withdraw an item, appropriate faculty may be asked to review the material before a final decision is made.

Monographs:

In addition to the collection development criteria previously outlined, some of the factors to be considered when evaluating materials for retention/removal include the following:

1. Is the item unnecessarily duplicated?
2. Is the item in poor condition?
3. Does the Library have a later edition of the item?
4. Does the item contain technical material that is out of date, perhaps dangerously so?
5. Has the item circulated in the past five years?
6. Is the item part of an incomplete set (which cannot or probably will not be completed)?
7. If the item is to be withdrawn, should a replacement be purchased? Is a replacement available?

When appropriate, titles marked for withdrawal should be checked against relevant lists of recommended books. Whether a book is still in print and whether it appears on a list of recommended titles should be considered in the weeding process. If for some reason a needed title cannot be replaced (out of print, too expensive, etc.), the library staff person with the most expertise in the subject area or a knowledgeable faculty member may be asked to make the decision.

Some materials, though old, may be of special interest to the collection. Archival materials, fiction and works by classic theorists should be retained, if at all possible.

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Serials:

In evaluating serials, other considerations in addition to the basic collection development criteria should be taken into account. These include:

1. Is the serial covered in an index to which the library subscribes?
2. Does the serial have its own indexing?
3. Does the serial contain artwork or color pictures of a unique or valuable nature?
4. How complete and what is the length of the run of the serial?
5. Can missing issues or volumes be filled in?
6. Can the serial be replaced in microform?
7. If the library no longer receives the serial, how long has it been since it ceased or was cancelled?
8. Is the serial readily available from other sources?

Microforms and items in other non-print media should be evaluated according to criteria similar to those described for books and serials.

USF Library Services is indebted to Northwestern State University's Collection Development Policy, Revised, 9 February 1993, Natchitoches, Louisiana, EDRS ED 284 575, which is the model upon which much of this document is based.