

Collection Development Policy

Bishop Library

Lebanon Valley College

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## Introduction

The Vernon and Doris Bishop Library exists to support the total academic program of Lebanon Valley College. Its collections must therefore reflect the curricular and research needs of the campus community of students, faculty, and staff. Though the library will always attempt to meet the information needs of all library users, including those library patrons and information seekers in the surrounding communities, the county, the state, the region, and the world, the primary focus of the Bishop Library is the community of Lebanon Valley College.

This library collection development policy is meant to assist in guiding the consistent and conscientious management of library resources, and in building and enriching library collections and access to information in accordance with the mission of Lebanon Valley College. The Bishop Library staff, in consultation with college faculty and other members of the college community, and in conjunction with other cooperating college, university and research libraries and library consortia in this state, region and elsewhere, will continue to enhance, develop and modify this policy to meet the changing needs of Lebanon Valley College.

Each academic department is allocated a portion of the funds provided to the library for collection development by the academic affairs division of the college administration. Though library staff members are responsible for the overall maintenance, management and development of the library collections, faculty in all disciplines of the college are expected to take an active role in selecting library print, multimedia and electronic materials. Faculty members, and other members of the college community, may submit requests for materials in their fields or in other areas of interest. All materials requested through a specific academic department are charged against the appropriate academic department's portion of the overall library budget. Materials

purchased with library funds become college and library property. All members of the college community are encouraged to make recommendations for book and multimedia purchases. Recommendations or requests for the purchase of library materials are accomplished through several means, including printed order cards or electronic orders, and will be considered in light of this document and in relation to the overall instructional and educational purposes of the college.

## General Priorities and Guidelines

Every academic year, one or more library staff members will attempt to meet with all academic departments to get their input and feedback on library services. As part of these regular conversations, the library staff will review with academic departments the budget allocations for books, periodicals and other library materials assigned to their departments, will discuss any new programs or special needs departments may have, and generally will attempt to anticipate any issues or concerns departments may have about library materials and services that support their academic areas. Academic departments are assigned specific portions of the library book and multimedia budget lines based on demonstrated needs, past spending patterns, special circumstances, and inflation. These particular budget assignments are relatively flexible to allow for new course offerings, new programs, and new faculty members, and their totals may vary somewhat by department from year to year.

Library materials needed for support of the current teaching programs of the college are of primary importance. Clearly they should possess a level of maturity appropriate to the needs of the students and faculty. Also vital are basic reference works and tools not directly related to any one particular college academic program, but which are of such overall importance that they belong in every academic library. The library collections should also contribute to and help sustain cooperative programs with other institutions.

In addition, the library must attempt to provide any and all of the many print and other materials required to support the research of the faculty, and to assist the college administrators and staff in the effective performance of their duties. The library may not always have the resources to meet every specialized research need with materials on hand, or available through various networked sources, but library access to information should be sufficient to aid in the preparation of lectures and other teaching activities, as

well as most routine and customary research in every academic area represented on campus. Interlibrary borrowing, document delivery, and individual, ad hoc purchases may be utilized for highly specialized materials or ephemeral research needs.

To supplement the college archival program, the library has an ongoing commitment and obligation to collect published materials relating to the history and development of the college, of Lebanon County and the surrounding area, particularly the Pennsylvania Dutch (German) country, and of the southeastern and central Pennsylvania region. Local imprints and local presses fall into this category of local history, and are of interest to the college and will be collected.

The library will also consider purchasing materials that address the recreational needs of the college community, particularly in subject areas covered by or related to instructional programs, as well as materials which may contribute to future or anticipated academic programs of the college.

## Types of Books

The library will purchase single copies of new hardcover books when they appear in print. Paperbound books can serve as the preferred format and may alternatively be purchased, at the discretion of the Technical Services Librarian, when there is a choice in the format of binding. Paperbacks may be the only available choice, or the only cost-effective choice, in binding or format. In general, paperbacks will not routinely be rebound as hardbacks.

Normally, the library will not purchase textbooks. However, exceptions to this policy will be made for specific academic areas in which textbooks may form an important component of the primary literature, when textbooks may be considered as classics in the field, when other types of monographic publications in a curricular area are sparse, or when textbooks treat important subjects not otherwise represented in the collection.

Books will be purchased primarily in the English language, except when foreign language titles are needed for language instruction and teaching, or for reference and other basic information considered necessary by faculty members in consultation with appropriate library personnel.

The library cannot routinely acquire out-of-print books or other out-of-print or discontinued materials. However, if discontinued or out-of-print books or other materials are available from antiquarian book dealers or other sources, and there is a demonstrated need for such materials and sufficient funding available, the library will attempt to purchase them.

The library will purchase current best-selling literature for the recreational use of the campus community. Any general literature, whether fiction or non-fiction, when it is of sufficient literary or informational merit to contribute to the overall enrichment of the library collection, will be acquired and retained. Concerted efforts will be made to provide a balanced and representative selection of the works of the world's major literary, cultural, political and scientific figures, along with supporting biographical and critical studies.

## Serials

Serials (or periodicals or journals) are the major source of current information in a number of academic disciplines. Known by various terms like “periodicals”, “journals”, “magazines”, and “newspapers”, serials function to keep the library collection up-to-date. They provide a broad range of information in print and electronic formats; material that is not available in books and which supplements the other types of collections. The library establishes and maintains serial subscriptions very carefully, since academic serials can be quite expensive and subscriptions are usually long-term commitments. Serial subscriptions should never be initiated casually. Therefore recommendations for the placement of new serial subscriptions must be made with a clear recognition of the nature of long term commitment implied by this type of material, especially in the print format of serials. In establishing a print serial subscription, the library is usually making a commitment to continue the subscription indefinitely, to bind or replace the backfiles with microfilm or fiche, and to house the backfiles permanently, unless they are available in a web-based or an electronic format.

Selection criteria for serials include: indexing or abstracting in the appropriate reference sources, local availability through consortia or public or other libraries, demonstrated need, scholarly reputation, and cost. Subscriptions are normally made on a yearly basis and are charged to the library periodicals budget line. When a new or alternative journal subscription is deemed necessary, the appropriate academic department, in consultation with the library staff, may study all the journal subscriptions in their academic field or area and determine that another subscription or subscriptions in their particular discipline should be discontinued in order to free up limited periodicals funds to pay for new or alternative journals. Of course, the preferable way to handle required, additional subscriptions, particularly in new or evolving academic programs, is

to build the projected costs of such journals into future college budgets, and make sure they are adequately funded.

Due to the high cost and considerable space requirements for housing paper or microformat backfiles of serials, they cannot and will not usually be purchased retrospectively. If sufficient demand for back issues of journals develops, the library will normally attempt to acquire them in electronic format or within databases that hold the full-text of the journal.

Limited current runs and backfiles of periodicals, such as some newspapers for example, which are not available through web-based sources, make up most of the acquisition of materials in microformat. Electronic journals and database access to full-text are normally preferred to microformats.

## Multimedia and Other Formats

Multimedia and other non-print items have their own library budget line, which is distributed to academic departments in the same manner as the monographic or books budget. Over the course of every academic year, the library staff meets with each academic department to review current acquisitions in their subject area(s) and any anticipated special materials needs. Non-print materials may play a part in these discussions. As long as requests are for items that support the curriculum and/or research needs, the library will make every effort to acquire all requested materials.

In any case, non-print or multimedia collections will be selected with the same care and thoughtfulness as the print collections. Whether videos, DVDs, CDs or other formats, most multimedia will be housed in limited access areas not directly available to the public.

## Gifts

The college, on behalf of the library, will accept and acknowledge monetary gifts to the library. Gifts of this type may be used to establish endowments for the purchase of library materials, whether in print, non-print, or electronic formats, or to subsidize the acquisition of individual items for the library collections, which fit the missions of the college and library.

The college and the library also receive and acknowledge gifts in kind and donations of books and other materials for the library collections. In accepting gifts in kind, the library will utilize the same criteria for selection as items acquired and purchased through regular channels. All accepted gifts should fit into the definitions of relevant and appropriate materials under the collection development policy, and should generally not have any restrictions (or “strings”) attached to them. The library reserves the right and duty to refuse any gift, which does not contribute to the mission and purpose of the library. The library staff will decide on the best disposition of gifts, including the location, classification, and manner of circulation or non-circulation of such items. The library must retain the right to dispose of duplicates and any other unneeded materials, as the library deems appropriate. In such a case, disposal may be by direct sale, by gifts to other libraries, by discard or by other appropriate means.

The college and library cannot officially appraise books and other materials, or collections of such items, for tax or other purposes. The college does provide donors with a statement describing their gift, including the number of items donated.

## Replacements, De-Accession (Weeding), and Remote Storage

Library materials reported missing are often out-of-print, or irreplaceable. In such cases, potential replacements are evaluated for purchase with roughly the same selection criteria as regularly acquired items. Heavily used materials, which are determined necessary for teaching or research, will be replaced as quickly as possible if they are still available. Attempting to replace very old, unusual or particularly costly items is always problematic, and therefore must be undertaken with some caution and realistic expectations. After being missing for five years, an individual bibliographic item that cannot be replaced should usually be considered permanently lost, and all records of it will be withdrawn from library catalogs and databases.

De-accessioning (or weeding) is an essential, on-going library routine, through which unneeded or outdated materials are withdrawn and removed permanently from the library collections. Withdrawing materials from the collections permanently is a fundamentally different activity from transferring items to remote storage from a circulating or open-stack collection. Examples of unneeded materials which might be targeted for either withdrawal or remote storage could include unnecessary multiple copies, badly damaged or deteriorating books, out-of-date or chronically unused materials, broken and incomplete runs of dated periodicals (especially if they are available elsewhere), and obsolete multimedia materials.

Remote storage is the preferred means of disposition for less immediately useful items, which do retain some intrinsic or unique value, whether as artifacts, or as bearers of intellectual content. The library staff must always reserve the right to de-accession library materials when, in their best professional judgement, such a course of action is necessary because of the chronic shortage of general shelving or other storage space, and any other possibly serious ad hoc considerations and constraints that might impinge on the space available for library collections. Whenever possible, faculty members and

other subject specialists should be invited to participate in the weeding process, to assure that materials of historical or research interest are not inadvertently removed permanently from the library collections.

In periodically reviewing and evaluating the balance and strength of the library collections, the library staff may use various standard bibliographies such as Books for College Libraries, or those bibliographies that appear in Choice and other appropriate sources and databases.

## Levels of Collection Development

Requirements for the development of library collections will vary considerably with different disciplines and subject areas. Detailed criteria and needs may or may not be documented for each academic department, at the discretion of the academic departments themselves. The latest copies of any such written departmental statements are kept on file by the library as a supplement to this policy. Periodically the library staff reviews such supplementary documents.

In any case, several general hierarchical levels of collection development can be identified for convenience sake and reference, but are not specifically required for any academic department or program.

First, minimum development refers to subject areas which are largely outside the scope of the college curricula and in which there is little interest or activity in the college community.

Basic development includes materials which support the core curriculum in all disciplines and lower level courses. This level should cover surveys of the subject, introductory works, encyclopedias, handbooks, selected texts and basic periodicals.

Comprehensive development is the general level which supports all intermediate and some upper-level courses for undergraduate degrees. Materials acquired at this level should provide extensive coverage of all aspects of a discipline, and should support all course work and independent undergraduate research. In addition to standard works and histories, purchases at this level should include biographies and the major journals.

Advanced development includes materials which are suitable for research in graduate programs, including: primary sources; in-depth collections of major authors and works (in original languages, where and if appropriate); critical and analytical studies (with emphasis on specific periods, subdivisions or eras as required by the discipline in question); and the relevant journals. In general, the college collects at the comprehensive and lower levels, not at the advanced level, but clearly materials at this level must also be acquired selectively.

## Intellectual Freedom

The staff members of the library support the concept of intellectual freedom. All points of view and subjects will be considered for inclusion in the library collections, as long as they fit into the general collection parameters of the library. Prejudice and censorship have no roles to play in determining the balance of the collection.