

South Texas College Library

Collection Development Practices

These collection development practices are intended to reflect the mission of South Texas College (STC) Library Services to provide a welcoming, learning-centered environment, rich in quality information resources and outstanding services to meet the research, instructional and learning needs of the South Texas College students, faculty, staff and community. These practices also serve to guide staff in the selection and retention of materials and to inform our Library users of the principles supporting selection, retention, and collection management decisions. These practices are also informed by the following documents:

- [Principles of Accreditation](#), Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
- [Library Bill of Rights](#), American Library Association
- [Intellectual Freedom Statement](#), Texas Library Association
- [Freedom to Read Statement](#), American Library Association

I. Our Collections

The STC Library purchases a wide range of materials to support the current and anticipated academic and technical curricula of the College and the personal and professional growth of our users. Selections of library materials are made jointly by librarians and faculty. Faculty members are strongly encouraged to participate through the liaison program in shaping the library's subject collections. In addition, all users are invited to submit requests via the Library Purchase Request form.

II. General Criteria for Selection

Library materials are selected for purchase based on the following factors:

- instructional support
- general interest and demand
- cost
- significance and authority of the work
- format
- value and quality
- permanence and lasting appeal
- reputation of the publisher

Selectors consult available critical reviews; professional and trade journals; subject-area bibliographies; publishers' catalogs; and promotional materials as part of the selection process. Requests from faculty and students are also an important source of recommendations for selectors. Due to budget and space considerations, the purchase of duplicate items for the same campus library should be limited to instances where the demand justifies this duplication.

The following types of materials are generally not considered for acquisition:

- textbooks, lab manuals, exercise books, and other consumable materials designed to be written in, or designed primarily with tear-out pages
- specialized technical books or research materials beyond the needs of the students
- rare materials or limited editions
- materials or formats which will not be easily accessible to most students or are inappropriate for library use; and
- out-of-print materials

Popular Fiction having short-term interest among readers is generally not purchased, however, established literary works and new works receiving critical literary acclaim are considered, especially those that support academic programs. Where funding permits and where possible, leasing arrangements will be used to address user interest in popular fiction and bestsellers in general.

The Library will continue to explore available options for improving collection development through programs such as patron-driven acquisition and leasing where these provide cost effective ways to leverage Library resources and further tailor acquisitions to the needs and interests of our users.

III. Serials

Serials, including journals, magazines, and newspapers (periodicals) are publications issued in successive parts bearing numeric or chronological designations and intended to remain in publication for an indefinite time. The Library collects serials in print and electronic form.

Serial print subscriptions require a continuing commitment to the cost of the title, including maintenance and storage. Journal back-files or archives are stored indefinitely as space permits. Magazines and periodicals are kept for limited times depending on the frequency of publication. Generally, newspapers at all campuses are kept for two months and magazines are kept for no more than one calendar year as space permits.

In addition to print subscriptions, the Library provides access to an extensive collection of serial titles through online subscription databases. Subscription databases provide access to serial publications throughout the College district as well as to distance education students and faculty. Additionally, these resources do not require the same level of maintenance and storage accommodations that print serial subscriptions do. Accordingly, in evaluating recommendations for serials subscriptions, the Library will first investigate whether the serial title requested is available through an existing subscription database. Acquisitions of a serial title in electronic form will be preferred unless there is a justification for adding the title as a print subscription.

Due to budget constraints and changing use patterns, the Library may discontinue a print title, especially where the title is already available electronically through an existing subscription database and previous serial usage surveys indicate that the print title has not been consulted by users throughout successive semesters. A decision to discontinue a serial title will include,

as appropriate, advance consultation with the pertinent Library liaison and academic department.

IV. Electronic Resources

With the growing availability of research materials, including books and serials, in electronic form and the versatility and adaptability of this format to the distributed and virtual reach of the College, the Library maintains access to a collection of electronic resources. A critical consideration in the evaluation of any electronic resource is the licensing agreement associated with the resource. Unlike print books, whose circulation and use is governed by established rules of copyright, the availability and use of commercial electronic materials is usually governed by a licensing agreement. In evaluating an electronic resource, Library staff will review any applicable licensing agreement to confirm that it provides reasonable terms for the academic use of the electronic resource. Other terms of the licensing agreement will also be reviewed with an eye to modifying unfavorable provisions such as unreasonable restrictions on the use of the electronic resource, the application of out-of-state laws, or the establishment of venue in another state.

a. Electronic Books

The Library collects electronic books using the same selection criteria as that of print books and audiovisual materials. In addition to these criteria, other considerations made in deciding to purchase a book in electronic form include:

- the conservation of physical shelf space
- the advantage of having an electronic item available at all campus locations as well as off-campus for use by distance learning students and faculty
- whether the electronic item is compatible with relevant technology (e.g. networks and platforms) currently in use at the College

Where an item is available in both print and electronic form, selectors will opt for the electronic version unless there is reason why the print version would be more appropriate. Both an electronic and print copy may be selected where there is an independent justification.

b. Subscription Databases

In addition to electronic books, the Library provides access to electronic resources available by subscription. These subscription databases consist of serial publications, book collections, reports, or a combination of these. Owning all of the materials required by the Library's users is no longer a viable collection acquisition model. With many resources, especially academic journals, it is becoming increasingly cost effective to provide access through subscription arrangements rather than outright ownership. Because of the substantial cost of typical online subscription databases, the following guidelines will be followed in deciding to initiate subscription to an online resource exceeding \$2,000 in cost:

- a trial will be arranged, where possible, to enable evaluation of the resource by faculty, staff, and other Library users.

- the link will be posted on the trials section of the Library's website with a request for feedback.
- an announcement of the trial and an invitation for feedback will be made to the Collection Development Advisory Committee and to academic departments through the pertinent Library Liaison(s).

Subscription databases will be kept for as long as these resources serve their purpose and the budget allows. A decision to discontinue a database will be made based on usage statistics and cost and will be made following consultation, as appropriate with the pertinent Library Liaison and academic department.

V. Collection Development Advisory Committee

The Collection Development Advisory Committee is responsible for providing advice and recommendations to the Library to help all STC libraries meet the needs of faculty, students, staff and community by providing materials (print and non-print) necessary to meet their educational and leisure goals. The Collection Development Advisory Committee is composed of a selected cross section of faculty members and Library staff members who serve as Library Liaisons.

The Committee meets at the beginning of the academic year and as circumstances require. The Committee discusses general plans for collection development and serves as a sounding board for ideas and recommendations for the acquisition of materials intended to enhance the curriculum of the College. The Committee serves as a vehicle for maintaining lines of communication between faculty and the Library regarding collection development.

VI. Library Liaison Program

The Collection Development Library Liaison Subcommittee is a subcommittee of the Collection Development Advisory Committee responsible for ensuring that all STC libraries meet the needs of faculty, students, staff and community by selecting materials (print and non-print) necessary to meet their educational and leisure goals. The Collection Development Library Liaison Subcommittee is composed of library staff members who serve as Library Liaisons.

A key element of the Library's collection development activities is the assignment of library staff members to each of the academic and technical disciplines. The duties of each Library Liaison are to:

- become familiar with assigned disciplines
- establish and maintain a dialog with faculty members in assigned departments, communicating to them information about available Library resources and services, supporting their disciplines, and eliciting information on the department's general and specific resource needs
- become familiar with the Library's collections in their disciplines
- become familiar with collection development resources
- compile requests from faculty members and others for the assigned disciplines

- make selections of library materials in the assigned disciplines
- submit lists with requests and selections to the Collection Development and Acquisitions Librarian for evaluation and ordering
- participate in the maintenance of collections in their assigned disciplines by periodically evaluating and deselecting materials to ensure that the composition of the collection continues to support students and faculty

The Collection Development and Acquisitions Librarian will coordinate Library Liaison collection development activities and supply guidance, training, and support as needed to assist Library Liaisons in performing their selection and collection maintenance duties.

VII. Collection Maintenance and Evaluation

An essential element of collection maintenance is the systematic removal of items that are no longer valuable. This includes items that are outdated, inaccurate, damaged beyond repair, or otherwise a poor fit for the collection. Faculty members are encouraged to assist with identifying outdated or inaccurate materials in their areas of expertise. An evaluation of resources that are missing, lost, or withdrawn will determine if these items are still valuable to the collection and should be replaced.

VIII. Discipline-Specific Deselection Criteria

The “years since published” criterion below is a general rule to identify candidates for deselection. The number of years used is approximately double that used in the CREW weeding manual so that the collection is not compromised by very aggressive deselection. An “X” means that items in that category can remain on the shelf as long as they’re fit to circulate. In any case, the Library Liaison completing the deselecting, will determine with respect to each item, in consultation with faculty where appropriate, whether the material is outdated and/or inaccurate or if the item is damaged beyond repair.

Discipline	Years Since Published	Other
Agriculture	>20	Developments may render some works obsolete sooner.
Bibliography & Library Science	>20	Developments may render some works obsolete sooner.
Biology	>20	Developments may render some works obsolete sooner.
Business & Economics (BAT-TMGT)	>10	Business directories and almanacs become obsolete sooner.
Children's Materials	X	Keep as long as the item is fit to circulate.
Communications	>20	Developments may render some works obsolete sooner.
Computer Science (BAT-CIT)	>10	Developments may render some items obsolete earlier.
Creative Arts - Fine Arts	X	Keep as long as the item is fit to circulate
Creative Arts - Music	X	Keep as long as the item is fit to circulate.
Criminal Justice & Law	>10	Developments may render some works obsolete sooner.
Development English, Reading, & College Success	X	Keep as long as the item is fit to circulate.
Development Math	>20	Replace books that focus on outdated teaching methods.
Education	>10	Developments may render some works obsolete sooner.
English	X	Keep as long as the item is fit to circulate.
Foreign Languages & Humanities	X	Keep as long as the item is fit to circulate.
General Works	>20	Print encyclopedias become obsolete in about 5 years.
Government	>10	Developments may render some works obsolete sooner.
Health Sciences	>10	Developments may render some works obsolete sooner.
History	X	Keep as long as the item is accurate and fit to circulate.
Kinesiology & Physical Education	>20	Developments may render some works obsolete sooner.
Math	>20	Replace books that focus on outdated teaching methods.
Military & Naval Science	X	Keep as long as the item is fit to circulate.
Philosophy & Religion	X	Keep as long as the item is fit to circulate.

Physical Sciences	>20	Developments may render some works obsolete sooner.
Psychology	>20	Developments may render some works obsolete sooner.
Social Sciences - Anthropology	>20	Developments may render some works obsolete sooner.
Social Sciences - Sociology	>10	Developments may render some works obsolete sooner.
Technology	>20	Developments may render some works obsolete sooner.

The Library Liaison will also determine if an item has circulated within the recent past. Generally, if an item that is otherwise a candidate for deselection has not circulated in the past three years, it should be considered a strong candidate for removal. Certain item types that deserve special consideration for retention include quote books, books on the history of a given discipline, works that impart timeless advice, biographies, classic works, award winning books, and case studies.

IX. Approved Gifts Procedure

Library Services appreciates the good will of potential donors. Library Services normally does not accept donations of books and other library materials except in special cases involving the unrestricted donation of items determined by Library’s professional staff to be of unique value to the Library’s collections.

Such unrestricted donations of books and other library materials are gratefully accepted with the understanding that items that do not meet the criteria described in the Materials Selection Guidelines may be disposed of as deemed appropriate by the library staff. Gifts to Library Services become state property and cannot be returned to the donor. No conditional acceptances will be made, i.e., to be returned to the donor if already owned.

Items received as gifts will be subject to the same criteria that govern the selection and processing of new purchases. The Library will determine the classification, housing, and circulation policies of all gift items. The Library retains the right to dispose of duplicates and unneeded materials as it sees fit.

Donations to Library Services may be considered charitable contributions for tax purposes. The Collection Development and Acquisitions Librarian may issue a letter of appreciation that is an official receipt and can serve as a tax statement for use by the donor. The Tax Reform Act of 1984 forbids libraries from appraising gifts. Donors are responsible for the appraisal of gift materials. IRS Publication 526, Charitable Contributions, contains the pertinent tax rules and is available from the IRS.

Library Services will only accept donations of appropriate materials for the collections. Magazine and journal gifts will only be accepted to fill gaps in Library holdings. Other materials and formats may be accepted as gifts with advance approval from librarians. Some items that

ordinarily would not be purchased may be accepted as gifts. Art work may also be accepted, provided it meets the same criteria that govern the selection and processing of new art purchases. Library Services will not accept textbooks unless they are supplied by faculty in connection with course work or are authored by faculty. Library Services will not accept books in physically poor condition, individual issues of periodicals, incomplete volumes, or duplicates of periodicals already owned.

Anyone interested in making a donation is encouraged to contact the Collection Development and Acquisitions Librarian at (956) 872-2323 to discuss the matter.

X. Intellectual Freedom

The Library is committed to freedom of information. In selecting materials, the merits of the works and the need for the material in the collection based on whether the material supports the current and anticipated academic and technical curricula of the College and the personal and professional growth of our patrons are considered. Users are free to choose what they find useful from the collection and ignore what does not support their needs or interests. Library selectors make an effort to present various points of view on controversial subjects so as to develop a balanced collection. That the Library includes an item in the collection does not mean that the Library or the College endorses any theory or statement contained therein. The Library welcomes the thoughts of users on the quality, balance, and responsiveness of the collection.

Approved by the Library Collection Development Advisory Committee and adopted by the Library Administrative Team in September 2012. Updated January 2018.