

Mantor Library
University of Maine at Farmington

Reference Collection Development Policy

Objectives

- To establish guidelines for the subject, scope, and format of the reference collection and the materials included in it.
- To establish procedures for ongoing evaluation of the collection, acquiring new materials, and deselection of materials to ensure the development and maintenance of a reference collection that is current and supports the information needs of the faculty, staff, and students of the University of Maine at Farmington.

Subject Scope

The Reference Collection includes:

- Materials that support basic information needs.
- Basic and in-depth information sources that support the academic disciplines in the curriculum of the University.
- Selective coverage of subjects of current interest and of subjects not directly related to the University's curriculum, but which have relevance in an academic library serving an undergraduate level institution and graduate studies in education.
- Materials supporting research and independent study at the undergraduate level and graduate studies in education.

Selection Criteria

Selection of materials for the Reference Collection shall be consistent with the Mantor Library Collection Development Policy regarding subject scope and should support the subject areas in the curriculum of the University. For consideration, sources must address the strengths and weaknesses of the existing collection and meet a demonstrated need. Sources shall be selected based on the following criteria:

- Unique features or content not duplicated in other sources in the existing collection.
- Authoritative, based on evaluation of scope, content, and the credentials of the author/editor/publisher.
- Favorably reviewed or included in basic reference collection guides.
- Potential for frequent use.
- Currency of topic, with a preference for materials that are the most current and authoritative in the field.
- Scope and depth of subject coverage.
- Suitability for undergraduate level academic collection.
- Price of publication and availability of funds to make purchases for the collection.
- Language of publication. Generally, materials in English will be selected. Some sources in other languages may be collected if they are directly applicable to the University's curriculum.
- Online formats that offer increased accessibility.
- Ease and efficiency of use.

- Updates, supplements, or complements a source already in the collection.
- Standing orders.

For print materials, if a hardcover and a paperback are available for the same source, preference may be given to the hardcover edition (subject to price and availability of purchasing funds).

For electronic resources, additional criteria include:

- hardware and software requirements
- licensing terms and agreements
- use restrictions or limitations
- level of user sophistication required
- duplication of print source
- reputation of vendor

Types of Materials Included in Reference Collection

The materials in the reference collection shall conform to the guidelines set forth in the Mantor Library Collection Development Policy and support the curriculum of the University. Additional selected materials shall be collected to maintain a general information resource for the University community. The types of materials collected for the reference collection include, but are not limited to:

- *Almanacs, Annuals and Yearbooks*: Current editions of major national and international publications as determined by curricular needs.
- *Bibliographies*: General, national, and trade bibliographies only. Those of narrow scope (including single-author bibliographies) shall generally be assigned to the circulating collection.
- *Biographical sources*: National, international, and professional biographical sources (retrospective and current). More specific or narrow biographical sources shall be included in the circulating collection.
- *College Catalogs*: No college catalogs will be collected for the reference collection. The UMF catalogs will be collected for the University archive collection.
- *Concordances*: Concordances for major authors and important works (such as the Bible, Milton, Shakespeare, and Keats) will not be purchased or kept in the reference collection.
- *Dictionaries*: Selected general, bilingual, specialized (regional, slang, idiomatic, historical, etc.), and subject-specific dictionaries. Acquisition of revisions of major dictionaries, such as the Oxford English Dictionary, shall be on a regular basis (as funding permits). Older editions may be kept in the reference collection for historical or research purposes or moved to the circulating collection as appropriate.
- *Directories*: Selected current major directories only will be included in the reference collection.
- *Encyclopedias*: Major general encyclopedias in single or multi-volume format, with regular acquisition of revised editions of Encyclopaedia Britannica or other major sources replaced regularly (on a rotating basis and as funds permit) unless

access to the same or equivalent resources are available online or through subscription online reference collections. Selected authoritative subject-specific encyclopedias shall be included in the reference collection, but encyclopedias covering one person or a very narrow subject shall be included in the circulating collection.

- *Genealogical sources*: A limited number of selected sources relating to Maine or Franklin County may be collected.
- *Geographical sources*: Selected authoritative current and historical atlases and gazetteers. Selected maps relating to Maine and Franklin County may also be included in the reference collection. Travel guides and other general geographical sources shall not be included in the collection.
- *Handbooks*: Selected authoritative and current handbooks in major subject areas that support the University's curriculum.
- *Heraldry*: A limited number of selected sources.
- *Indexes and Abstracts*: Selected general and subject-specific indexes and abstracts that cover the disciplines taught at the university. Sources included in the reference collection shall be closely related to the periodical holdings of the library. Preference shall be to avoid duplication of sources in electronic and print format. Emphasis is given to education, humanities, and liberal arts materials.
- *Legal materials*: Very limited resources, including the Maine Register, Maine Reporter and Digest. Selected general sources relating to Maine law.
- *Plot Summaries*: Major comprehensive plot summaries (Magill's or similar resources) only.
- *Quotation books*: Major sources in English.
- *Sacred Books*: Limited selected sources in English relating to the Bible and other sacred documents or works.
- *Scholarships and Grants*: No handbooks or directories on undergraduate and graduate institutions (Peterson's) and study abroad programs, educational scholarships, financial aid, and grants will be included in the collection.
- *State and local information*: Selected Maine and Franklin County materials.
- *Statistical sources*: Selected national and international resources.
- *Study Guides*: No study guides shall be included in the reference collection.
- *Style Manuals*: Most recent editions of major manuals. Older editions may be moved to the circulating collection or weeded from the collection.
- *Thesauri*: Selected general thesauri in English. Older editions may be retained in the reference collection for historical purposes.
- *Other materials*: Other materials shall be selected based on the criteria set forth in the Selection Criteria section of this document. Other considerations include usefulness, perceived need, costs, and availability of funding.

Electronic reference resources shall also be subject to the guidelines outlined in this policy and shall support the curriculum of the University. Every attempt shall be made to acquire electronic resources that provide unique content or that supplement the existing print collection. If an electronic version of a print resource currently in the reference collection is available, the print resource may be maintained in the collection but newer editions not purchased as long as the electronic subscription is maintained.

Any print resource that is out of date or superseded by an electronic version may be weeded from the reference collection.

Acquisition and Maintenance of the Government Documents

Mantor Library is a U.S. Census Affiliate library and retains Census materials in accordance with the terms of the affiliate agreement. Documents published by the United States government will be selected according to the regular criteria for inclusion in the circulating and reference collections. Selections will be based on requests from patrons or library staff and funded from either the reference budget or the general acquisitions budget. Emphasis shall be placed on those documents that contain frequently requested information such as Census data and other statistical sources. Documents that are currently available in electronic format shall not be considered for purchase unless ease of use provides a compelling reason for purchase of another format.

Acquisition of New Materials for the Reference Collection

New materials shall be acquired for the reference collection on a regular basis, as needed and as funding permits. Preference shall be given to materials that update, supplement, or support the existing collection and the curriculum of the University. New materials shall also be acquired to strengthen weak areas of the existing collection and to fill perceived needs.

New materials may be added to the reference collection based on the recommendation of the reference librarian or other library staff. Faculty and student recommendations may also be considered for purchase providing the recommended materials meet the selection criteria outline in this policy.

Maintenance and Management of the Reference Collection

The reference librarian shall be responsible for maintenance and management of the reference collection. Shelf reading shall be done on a regular basis by the reference librarian, reference staff, or student library aides. Damaged, missing, or outdated materials should be reported to the reference librarian. The reference collection shall be periodically inventoried to ensure accuracy and consistency of collection with catalog records.

Evaluation and Weeding

The reference librarian shall evaluate reference materials annually using the selection criteria set forth in this document. Materials that are out of date, duplicates, incomplete, superseded, badly damaged, or no longer supported by the curriculum will be weeded from the reference collection as appropriate. Weeded materials may be moved to the circulating stacks, sold, donated to other libraries, or discarded. General weeding criteria include, but are not limited to:

- Relevance of publication to the curriculum of the University
- Usefulness in relation to existing collection
- Current and projected future use
- Comprehensiveness
- Currency or accuracy of the information

- Availability of later editions or better source
- Availability of information in another format (such as reliable and authoritative electronic or online sources)
- Historical or research significance
- Physical condition
- Duplication of content

Standing orders shall be reviewed annually. Faculty cooperation shall be enlisted in the weeding process as appropriate and feasible, but the reference librarian and library director shall make final decisions.

Use of Reference Materials

The reference collection is for use by the students, staff, and faculty of the University. The general public may also use the collection in accordance with the Mantor Library's Collection Development Policy.

Reference materials are restricted to in-library use only.

Other Guidelines

The Mantor Library Collection Development Policy shall be consulted for any collection development policies that are not expressly set out in this document, but which may apply to the reference collection.

Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed annually, but is subject to revision at any time.

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