

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT POLICY

Rentschler Library

Miami University Hamilton

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to explain the general guidelines used by Rentschler Library staff in making collection management decisions. Every effort is made to build and maintain a collection that supports the mission of the library as stated below.

Library Mission Statement

Rentschler Library contributes to the intellectual and cultural development of the students, faculty, staff, and community users at Miami University Hamilton by supporting the teaching and research needs of the campus and promoting personal growth and success through lifelong learning.

GOALS

The primary function of Rentschler Library is to support the undergraduate academic programs of Miami University Hamilton. Materials are selected to meet the needs of the students, faculty and staff in their educational pursuits. In their efforts to carry this out, library staff will:

1. Strive for a systematic approach to collection management where all subjects are equally considered and purchasing decisions are made purposefully with the needs of the campus community in mind. This will lead to a balanced and well-rounded collection and will prevent random, uneven coverage.
2. Develop a functional collection that is useful to the majority of the users of Rentschler Library. The intention will be to actively support the undergraduate curriculum taught on the Miami University Hamilton campus, while still providing adequate coverage in other areas. All subjects will be considered and developed to the appropriate level.
3. Provide the best possible coverage in each subject area. Efforts will be made to:
 - A. Maintain currency by continually adding and updating materials and withdrawing outdated sources that are no longer useful.
 - B. Maintain quality by selecting the best materials available in the most cost effective way.
 - C. Maintain the physical condition by weeding, repairing, or replacing damaged books and implementing preventative maintenance.
4. Encourage student and faculty use of the library by building a usable collection that is relevant for student coursework and is an integral part of the campus curriculum.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION

The professional librarians at Rentschler Library are responsible for selection in assigned subject areas of the collection. Each selector will also be responsible for weeding and maintaining these assigned areas. In order to provide complete coverage for the collection, these responsibilities are assigned in the following two ways:

First, assignments are made according to the Library of Congress classification system, with each librarian taking primary responsibility for specific classes. For example, one librarian manages the E class (American History), while another librarian handles the L class (Education). This ensures that someone is responsible for each part of the collection and will prevent inadequate coverage in a subject area that may not have specific coursework on campus.

Secondly, responsibilities are assigned based on the curriculum taught at the Hamilton campus. These assignments will correspond as closely as possible to the first division described above. For example, the botany classes on campus will be covered by the librarian who is responsible for the Q classification (Science). Therefore, each department on campus will have a specific contact person in the library. The faculty will communicate their needs and make purchase recommendations to their assigned library liaison.

FACULTY INVOLVEMENT

The most important thing that individual faculty members can do is to communicate frequently with the library liaison assigned to their discipline. Faculty can facilitate this in the following ways:

1. Submit course syllabi and specific assignments that require library research.
2. Participate in collection analysis projects. This involves evaluating the books or other materials in their discipline. Decisions are made to retain, discard, update, or send an item to the university's remote storage facility. The procedure and criteria for this are described in a separate document, *Collection Analysis Guidelines*.
3. Complete the collection development survey form found at <http://www.ham.muohio.edu/library/policies/collectionsurvey.pdf>. This survey will help the librarians identify broad subject areas, as well as more specific topics that should be considered when making selections.
4. Recommend specific titles by completing the *Suggest an Item for Purchase* web form at <http://www.ham.muohio.edu/library/suggest.htm>.
5. Seek input from library liaison to create new assignments that will best utilize the resources already available in the library.
6. Promote the library as an essential source for students. Encourage them to use the library when working on assignments or doing research.
7. Maintain ongoing dialogue with library liaison through email, phone calls, or regular meetings.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Purchase selections will be made using a variety of criteria. In no particular order, these include:

1. Relevance to the educational program of the campus.
2. Anticipated use by Miami Hamilton students, faculty, and staff.
3. Subject content applicable to the undergraduate level.
4. Timeliness or permanence of the material.
5. Accuracy and reliability as reflected in review sources*
6. Reputation of the author and/or publisher
7. Current strengths or weaknesses of present holdings in the subject area
8. Availability at Miami or OhioLINK libraries
9. Cost

*Review sources will be the primary means of identifying purchase possibilities. *Choice* is a publication designed for academic libraries and will be a major resource. To a lesser extent, *Library Journal*, *Booklist*, and *Publisher's Weekly* will also be consulted.

Faculty recommendations will be given thoughtful consideration, especially those that have the needs of the student body in mind. Rentschler Library is able to provide ready access to advanced level materials that support faculty research endeavors by participating in resource sharing with other Miami and OhioLINK libraries and through traditional interlibrary loan services.

SPECIFIC AREAS OF THE COLLECTION

Reference & Electronic Resources

The selectors work as a team when adding materials to the reference collection or purchasing electronic resources. Each librarian makes suggestions for titles to add and titles to weed in their subject areas. The committee considers the price and potential usefulness of the product and makes the final decision.

Nonprint

This collection includes videos, CDs, slides, and kits. Additions to this collection are primarily made by faculty suggestion or request. The faculty member making the request is required to preview the material before a final purchase is made.

Periodicals

The professional librarians will review all active periodical subscriptions every two years. Faculty, staff, and students can recommend titles to be added at any time. However, due to the high cost of periodical subscriptions, there must be a compelling argument that the new title will be an asset to the campus community. Electronic availability will be a major factor in deciding what titles to add or cut.

Textbooks

The library does not typically purchase textbooks. Exceptions may be made in certain disciplines, such as nursing, where textbooks are an integral part of the literature available or when a particular title is considered to be a classic in its field. However, the library encourages donations of textbooks that are current and useful as additional resources for students in carrying out their coursework. For example, faculty can donate advance copies of textbooks that they receive from publishers.

Gifts

The library welcomes donations of books and other materials for its collection. All donated materials are carefully reviewed and only selected items are kept. When evaluating gift materials, special attention is given to the condition of the item and the date of publication (when relevant). Potential use and availability at other libraries are also considered. Books that are not added to the collection will be donated to a Miami University book sale.