

# **ATHENS STATE UNIVERSITY COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Collection Development Policy is formulated to coordinate selection and weeding of materials for the collection of Athens State University. As a planning document, it will guide the allocation of funds in the acquisition budget in the present and future. The stated mission of the University as a two-year, upper-division institution is to “prepare students for professional careers, graduate school, life-long learning, and enrichment.” A primary role of the Library in its mission statement is “to identify, acquire, maintain, preserve, and provide access to information and research in support of academic programs offered by the college.” The Collection Development Policy will promote Library self-examination and assure a consistent and balanced growth which will meet immediate and long-term needs.

As of September 2008, the ASU Library collection consists of approximately 119,000 print volumes, 60,000 e-books, 235 current periodical subscriptions, and 49 electronic databases. These resources are typically selected to support various curricula at the initial study level. Through cooperative agreements with area libraries, resources are somewhat expanded for our users. ASU has three major Colleges of undergraduate course work in thirty-three areas of study, resulting in BA, BBA, BS and BSEd degrees.

The Collection Development Librarian, with the guidance of the Library Director and Vice President of Academic Affairs, formulated the Collection Development Policy to serve as a planning tool, management tool, communication tool, and to facilitate cooperation. A formal selection policy sets selection standards, reduces likelihood of bias, provides continuity despite staff changes, serves as an orientation device for new staff, and assists in weeding procedures.

## **MISSION OF THE LIBRARY**

The mission of the Athens State University Library is to identify, acquire, maintain, preserve, and provide access to information and research in support of academic programs offered by the institution; to enhance bibliographic skills of patrons through instruction; to work cooperatively with faculty and the greater community to build appropriate collections in a variety of formats; to respond to advances in information technology; to establish and maintain cooperative agreements for resource sharing with other libraries; and to encourage research and life-long learning.

## **SELECTION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS**

The responsibility for collection development rests with the Library. The process of selecting material for the Library's collection is a cooperative one involving faculty members and Library staff.

While it is hoped that every faculty member will participate in the selection process in areas of their expertise, the primary responsibility for the collection lies with the Library staff. All librarians, faculty, and University administrators are encouraged to submit requests for both print and non-print materials which fall within their areas of expertise and which conform to collection policies presented in this document. Students, other members of the University community, interested townspeople, and visiting scholars may also submit recommendations for purchases.

A primary duty of the Collection Development Librarian is to assist faculty in the selection of materials and serve as coordinating librarian regarding Collection Development. The Librarian will also request copies of current syllabi and information regarding planned changes in curriculum. Each College will be requested to complete a profile statement to assist the Library in meeting the needs of the College. The Library Liaison will serve as the contact person between the Library and each College, encouraging requests for materials, providing reviews of materials relevant to different departments, and answering questions regarding Library policies. This librarian will circulate selected Choice reviews to his/her assigned College and coordinate the receipt of requests from faculty in the College. In addition, this librarian will notify College deans of any changes of policies or procedures which might affect the Colleges.

All librarians, including the Library Director, will help determine whether requests received conform to the goals, qualitative guidelines, and the selection and acquisition policies presented in this document.

### **CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF MATERIALS**

The quality of content and fulfillment of academic curricular needs are the first criteria against which any potential item for purchase will be evaluated. Specific criteria used in selecting items for the Library's collection include:

- lasting value of the content
- anticipated use
- appropriateness of level of treatment
- strength of present holdings in same or similar subject areas
- currency of information
- critical reviews
- cost
- suitability of format
- authoritativeness of the author
- reputation of the publisher

### **RESOURCES FOR SELECTION**

- Bibliographies
- Publisher Catalogs
- Internet Sites

- Subject Specialist Journals
- Book Selection Periodicals
- Library Catalogs
- Course Syllabi

## **SERIALS**

Serials are defined as titles issued periodically and expected to continue indefinitely, often with numbered parts. The serials collection includes newspapers, journals, annuals and monographic series. The purchase of serial publications require special consideration regarding space, maintenance, and long-term commitments of money, unlike monographs which are one-time purchases. Titles are added very selectively, and serials are charged to special Library-controlled budget lines.

Any member of the academic community may initiate recommendations for serial purchase. However, responsibility for serials collection development decisions rests with the Library Director.

### **Selection Guidelines for Serials**

The Libraries' general framework for building, preserving, maintaining and evaluating the collection is outlined in earlier sections of this document and forms the basis for these selection guidelines.

Specific guidelines for the selection of serials:

1. Relevance of the title to the curriculum.
2. Strength of existing subject coverage in the collection and a title's ability to add significantly to the existing coverage.
3. Indexing availability. For most journals the Library acquires, there should be indexes available in sources the Library owns.
4. Cost and projected availability of funds.
5. Audience for whom the title is intended.
6. Reputation of editors or publisher.
7. Currency of information.

## **ELECTRONIC RESOURCES**

Electronic resources will be selected using the same basic principles as print and non-print media. For the purpose of this document “electronic format” refers to those categories of materials that require computer access.

### **Selection Guidelines for Electronic Resources**

Resources are selected for purchase using similar criteria as print selection, along with the Library's checklist for consideration of an electronic product. Whenever possible, the Library will cooperate with the Network of Alabama Academic Libraries (NAAL) and Lyris to take advantage of state-wide and region-wide price reductions for products meeting selection criteria.

Criteria to consider include:

- Appropriate retrospective and current coverage
- Spread of disciplinary coverage among selected titles
- Duplication of content with other products
- Basic and advanced search capabilities
- Economies of scale reflected in print
- Local and remote access
- Ease of user interface
- Minimal support required of Library staff
- Compatibility with current telecommunications and campus technological infrastructure
- Adequate documentation, training and bibliographic services provided by vendor
- Stability of the product
- Flexibility and responsiveness of the vendor
- Long-term support by the vendor
- High benefit but low cost threshold
- Availability of usage statistics from the vendor
- Inter-product links
- Evidence of progress by vendors to meet the accessibility needs of those with disabilities.

### **WEEDING OF LIBRARY MATERIALS**

Materials are weeded from the Library in order to maintain a current, active, and useful collection which reflects the goals of the Library and its users. Consultation with the faculty is especially important as a safeguard against withdrawal or cancellation of materials with special qualities or significance. All librarians will participate in this activity on a regular basis, under the supervision of the Library Director. Consideration of the costs of weeding of materials should be kept in mind.

The following criteria have been established to provide a guideline for weeding of materials which are not a part of a series:

1. Quantity and recency of past use (browsing should be considered)
2. Language
3. Old editions
4. Superseded volumes
5. Obsolescence (especially in specific fields such as science, technology)
6. Textbooks
7. Dissertations
8. Discredited materials

9. Trivial material
10. Appropriateness of subject matter to collection
11. Likely future use.\*
12. Damaged, lost, long-overdue titles
13. Titles acquired before 1970 which have not circulated since 1974 and whose authors are not listed in 2d edition of Books for College Libraries
14. SACS standards
15. Availability at area libraries
16. Books on highly specialized topics essentially covered in other works
17. Biographies of obscure people

\*Likely future use is established or defined as the time the material has remained on the shelf since the last circulation date, or in the case of very recently bought materials, its accession date.

Criteria to be used for cancellation of serials or series subscriptions or standing orders are:

1. Existence and availability of indexes
2. Language
3. Appropriateness of subject matter to the collection
4. Past use
5. Likely future use
6. Cost of continuing subscription/standing order
7. Audience
8. Extent of past run
9. Availability of full-text online
10. Binding, storage costs
11. SACS standards
12. Availability at area libraries

Criteria to weed audio-visual and vertical file materials are:

1. Damaged materials
2. Amount of use
3. Obsolescence

After implementation of these criteria, the final decision to weed materials will be made on a title-by-title basis by the librarians and the Library Director.

Materials selected using the foregoing criteria will be designated to be destroyed, offered for sale, donated to other libraries, sent for rebinding, or in the case of selected reference materials, reclassified to circulation.

## **GIFTS AND DONATIONS POLICY**

The Library accepts gifts with the understanding that those which would enrich the Library collection will be retained, and others will be disposed of in an appropriate manner. They may be placed in a Friends of the Athens State University Library book sale or given to other teaching/learning institutions. All donated items will be evaluated on-site by librarians and/or teaching faculty who are subject experts in the field. Materials that are not in good physical condition (e.g., contain mold or mildew, water damage, or are in any way impaired in a manner that results in limited or restricted use) will be declined.

Donors will be asked to complete an “Athens State University Library Donor Record Form” for documentation purposes. The Library will send correspondence to the donor acknowledging receipt of the gifts; however, no monetary value will be stated. Donors are encouraged to consult the Library Director in advance concerning donations of materials.