

Mildred F. Sawyer Library
Collection Management and Development
Last revised: 2005 April 19

GENERAL STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the management and the systematic development of the library's collection of material in all formats. It sets forth the criteria to be met in selecting material for the collection and in withdrawing material from it. This policy is used solely by the Sawyer Library and is not intended to affect any other Suffolk University library.

There is a change in emphasis from a print and local-based collection to a collection which emphasizes electronic resources and remote access. The Sawyer Library is developing integrated information environments that will offer gateways to remote content databases (abstracts and indices, the text and graphics of journals or other information resources such as encyclopedias and handbooks), and in as many instances as possible, provision for full-text information. It is therefore anticipated that the print and electronic collections will increasingly supplement and complement one another so as to best serve the needs of the academic community.

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- Develop and maintain collections that provide print and non-print resources in a variety of formats in subject areas in the existing, or revised and approved curriculum.
- Provide access and availability of as much of the information resources as possible to the remote campuses, and to users remote to the physical library.
- Provide access to material that we do not own through interlibrary loan and through membership in the Fenway Library Consortium.

Strategic Directions

- The Sawyer Library has never been a research library, and will likely never be a research library. Therefore, we do not collect at the research level.
- Because of shelving limitations the library will have a definitive number of print volumes. The goal is to increase the collection to 165,000 print volumes, and 135,000 e-books by 2015.
- Because of shelving limitations the library will only shelve physical items with an expected shelf life (value) exceeding three years. Any resource with a shelf life less than three years, other than Reserve, should be acquired in electronic form only if possible.

- We prefer to acquire or otherwise access electronic information resources via the World Wide Web rather than physical media such CD-ROM or DVD.
- The Sawyer Library is likely to never have the budget nor the shelving space to meet all of the needs of all of the Suffolk University community all of the time. However, the University is fortunate to be located in one of the most information rich cities on this planet. We may not be able to shelf enough titles or obtain subscriptions to every database, but, the information likely exists somewhere in this area, physically accessible to the Suffolk University community via the subway.

SELECTION

General Acquisitions Priorities

We acquire information resources to support the core undergraduate curriculum, then undergraduate courses within the disciplines, and then the graduate curriculum by discipline.

Reserve books are our first priority. Any monograph or textbook indicated by the faculty member on the course syllabus as "required" for the course other than photocopied course packets and available through the bookstore is purchased by the library and placed on reserve.

Second priority is given to maintaining existing journal titles and content database subscriptions. We will consider new subscriptions at the request of a faculty member, pending available and adequate funding. We have an internal policy that once we start a subscription, we do our best to maintain it year to year. Therefore, a request for a new journal title or content database subscription has long term budget implications. We prioritize a journal available electronically over one based only in print because of the increased accessibility of the electronic form.

The third priority is the development and maintenance of the print and electronic resources of the reference collection to support the undergraduate and graduate curriculums.

Monographs which are not required course reading are the fourth priority.

Selection Criteria

Librarians select material to add to the library in all formats and disciplines. It is the responsibility of the reference librarians to select the resources added to the collections of the Library with the direct involvement of other University community members including faculty, students, and other Sawyer Library staff. The reference librarians, along with the staff of Technical Services, are responsible for seeing that the materials budget is expended or otherwise encumbered by May 1. Faculty participation and requests for materials are often accomplished through e-mail, in-person, intra-campus mail, web-based forms or occasionally via the telephone.

Selection tools and resources include:

- Choice

- Library Journal
- Publishers' Weekly
- vendor catalogs

Formats Collected:

- monographs
- e-books
- bibliographies (minimally)
- handbooks
- quick reference materials
- visual resources (book format rather than picture files)
- textbooks (reserves only)
- criticism
- periodicals and serials in print form
- periodicals and serials in electronic form (e-journals)
- abstracts and indexes
- videos (prefer discs over tape)
- Web-based databases including aggregated databases of journals
- Suffolk University graduate theses (excluding Law)
- microforms
- trade literature (very limited, e.g., AdWeek)

Formats NOT Collected:

- sales catalogues and auction catalogs
- photographs and reproductions of works of art
- documents within the scope of University records management
- individual maps
- manuscripts

General Guidelines

Considerations for adding to the collection:

- appropriateness of content or subject based upon the curriculum
- to increase the depth, breath and scope of a curriculum-based subject area
- "suggested readings" on a course bibliography
- permanence or timeliness of the book
- expected or anticipated use
- positive review evaluations in one or more of the accepted reviewing media and/or citations for the book in specialized bibliographies or indexes
- uniqueness of content, capabilities, or features
- faculty or student requests
- high standards of quality in content (scholarship), format, and/or literary merit;
- physical quality (of illustrations, paper and binding, format, typography, etc.)
- reputation of publisher, author, editor in the subject field;
- cost

- language
- geographic coverage
- reading or user level in which content is directed
- access points (indexes, etc.)
- ease of use
- external resources that index the publication
- comprehensiveness or breadth
- frequency of updates or revisions
- frequency the title is referenced in bibliographies or citations
- overall balance of the collection including a variety of perspectives

Requesting Acquisition of New Titles

Faculty members may request the library to consider an acquisition. Requests for consideration may be made via an e-mail, web-based forms, intra-campus mail, telephone or a personal visit, and may come in the form of catalog tear sheets, online printouts, etc. We make an effort to honor faculty requests, and prioritize such requests before librarian selections intended to broaden the collection. If the faculty request does not seem to be an obvious choice (something to support an existing course), we will seek reviews of the monograph as input into the acquisition decision. Journal titles requested must be indexed in a source already accessible or otherwise available through the Sawyer Library. On the rare occasions that we turn down a request, we notify the faculty member with an explanation.

The relevance (importance) of the information resource requested to the existing curriculum is the primary factor in an acquisition decision. The availability of adequate funds is the secondary factor in an acquisition decision.

Gifts

The library occasionally receives gift material from faculty, alumni and the general public. It is generally the practice for reference librarians to review this material as they would any new item, and to add it the collection if it is something that will add to the quality of the collection and is in good condition. Gifts not added may be placed on the book sale cart, or otherwise disposed. We are very liberal in accepting donations as long as it is understood that we may sell or give away what we do not need.

The Sawyer Library benefits from the annual Honor with Books Program managed by the University Advancement Department. Honor with Books solicits funds through printed requests (brochure and letter) from the parents of graduating seniors. The donor may designate a subject or collection when participating in this program. On the library side, technical services places a special book plate in each volume, and provides search accessibility to each donation via the item record in the library's integrated library system.

WEEDING

Withdrawing material is also part of collection management especially in a library that is not a research library. It is also conducted to re-evaluate the collection in conjunction with the selection of new and replacement materials (e.g., new editions) in order to keep the collection viable and useful. Primary responsibility for weeding lies with the library staff, although advisement from pertinent faculty may be sought where appropriate and available.

Weeding Criteria:

- outdated (obsolete) and little used material
- total usage combined with information on last date circulated
- contains inaccurate data or facts
- availability elsewhere
- number of duplicate copies
- age and/or condition
- lack of currency, timeliness of the content
- newer edition or better title available
- if outside scope, suitability or appropriateness
- unsolicited and unwanted gifts
- fragility or need for special preservation attention
- incomplete sets of books, the continuity of which is not maintained
- incomplete holdings of journals for which there is not adequate justification or demand
- insufficient use will be considered but not used as a sole factor

Criteria for Not Discarding:

- memorial and/or donations from the “Honor With Books” program
- perception of possible future demand
- cited in standard abstracting or indexing tools
- listed in a standard bibliography of important works
- rare or valuable sources discovered in the collections will be relocated to “rare books”
- materials weeded from the Reference Collection may be placed in circulation if of lasting value
- author is/was a faculty member
- has local reference or relevance

MEDIA

Since there is no funding directly provided for video purchases and there is limited shelving to house the growing collection, the Sawyer Library will collect videos using the following guidelines:

- videos should directly support CAS and SSOM curriculum or specific academic programs
- videos should support serious scholarly interests and not merely provide entertainment

- videos of general popular interest (e.g., Hollywood hits) or videos easily obtained for rental at most video stores will generally not be purchased
- will normally collect documentaries and non-fiction informational films over fictional “movies.”

Precedence will be given to videos that support core-learning courses where a video will actually enhance a student’s understanding of the topic being studied. For example, BBC productions of Shakespeare’s plays help an English 102 student understand the Elizabethan language and dramatic intent of a play being studied.

Since libraries are often required to pay many times the general “individual” price for a film, budgetary constraints may keep the library from ordering even appropriate titles.

The Sawyer Library does not have adequate funding or space to collect the following:

- musical CDs or other sound recordings in general
- videogames
- 35mm or other films on reels
- filmstrips or slide collections
- standalone CD-ROMs and computer software, except for certain statistical resources or those CD-ROMs that are directly related to a textbook or an essential reference resource

ADDITIONAL COLLECTION MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION

Suffolk University Archives

The Archives has its own collection management and development policy which is not reproduced in this document.

Journal Back Files

Journal back files are developed and maintained within the scope of the budget allocated. Our preferred formats are electronic (e.g., JSTOR), followed by microforms, and then bound volumes.

Collection Analysis

The Sawyer Library compiles and analyzes information concerning the characteristics of the collections. As examples, an “age report” is generated as needed through the reporting functions of the library’s integrated library system. It is used to quantify the “years since copyright” of the collection by LC classification number. A second report, generated for the first time in 2005, is outsourced and provides collection information including usage and subject alignment with recognized bibliographic sources used for collection development.

Inventory

The collection is physically inventoried annually during the summer months.

Physical Item Quality

Librarians in Reference and Circulation maintain physical collection quality by monitoring the use, physical conditions, and accessibility of materials.

Replacement of Resources

The decision to replace materials that have been lost, damaged, or stolen is made on a case-by-case basis. Criteria include the availability of the resource, its cost, and the likelihood of its future use.

Duplication of Resources

Because of the library's limited shelving, and its limited acquisitions budget, acquiring more than one copy of any resource in any format is unusual. An exception is when a publisher requires a print version of the electronic version in order to receive and maintain the electronic version so as to increase its availability and accessibility (e.g., the remote campuses).

Resource Sharing

The Sawyer Library acknowledges a dependence on resources external to the library and its virtual collections. The Sawyer Library is therefore exploring, developing, and utilizing strategies for the sharing of resources and/or their acquisition in cooperative programs with other institutions.

- We belong to the Fenway Library Consortium which enables any member of the college/university/public community of member libraries to borrow from another member library with the same privileges as does a local, direct community member.
- We leverage our memberships in consortial arrangements to acquire ownership of, or subscription/access to, curriculum-related resources including Fenway Libraries Online (FLO); Palinet and Nelinet (regional bibliographic utilities) and the Northeast Research Libraries (NERL). We also take advantage of our Massachusetts regional affiliation with the Boston Regional Library System.

We Do Not:

- use approval plans
- use off-site storage
- preserve other than bind
- formally repair or conserve
- participate in area or consortia cooperative collection development
- serve as a research library.