

Simmons University Library Collection Development Policy 2023

Adopted July, 2023

The Simmons University Library is an active participant in the student learning experience, an essential component of a Simmons education, and a vital asset to the University, fostering an institution-wide culture of academic inquiry and knowledge cultivation. We are committed to the support of teaching and learning; inclusivity and accessibility; sustainability; and thought leadership and professional engagement.

The Library's collections are thoughtfully developed, managed, assessed, and promoted to best support the academic mission of Simmons University and the educational needs of our community, centering student learning. The Simmons University Library is open to all members of the Simmons community, including faculty, staff, and alumnae/i; due to licensing restrictions, certain electronic resources may require authorization of login credentials, and/or may be restricted to particular user populations.

This Collection Development Policy outlines the guiding principles the Library follows in the selection and acquisition of materials, as well as our approach to managing the general collection.

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Guiding Principles and Selection Criteria

Support of the Academic Program

The Library collection supports the learning, teaching, research, and other academic needs of the Simmons University community, prioritizing support for student learning. The Library lacks the space capacity or financial resources to develop and maintain a comprehensive collection of records across all areas of study. Instead, the Library focuses on developing a collection that supports the current curriculum and the scholarship being conducted at Simmons at levels appropriate for the academic programs offered and in formats that best support program delivery and academic program administration and accreditation. As we provide access to electronic resources, we advocate for technological solutions that ensure equitable collection access for all.

Additional considerations include value to our users balanced against the cost, quality of content, currency/timeliness, accessibility of online materials for users with disabilities, and discoverability of the content in the library catalog.

As acknowledged by the Curriculum Committee and Academic Program Management Committee, the development of new or substantively altered academic courses or programs may require unique Library resources. Such needs are to be discussed with the Library Director.

Purchase of materials intended solely for individual faculty research will be considered only after instructional needs have been met, and only if funds allow. Faculty may be referred to the Center for Faculty Excellence to pursue funds to support such resources.

Diverse Perspectives

Recognizing that Libraries are not neutral, and in support of the Library's core value of inclusivity, we make an effort to provide access to underrepresented and marginalized perspectives, voices, and viewpoints.

We take an equitable and inclusive approach to the Simmons University Library collections in order to support the curriculum and reflect the entirety of the Simmons community. We value a range of perspectives, authorship, audience, and subject matter. We regularly assess our collections to

ensure they reflect the diversity of the University's students, faculty, and staff. We advocate for inclusive cataloging that improves equity of access to materials and uses equitable and updated terminology. We use collection building practices that are transparent and consider faculty, staff, and student input.

Accessibility

The Library seeks to build a collection accessible to all Library users, including online, distance, and remote student populations. Selection of Library materials by format (physical vs. electronic) is guided by multiple criteria, including course modality, subject/discipline, material type, acquisition mode, urgency of the information needed, how the material would be used, and availability of the content in the desired format.

To the degree possible, the Library strives for the broadest degree of access when selecting electronic resources, including allowance for unlimited or multiple simultaneous users and preference for resources with no restrictions to printing, copying, or downloading.

Recognizing the enhanced access provided by electronic materials, acquiring electronic versions of existing print holdings will be considered on a case-by-case basis depending on the context and relevance of the title in question. Print duplication of existing electronic or print holdings is discouraged due to physical space limitations.

Sustainability

The Library balances acquisition modes that alternately provide for ownership and/or subscription access in order to ensure we are able to provide reliable and consistent access to more resources while also being fiscally responsible. The Library conducts regular assessments of collection use to ensure that funds are directed to the highest impact resources.

Intellectual Freedom and Professional Values

The Library supports the American Library Association's Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read Statement, including the Intellectual Freedom Principles for Academic Libraries interpretation. The library affirms the belief that "[t]he general principles set forth in the Library Bill of Rights form an

indispensable framework for building collections, services, and policies that serve the entire academic community.” This includes that collection development “should transcend the personal values of the selector” and “it is essential that collections contain materials representing a variety of perspectives on subjects that may be considered controversial.” The Library Director will review and respond to any concerns raised by community members to materials in the Simmons University Library collections.

Collections Overviews and Selection Criteria

General Collection

The General Collection consists of books, journals and magazines, media and recordings, databases, and digitized primary sources. The scope of materials, as well as the balance between physical and electronic formats, varies according to the needs of each discipline. The collection is discoverable through the Library's Catalog.

The physical print collection totals approximately 165,000 volumes and is held on the Ground level of the Library. E-books are available through vendor packages and by individual purchase. This collection is developed through librarian selection or user recommendation, and the default purchase option is for electronic access.

Reserves Collection

The Reserves Collection consists of books, including textbooks, media (both physical and streaming), journal articles, and other materials required for coursework. Materials are accessed by students through the Course Reserves website. Physical reserves are accessible at the Library Service Desk during hours of operation.

Materials can be placed in the Course Reserve Collection by faculty, and this collection is developed primarily through faculty purchase requests. In most cases, purchase requests for course reserves will be fulfilled within two weeks of receipt. Exceptions around cost, format, or availability may apply.

Streaming Media and select other materials in the Reserves Collection are obtained via subscription and will not be automatically renewed. It is the responsibility of faculty members to manage the reserves lists for courses they teach and/or administer.

In select instances, the Library administers access to specialized databases and/or curricular software which support defined academic user groups (i.e. Nursing, Art and Arts Administration, Library and Information Sciences). These subscriptions are funded by the respective department's

budget, and the Library provides access (including limiting access) in accordance to license terms and agreements.

Consortial Agreements, Interlibrary Loan, and Resource Sharing

Simmons University Library enhances its support of learning, teaching, and scholarship through maintaining service and consortial agreements with other institutions. Materials for teaching or research that the Library does not own may be available from another library through Interlibrary Loan.

Simmons University Library is a member of the Fenway Library Organization (FLO), a group of academic and special libraries in the Boston area, and Simmons ID holders have borrowing privileges to all member libraries. Contact individual member libraries for more information. Simmons community members may be eligible for a library card or eCard with the Boston Public Library and/or the Minuteman Library Network if certain conditions are met.

LibGuides and Librarian-Curated Content

Simmons University Library creates, maintains, and makes available LibGuides of Librarian-curated content to support the Simmons University community and curriculum. LibGuides support academic programs through direct access to relevant Library-owned resources, subscription-based resources, and datasets and information sources produced by government, non-profit, and industry sources. LibGuides also support special Library and University programming, initiatives, and community interests.

Capsule Collections

Simmons University Library maintains selected “capsule collections” that reflect and support the Simmons University community and curriculum.

- In partnership with the Simmons Career Education Center, the Library maintains both print and virtual collections of materials to support students’ career development and future academic pursuits. The print collection is held in the Library Reading Room, and the virtual collection is accessible through a Careers LibGuide.

- The Simmons Authors Collection consists of books published by faculty, alumnae/i, staff, and students. Many of these works may also be held in the University Archives' book collections. This collection is primarily print-based and held in the Library Reading Room. It is developed by faculty purchase request and by Librarian selection.
- The Reference Collection is a curated collection of print and electronic reference sources that support the University's academic programs. The Library no longer actively collects most print Reference materials. The print Reference Collection is on the Library's main floor. Selected historical reference materials that support University Archives collections in Social Work and Library Science are held in the University Archives.
- The Zines Collection consists of primary source print works, typically self-published and self-distributed. Zines often are a favored method of expression for young people, creators who hold one or more marginalized identities, members of radical subcultures, and others who are often excluded by publishing gatekeepers. The Zines Collection aligns with the library's collecting areas including activism, self-care, women's health and hygiene, intersectional feminism, and sexuality. A complementary collection of Zines produced by Simmons students is held by the University Archives.
- The Children's Literature Collection consists of primary and critical texts in the field of Children's Literature, with particular collection strengths in areas of late 20th and early 21st Century picture books and young adult fiction. This collection is developed through close collaboration with faculty and scholars.

University Archives Collections

The Simmons University Archives collections document the history of Simmons University and reflect Simmons' commitment to preparing scholars for independent livelihoods. Particular collection strengths align with programmatic strengths of the University, especially a focus on social work and welfare in the early 20th Century.

- Archival University Records are comprised of records, reports, documents, publications, photographs, recordings and other informational content created by administrators, staff, faculty, students, and alumnae in their various official capacities; the records date from the late 19th Century through the present day and detail the establishment, development, and

operations of Simmons University. The records are organized by the administrative or academic department, and finding aids and collections guides are available for selected collections. In accordance with institutional policy, access to many of these records may be restricted for set periods of time. The University Archivist establishes and maintains the documentation strategy to capture and retain vital and historical records, and Archives staff appraise each records transfer for inclusion.

- The Archives' Manuscript Collections document the history of Simmons University and related topical areas through collections donated to or on deposit with the Simmons University Archives. Personal papers, photographs, scrapbooks, memorabilia, and oral histories illustrate the lives of Simmons students, faculty, staff, and alumnae/i. Additional collections of individuals and organizations are acquired in areas of particular interest to the University, including social work and librarianship. Finding aids and other collection guides are available for many collections. The University Archivist evaluates each potential donation for its appropriateness to the collection.
- The Charities Collection contains annual reports, pamphlets, and sermons of private charities, public welfare agencies, and hospitals in Boston, throughout Massachusetts and the eastern United States, and England, from the 1790s to ca. 1950. The original set of these materials was collected and maintained by the Simmons School of Social Work and utilized in their curriculum. Accessions to the Charities Collections are evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the University Archivist.
- The Historical Book Collections at Simmons University reflect the strong professional orientation of the University curriculum. Represented are mostly 19th and 20th century works relating to public health nursing, social work and social welfare, children's literature, librarianship, household economics, and the history of the book. There are also selected works by members of the faculty and alumnae/i. Additions to this collection are at the discretion of the University Archivist.

Collection Acquisition and Budget

Librarian Selection

Selection and acquisition of materials for the general collection is facilitated through a close collaboration of Collections and Access Librarians and Curriculum and Research Librarians (C&R Librarians). C&R Librarians have the primary responsibility for developing, advocating for, and assessing the print and electronic collections associated with the disciplines they support. C&R Librarians maintain close contact with faculty and stay abreast of disciplinary publishing trends, which in turn inform the title-by-title selection of new materials for the collection. Librarians make collaborative and evidence-based decisions when determining which ongoing subscriptions and large one-time purchases of databases and package deals to acquire.

Demand-Driven Purchases

Through a mediated demand-driven acquisitions program, the library accepts requests from Simmons community members for specific resources used to support instruction, research, or course assignments and projects. Titles can be requested using the Suggest a Purchase form on the Library website, or by directly contacting a Librarian. All requests will be reviewed according to the considerations outlined above. The Library endeavors to review requests on a regular basis, but will often leave high price/major decisions for the end of the fiscal year, when we have a better understanding of funds available.

Resource Trials

Resource trials are used to help Librarians assess the value and usefulness of a prospective resource. When possible, trials will be scheduled to maximize the potential for faculty and students to provide input. Trials are scheduled in collaboration with vendors and often there is little timing flexibility. All requests for trials are coordinated through the Access and Operations Librarian via recommendation from Librarians.

Library Collections Budget

The Library's Materials Budget supports the acquisition of all materials covered by this policy – including purchases and subscription access. It is comprised of operational funds allocated as part

of the University budget cycle and, in select cases, gift funds, some of which may be designated in support of specific academic programs. The Materials Budget is administered by the Access and Operations Librarian in consultation with the Library Director and members of the Library Leadership Group.

The majority of the library's Materials Budget is committed to ongoing subscriptions to electronic journals and databases, ebook packages, streaming music and videos, statistical data, and other electronic resources, that are renewed on an annual basis. The library budget does not allow for growth in subscription funding, as typical yearly rate increases on subscription costs outpace inflation. Therefore, new subscriptions can usually only be added when funding is released via subscription cancellations or by securing a supplementary funding source.

Donations

Unrestricted financial gifts for acquisitions are always appreciated, and the Library is thankful for gifts of any size. They make a difference in the quality of collections and services we offer.

Potential donors of books for the general collection are invited to first send a title list for review. Since the library has limited space for new physical materials in the general collection, potential donations must first be reviewed based on the same criteria used for purchased materials. We might not be able to accept them all. Duplicates of already owned books are not accepted. Unsolicited donations left at the library's Services Desk, Loading Dock, entrances, Book Return bins, or anywhere else in or around the library, will be discarded. The library reserves the right to deselect previously accepted donations if they are deemed obsolete, out of scope, or no longer in suitable condition for circulation.

Appraisals are the responsibility of the donor. For more information, refer to United States tax regulations, particularly "561: Determining the Value of Donated Property," "526: Charitable Contributions," and "8283: Noncash Charitable Contributions Appraisal Summary." Please see the IRS' Eight Tips for Deducting Charitable Contributions or consult with your tax adviser.

For all financial and in-kind gifts, the library can provide a Letter of Acknowledgement signed by the Library Director on behalf of Simmons University. While we are unable to appraise the value of in-kind gifts for donors, we can count the number of volumes donated and include that count in the letter.

University Archives Acquisitions

The Simmons University Archives administers the University's Records Management Program. Approved by the Simmons University Board of Trustees in 2011, the Records Management Policy outlines the obligations of Simmons staff, faculty, and administrators to the systematic and consistent management of all records, regardless of medium or format. The University Archives has developed Retention Schedules for all University Records and schedules specific to individual offices or broadly shared functions. It is the professional responsibility of all Simmons University administrators, officers, faculty, and staff to comply with the University's Records Management Program.

Simmons University Archives staff works closely with donors to identify personal papers most appropriate for donation to the Archives. Donors are encouraged to contact the Archives staff before sorting or rearranging the materials they wish to donate, and donations of any size are welcomed. Donors will be asked to complete a Deed of Gift which transfers copyright and ownership to the University Archives, facilitating scholars' ability to quote from collections during their research. Ownership of the records is transferred when the donor signs a deed of gift. While the deed of gift is a standard document, it can be customized to suit individual donors' needs. In most cases, the University Archives will not accept donations unless the ownership is transferred to Simmons University.

Appraisals are the responsibility of the donor. For more information, refer to United States tax regulations, particularly "561: Determining the Value of Donated Property," "526: Charitable Contributions," and "8283: Noncash Charitable Contributions Appraisal Summary." Please see the IRS' Eight Tips for Deducting Charitable Contributions or consult with your tax adviser.

The cost of caring for, describing, and providing access to historic materials is high. Donors are encouraged to consider making a monetary donation toward supporting the arrangement, description and preservation of their materials donation. For all financial and in-kind gifts, the Archives can provide a Letter of Acknowledgement signed by the University Archivist on behalf of Simmons University. While we are unable to appraise the value of in-kind gifts for donors, we can describe the collection in the letter.

Collection Assessment, Maintenance, and Deselection

Collection Assessment and Deselection

Materials in the general collection are evaluated and assessed utilizing a variety of data and metrics to aid in identifying potential gaps and subject areas for further development. Identifying high-demand and emerging subject areas enables the library to shape future allocations and priorities to meet the evolving research and classroom needs of our users. Collection evaluation also plays an important role in recognizing underutilized resources of high quality that can be more heavily promoted, as well as resources that can be removed from the collection.

The deselection of materials from the collection (sometimes referred to as “weeding”), is an integral process for ensuring the relevance, currency, and accessibility of the library’s physical collections and ensures sufficient space for the addition of new acquisitions. Librarians and staff regularly assess the physical collection. Commitments to long-term retention of print materials extend to those that continue to support the academic needs of our students and faculty, as well as materials identified by our shared print agreements with regional and national library consortia.

Considerations for deselection of materials include the materials’: physical damage; duplication or availability elsewhere; superseded by later editions; obsolescence, lack of recent usage, or out of current collecting scope. Titles identified for deselection are deaccessioned from the catalog and sent to a third-party bookseller. Lost or damaged physical materials are evaluated for currency, demand, and whether they are still within scope of the collection, before being replaced.

Subscription Review

To ensure long-term access to essential information resources, ongoing subscriptions to journals, databases, and other resources are reviewed annually to identify potential candidates for cancellation. Decisions are based on criteria including, but not limited to: low or no usage over multiple years, cost per use higher than the cost of borrowing or purchasing individual articles or chapters, or no longer within scope of the collection. Librarians consult with faculty as needed. Funds freed by cancellations will be reallocated to cover rate increases of existing subscriptions and acquisition of new subscriptions.