

LIAISON PROGRAM
GOALS AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR
FACULTY COORDINATORS
SEPTEMBER 2008

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

While ultimate responsibility for developing and maintaining the library's collections rests with the librarians, faculty are essential collaborators in recommending material to support the curriculum. The Library's Liaison Program is the primary mechanism and forum for participation of faculty in the collection development process.

Liaison Program

The purpose of the Liaison Program is:

1. To enhance communication between the Library and the academic departments, by providing opportunities to discuss and resolve library issues with the faculty.
2. To strengthen faculty participation in the collection development process.

The Collection Development Librarian organizes the efforts of the Library Liaisons. The Liaisons determine whether requested materials conform to the goals, guidelines, and policies presented in this document.

In an effort to develop a collection which supports the instructional programs of the University, each librarian is assigned to select materials in specific subject areas and to be the Library Liaison (contact person) for the corresponding academic departments. The Library Liaison's counterpart is the faculty member whom the Departmental Chairperson appoints to serve as the Faculty Coordinator. Each Faculty Coordinator serves for a three-year term. This provides a continuity of service that strengthens the relationship between the department and the Library, and builds a body of knowledge that contributes to long range collection planning. The current list of Library Liaisons and Faculty Coordinators can be found at

<http://www.wpunj.edu/library/resourcegmt/selects.shtml>

The responsibilities of the individuals who act as the library and departmental coordinators are as follows:

FACULTY COORDINATORS:

- Act as the "point of contact" for Library issues, representing the needs of the Department
- Inform the Library of departmental activities, especially proposed new courses, programs of study and developing areas of research interest, which require library collections support
- Collaborate on the development of evaluative and selection criteria that support collection goals

- Select library materials and encourage selection from other colleagues.
- Participate in evaluation and assessment projects
- Communicate changes in library policies and procedures from the Library Liaison to the departmental faculty
- Gather information from the department faculty at the request of the Library Liaisons

LIBRARIAN SELECTORS:

- Act as the “point of contact” for faculty with other areas of the Library
- Facilitate the resolution of service problems
- Consult with faculty about major initiatives; communicate changes in library policy and procedures
- Remain aware of the status of programs and courses – including new and discontinued courses
- Evaluate and select library materials, and review faculty requests
- Collaborate on the development of evaluative and selection criteria that support collection goals
- Participate in evaluation and assessment projects
- Monitor expenditures of the acquisitions budget over the course of the fiscal year and establish priorities
- Review and make recommendations on requests for serials and audiovisual material; review interlibrary loan requests, lost, damaged, and missing titles, and donated materials which fall within assigned subject areas
- Report to the Collection Development Librarian about contact and progress with the Faculty Coordinators and other members of assigned departments on Library issues
- Participate in the development and revision of the collection development plan

Collection Development Goals

The primary goal of the Library with regard to the maintenance and development of the collection is:

To acquire and make available those information resources that are needed to support the instructional programs of the university.

The Library will also pursue three secondary goals. While these are subordinate to the primary goal, all three demand equal emphasis.

To acquire and make available those materials needed for research by faculty and administrators, which will be frequently used, and of long-term value to the university community.

To acquire and make available those library materials for general information in subject areas not included in the curriculum of the university.

To collect and preserve all-important materials related to the history and development of William Paterson University.

All materials acquired by the David and Lorraine Cheng Library will conform to the goals of the Library.

Collection Philosophy

1. Philosophy

While the primary education work of the academy is done in the classroom, laboratory and performance stages, these labors are, of necessity, transient and impermanent, requiring rehearsal and renewal each semester. Course by course faculty challenge students with the major ideas of civilization and expose them to some of the principal thinkers of all time.

The center of the life of the mind in the university, however, is located in the library. Only here are all of the great minds collected, preserved and made available to the serious researcher, the casual reader and the earnest seeker after truth in his own fashion.

Any university library that strives for excellence must count all the seminal, timeless works of humankind's rational, religious and cultural heritage, as well as significant numbers of secondary works that further what Robert Maynard Hutchins once described as "the Great Conversation." It must gather, as Matthew Arnold put it, "all the best that has been thought and said."

In addition to the key documents of civilization, the modern library must serve the university's curriculum. The student's textbook is but the starting point for an educational journey. A judicious selection of supporting materials of a more practical and explanatory nature must be collected and weeded as the vicissitudes of time, fad, change and the marketplace drive the more practical or vocational programs in new directions.

2. Controversial Issues

A university is the proper home of free and unfettered debate. No topic is forbidden from discussion. All viewpoints are given a hearing, and all are subject to question and challenge. The widely accepted positions of "everyone" are subject to challenge. Even the most unpopular ideas - the things considered by most people to be "wrong" or "bad" - have the right to be presented and defended, as long as their proponents permit others to openly and respectfully challenge them. Critical thinking, reason and persuasion should rule in academia, not intimidation, ridicule, abuse nor authoritative denunciation. Everyone and every idea must be given a respectful hearing, as long as they grant the same respect to others. Every idea must be open to question. Shouting down an opponent, even an obnoxious one, has no place in the university, nor does mindless invective. As Alan Dershowitz has noted, the only way to counter bad speech is with better speech.

The David and Lorraine Cheng Library has long upheld the position that the Library is the place where one can find the best that has ever been thought and written – and the worst, too. In the battle of ideas, both sides/all sides must be given their chance. It is inherently unfair to present “bad” ideas only as they are caricatured, attacked and condemned by their opponents. Wherever possible, the Library seeks to acquire the best arguments by the proponents of unpopular positions. Both sides should speak in the words of their strongest advocates.

The Library realizes that society develops a consensus regarding various controversial issues, often only after many years of contentious debate. Certainly, the Collection will reflect the majority opinions on many issues. Balance is not a 50-50 matter. The librarian selectors, however, are charged with seeking out enduring challenges to the current wisdom and the status quo. Selectors affirmatively attempt to include significant contrarian viewpoints (while avoiding the mere crackpots, sometimes not an easy task). In this way, students and researchers will be presented with a fuller range of viewpoints, not just the politically correct opinions of the day. History repeatedly shows that today’s radical challenge may become tomorrow’s common sense – and next year’s stifling orthodoxy.

It is the duty of the Librarian selectors to present and preserve the panoply of opinions that have shaped the debates of the past and that frame the debates of the present and the future. It does not censor ideas nor take sides. Its historic role is to acquire and preserve the raw materials necessary for intellectual debates to occur on campus.

3. Challenges to the Collection

All materials selected for the Library’s collection will be processed, shelved and circulated according to regular policies. No material will be labeled in any way that would differentiate it from “mainstream” holdings. Material lost, stolen or vandalized may be replaced according to normal procedures. If specific titles are repeatedly vandalized or stolen, it may be necessary to place them on reserve to preserve access.

Any patron, objecting to the inclusion of certain titles in the collection must make a signed, written complaint to the Director detailing specific points to support his or her position. The Director will respond in writing to patrons and if they remain dissatisfied with the resolution, the Director and librarians involved in the decision will meet with them upon request. Until a final decision is made, the questioned items will remain in the collection and available to patrons.

The Library endorses the tenets and policies of the American Library Association. The ALA Statements and Policies on Intellectual Freedom can be found at <http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=censorship&template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=114327>

All librarians, teaching faculty, students, and University administrators are encouraged to submit requests for both print and non-print materials which fall within

their area of responsibility and which conform to the collection policies presented in this document. The cost of these materials will be charged against the appropriate Library account. Material requests are also accepted from University staff and students.

Requests for library materials may be made online at <http://www.wpunj.edu/library/forms/>

General Collection Development Policies

In support of the University mission, the Library acquires information resources in a variety of formats – books, journals, audio, video, and digital files. Access to information is also provided through direct licensing from authorized providers, establishing connections to free resources, and participating in consortial agreements with other organizations. This document refers to all of these resources as the Library's collections, whether they are owned, leased, or borrowed, and whether or not they reside physically in the Library.

Since the Library does not have sufficient resources to acquire everything published in areas pertinent to the University's programs, Library Liaisons employ the following general criteria when selecting and evaluating material to be added or removed from the collections. Particular criteria assume greater or lesser importance depending on the collection, the resources available, and the subject matter covered.

General Selection Guidelines

1. Supports the curriculum
2. Of value to students or faculty, necessary for research or fulfilling the general aims of a liberal education. Need to balance the collection by subject will also be a consideration.
3. High standards of quality in content, expression and format
4. Major emphasis on current publications, preference to works which promise to fulfill future as well as current needs. Will obtain out of print material if readily available from vendors.
5. Effort to represent the widest possible diversity of viewpoints
6. Multiple formats – consider user demand, reliability of access, ease of use, cost, space, and ability to support the format.
7. While not a generic factor, cost may be a consideration.

General Evaluation Guidelines

1. Reviewed favorably in a reputable source.
2. Issued by known publishers with high standards of quality and reliable reputations.
3. Written or produced by authorities or outstanding people in the field
4. Cited in bibliographies for academic libraries or standard subject bibliographies.
5. Recommended by a faculty member
6. Provided essential diverse and alternative viewpoints