

Kalamazoo College Library

Reference Collection Development Policy

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PURPOSE AND MISSION

The Kalamazoo College Reference Department Collection Development policy defines the purpose of the Reference Collection and describes the scope of the collection, including types of materials, as well as the guidelines for fair and consistent selection, maintenance, and weeding of the collection. The policy should be revised annually to accommodate changes in the College's mission and curriculum.

Kalamazoo College Reference Department will continue to develop a reference collection that reflects the educational objectives and supports the curriculum of the college. The Reference Department will acquire materials in the areas of study of the programs offered by the college and appropriate to the level of instruction. In addition to supporting the curriculum, the collection should include basic works in all major subject areas and those broader in scope than any of the disciplines defined in the college's academic program. The department will exercise caution when considering the purchase of specialized research materials solely for individual faculty use.

Rising costs, increases in publishing output, and a the demand for information in a wide variety of formats necessitate careful materials selection based on an understanding of the immediate and future goals of the Library and the College. The Reference Collection must be systematically shaped and developed in order to make the best use of our financial resources.

OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of Reference collection development at Kalamazoo College is to build and maintain a library Reference Collection that supports the undergraduate curriculum.

COMMUNITIES SERVED

The Reference Department serves the educational and information needs of current students, faculty, administration, and staff of Kalamazoo College. Kalamazoo College enrollment is approximately 1300 undergraduate students and has approximately 140 faculty members. The department also serves visitors from the community, although librarians cannot undertake extensive research for visitors.

PROGRAMS SUPPORTED BY THE COLLECTION

The Reference Collection supports all divisions of the College (Fine Arts, Foreign Languages, Humanities, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Physical Education, and Social Sciences). In addition to these academic programs, the College has created several special programs to augment its liberal arts education, including First Year Seminars, Study Abroad, Career Development internships, Service Learning, and the Senior Individualized Project. These programs are supported as needed.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE COLLECTION

Reference Librarians are responsible for the development and management in all subject areas of the Reference Collection, including evaluation, selection, weeding, and designation of materials for relocation. The Acquisitions librarian will order materials for the Reference Collection. Faculty may request acquisition of appropriate and useful sources for student research needs and course requirements. Students and staff are encouraged to request materials as well.

ACQUISITION OF MATERIALS

The Acquisitions Librarian is responsible for ordering new materials and maintaining the budget for the Reference Collection. Reference Librarians suggest new print titles, as well as online databases and indexes, to the Acquisitions Librarian.

Selection of New Reference Materials

Reference materials are not easily borrowed from other libraries, and therefore the Reference department must consider this in building the collection. However, the proximity of other libraries (including the Western Michigan University Libraries, the Kalamazoo Public Library, and the Kalamazoo Valley Community College Library) are considered when assessing materials.

While the Librarians have ultimate responsibility for collection development, faculty, staff and students of the college are encouraged to contribute to the building of the Reference Collection. Requests should be sent to the Reference Librarians or to the Acquisitions Librarian.

The following principles, not in order of importance, serve as guidelines for selection:

- Usefulness of the publication, considering the existing collection
- Appropriateness of level of treatment
- Strengths and weaknesses of the existing collection related to current demonstrable needs of the college
- Favorable reviews or inclusion in basic reference collection guides
- Potential frequency of use
- Reputation of the author
- Reputation of publisher
- Currency of the topic
- Date of publication
- Cost
- Language of the publication
- Standing order obligations
- Space constraints
- Lasting value of the content

During the selection process, Reference materials are judged on four priorities:

Priority 1: Materials that meet the mission of the Kalamazoo College curriculum; materials that have immediate educational value for Kalamazoo College students; materials produced by authors and publishers of good reputation; materials that have basic permanent value and timely materials that have current value.

Priority 2: Materials that could be useful to students and faculty in various subject areas within the educational scope of the College, but that are not absolutely essential to the collection in these areas. Also fitting into this category are materials of outstanding quality that are not concerned directly with the present curriculum of the College. Immediate purchase of these items is desirable but not essential.

Priority 3: Materials of merit that would be "nice to have" but are not essential to the collection, either in support of the curriculum or in related subject areas. These items could be thought of as luxury items.

Priority 4: Materials that do not fit into the scope of the Reference Collection, and that do not fit into the current or future mission of the College or its curriculum.

Ultimately, the selecting Librarian will judge the relevance of the title to the curriculum, patron needs, utility of the resource, and alternative means of getting the same information (eg: are there free web sources that provide the same information in an authoritative manner?) These evaluations shall be based both on reviews in the professional literature and on the professional judgment of the selecting Librarian.

Sources to Consult

Reference Librarians use a wide variety of sources for collection development. These materials include journals that with book reviews such as *Choice Magazine*, *Booklist*, *Library Journal*, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *American Libraries*, and *Publisher's Weekly*. Publisher catalogs are used as well as specialized sources such as listservs. Reference Librarians consult vendors, bibliographies of Reference works, advertisements, and other sources for new and updated Reference works.

Selection Procedures for Electronic Reference Sources

Reference Librarians set up and request free trials of electronic resources. These trials are available to current students, faculty, and staff of Kalamazoo College. Reference Librarians send out an email to academic departments that may be most interested in a particular resource and ask for feedback on that resource. Based on this feedback, the guidelines above, and the priority level of an electronic resource, the Reference Librarians and the Acquisition Librarian decide whether or not to subscribe.

Gifts and Donations

The goal in accepting gifts into the Reference Collection is to acquire only materials that are highly relevant to Kalamazoo College's needs. Gifts and donated materials will be evaluated using the same criteria as purchased materials. The Reference Librarians make the final decision on whether a gift item is added to the collection. Each item donated to the Library becomes Library property, to be used as the Library staff deem most effective. Library staff will determine the classification, housing, and circulation policies of all gift items. Unneeded items will be disposed of by exchange, donation, sale, or discard.

Processing of the Library Collection

Books: Once a new book comes to reference, it is put on a reference new book shelf for shelving.

Indexes: New volumes of reference indexes are shelved in the Index Stacks. Once the bound copies arrive, the paperback copies are recycled.

Notebooks: The Acquisitions Librarian brings looseleaf issues and pocket parts to Reference. Reference student assistants file these looseleaf issues in their proper notebooks.

CDs that come with books: CDs that come with books are left in the pocket in the back of the book without other markings. Materials that are purely promotional will not be added to the collection.

SCOPE OF THE COLLECTION

A reference book is often defined as "a book designed by the arrangement and treatment of its subject matter to be consulted for definite items of information rather than to be read consecutively," and a reference collection as a "collection of reference books and other materials in a library, useful for supplying authoritative information or identifying sources, kept together for convenience in providing information service, and generally not allowed to circulate."

(ALA Glossary, 1998).

Coverage

The Reference collection includes works at three levels of coverage:

1. *General:* Supports the educated layperson's reference needs, and not necessarily instructional or research needs.
2. *Instructional:* Supports the curriculum, and supports professionals in staying apprised of current in developments within their field(s).
3. *Research:* In-depth coverage that supports the research needs of students and faculty.

Geographic Areas and Time Periods

All national and international geographic areas and regions are included. All chronological periods are collected, focusing on those covered in the College curriculum and including sources that provide broad overviews of disciplines.

Formats

Formats collected include:

Books: For most print reference sources, a single copy will be purchased. Multiple copies of selected, high-demand items will be purchased only after careful consideration of budget constraints.

Serials: Some serial publications (including monographic serials) are included in the Reference collection. The number of serial reference works selected is limited due to the ongoing commitment of serial publications.

Online: Online (most often Web-based) reference sources are a significant component of the Reference Collection and will be collected using the same criteria as other materials. Most online reference sources are purchased through subscription agreements. Online resources may be collected as an “additional” copy of a print resource, but more likely will be purchased in place of a comparable print resource, due to budget considerations.

Formats that are not collected include:

CD: Reference works (databases or Reference books) on CD or CD-ROM will not be collected unless the item is unavailable in print or online formats, and is deemed absolutely necessary for the Reference Collection. Interactive CD-ROMs are not collected because they quickly become outdated and some CD-ROM products, during installation or use, automatically load software or alter existing software. The Library does not provide access to CD-ROMs on Reference computers.

Microforms: Microform reference works will not be collected unless the item is unavailable in print or electronic formats, and is deemed absolutely necessary for the Reference Collection.

Types of Materials

The Reference Collection consists of a variety of resources, including but not limited to:

Almanacs and Yearbooks: Reference collects current editions of major publications for the United States and for countries and subjects as determined from curricular emphases.

Bibliographies: The Reference Collection includes single author bibliographies and general bibliographies on broad curricular topics, especially topics in great demand or of considerable current interest. The Reference Collection also includes bibliographies of Reference works in disciplines appropriate for the scope of the collection.

Biographies: Comprehensive, regional, national and international biographies, including both retrospective and current biography, are shelved in the Reference Collection.

Concordances: Only concordances for very important authors and works are included in the reference collection. (Examples of works collected are concordances for Shakespeare and the Bible.)

Dictionaries: The reference collection provides monolingual, bilingual, and polyglot dictionaries in major languages. The section also provides specialized dictionaries (for example, covering slang, idiomatic expressions, and historical aspects of language) as well as subject-specific dictionaries for geographical areas and time periods.

Directories: With directory information available online, the library collects selectively. The reference collection may include current editions of major national and international directories in key fields within the mission statement and may contain certain retrospective editions of directories based on demonstrated use. Directories of limited scope or low use will be replaced occasionally rather than regularly.

Encyclopedias: The reference collection includes major general encyclopedias in print and online, both single and multi-volume. The reference section will attempt to acquire a revised print edition of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* as funds permit, but other general, multi-volume English language encyclopedias (such as *Americana* or *Collier's*) are not collected. In addition to the general encyclopedias, Reference collects authoritative encyclopedias in specialized subject areas to support research in mission-related programs.

Full Text Databases: Because of the demand for full text materials, the Kalamazoo College Library tries to subscribe to as many full text resources as possible, following the principles in the "Acquisition of Materials" section above.

Geographical Sources: The reference collection provides authoritative atlases, maps, and gazetteers covering all areas of the world during all time periods. Current editions of relevant worldwide yearbooks are also maintained; e.g., *Europa*, *Statesman's*, as well as some current travel guides to support the College's study abroad programs.

Handbooks: The reference collection attempts to collect current and authoritative handbooks in all mission-related fields. Handbooks shelved in reference should be aimed at quick look-up or data verification rather than in-depth research.

Indexes and Abstracts (print and online): Because of Kalamazoo College Library's commitment to provide the materials to be indexed or abstracted, the acquisition of an index or abstracting service is closely related to existing periodical holdings. Print versions of indexes and abstracts are collected only in those areas where the library does not subscribe to the online version of the title. Evaluation factors to consider when selecting electronic versions of these resources, in addition to those commonly applied are:

- a. Subject coverage. Is the index coverage appropriate to Kalamazoo College's existing or future mission areas?
- b. Level of sophistication. What level of training or education does the index require for the average user? How does the function of the index compare with the counterpart formats? How will users be affected by the difference?
- c. Cost. How does cost compare with counterparts in other formats? What is gained or lost for the difference? Is any format noticeably more cost effective than another?
- d. Duplication. Will the print based index subscription have to be maintained along with the alternative format? Costly duplication should be undertaken only for unusually compelling reasons and should be avoided whenever possible.
- e. Indexes tied to text (e.g., full-text databases). The contents of the text will need to be evaluated along with the index.
- f. Index support. How well is the index supported by the periodical collection? Is there a financial commitment for providing additional periodical titles?
- g. Vendor. Is the vendor reputable? Is support service prompt and adequate?

Legal Materials: The reference collection includes basic legal resources such as encyclopedias and dictionaries rather than specialized legal research tools. Legal resources are limited to the United States and Michigan. Where authoritative information can be found for free online (such as the US Code and the Michigan Code), paper copies will not be purchased for the Reference collection.

State and Local Information: Appropriate works on the City of Kalamazoo and Kalamazoo County are collected whenever possible. Works on Michigan are collected when they meet the mission of the college.

Quotations: Major works in English are collected by the Kalamazoo College Library.

Statistics: Basic ongoing statistical summary information in both general and mission-related fields are collected for Reference.

Style Manuals: The reference collection includes major style manuals, including the Chicago Manual of Style, MLA, APA, and Turabian.

Language

English is the primary language of Reference materials. Sources in other languages are collected to support the College's curriculum and language programs, including dictionaries, bibliographies, and encyclopedias.

Major languages in the Reference collection include:

- Spanish
- French
- German
- Chinese
- Japanese
- Latin
- Ancient Greek

Other languages in the Reference collection, mostly represented by English/Foreign Language dictionaries, include:

- Italian
- Portuguese
- Swedish
- Polish
- Russian

Limitations

Circulation of materials: Reference Materials do not circulate. Materials in the print collection may be photocopied, following the Copyright Law of the U.S. Code, Title 17. In extreme circumstances special permission to borrow Reference materials may be obtained from a Reference Librarian. Materials are loaned out for short periods of time, usually only 2-3 hours. Some form of patron identification must be left at the circulation desk by the borrower and the item is checked out to the borrower in the library circulation system.

Multiple Copies: Duplicate copies of a work are purchased only under special circumstances (for example, a heavily used style guide)

Types of materials: In general, the Reference Department does not collect the following types of materials:

- Audio-visual materials, including DVDs and videos and audio recordings
- College Catalogs
- Corporate Annual reports
- Databases on CD Rom
- Materials on microform (microfilm, microtext, or microfiche)
- Pamphlets
- National or International directories (there are a few exceptions)

- Scholarship and grant information
- Software
- Telephone Directories
- Text books (the Library acquires some textbooks that are added to the Circulating Collection)

ORGANIZATION AND LOCATION OF THE COLLECTION

The Reference Collection is located on the first floor of the Kalamazoo College Upjohn Library Commons building. Many reference works, indexes and abstracts, and databases are accessible through our Library website. Library users have open access to Reference materials.

The collection is organized for optimum retrieval of information and materials. Cataloging and classification follows nationally approved conventions compatible with other academic libraries. This currently entails the use of the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules* (2d edition, revised), OCLC machine-readable formats, Library of Congress subject headings, and Library of Congress classification.

Materials are cataloged and classified in a systematic fashion to make them available as soon as possible after receipt. Materials to be cataloged include print and some electronic resources to which the library subscribes.

In addition to the Reference book collection, the Reference Collection includes these sub collections:

- Atlases (located in the Atlas Cube)
- Maps (located in the Map Case)
- Indexes (located on the north side of the Reference offices)
- Electronic Databases

COLLECTION MAINTENANCE

The Library assesses the physical condition of its collection on a continuing basis.

Inventory and Shelf Reading

Inventory and shelf reading are done on an ongoing basis. These activities assure that the library catalog is kept up to date and accurately reflects the library's holdings, and that library materials may be easily accessed once found via the catalog.

Inventory of the Reference Collection shall be undertaken once per year, usually during the summer after Spring Quarter has ended.

Student Reference Assistants are assigned to sections of the Reference Collection to keep tidy and shelfread. Each section should be read through once per quarter.

Materials Repair

Books in bad physical repair, but still worth keeping, will be repaired if possible, or replaced with new copies if they are available. Materials needing repair are referred to the Acquisitions Librarian, who takes care of mending issues.

Binding

Materials in the Reference Collection are ordered in the most sturdy binding possible (i.e., hardcover). However, if hardcover is not available, paperback copies are acceptable. Reference serials or monographs that have short-term value are acquired in paperback. Reference books are rebound only if they are heavily used and need repair.

Missing Materials and Replacements

Reference books are replaced if their Internal Use Count (see below) indicates that the title is used sufficiently to warrant a new copy in the collection, or if the Reference Librarians determine that the item is important to the collection. Missing materials that are part of a set are replaced if the set meets criteria above.

Quantitative Measures

In-house use counts are used to determine the activity of items within the collection. As materials are used and set aside, student assistants record the in-house use in the library circulation system before reshelving. These in-house use counts can be helpful in determining what subject areas to expand. For example, materials in a particular subject area that sees high use indicates an elevated level of interest, and collecting new materials in this subject area may be appropriate.

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS AND RESOURCE SHARING

Michigan Library Consortium (MLC) and Oberlin Group

The Kalamazoo College Library is a member of the Michigan Library Consortium and the Oberlin Group. As a member of these consortia, the Library has privileges on discounts given for electronic and print resources. These discounts are significant enough to make some titles affordable at a group rate that would not be affordable at an individual rate. The Kalamazoo College Library Reference Collection is often enriched by resources that would be unaffordable otherwise.

Michigan Electronic Library (MEL)

The MEL project, founded by the Library of Michigan, offers free database access to Michigan libraries. Most of the databases are provided by FirstSearch and Thompson/Gale Infotrac. Several databases are geared towards public libraries, so the Reference Librarians select appropriate databases from the MEL offerings and link to them from the Library Website.

Western Michigan University

The Kalamazoo College Library has reciprocal agreements with the Western Michigan University Libraries regarding circulation policies, and the Reference departments of both institutions strive to serve each others' patrons when possible. Since Kalamazoo College students can use the libraries at WMU, the Reference Collection of the Kalamazoo College Library is essentially augmented by the Reference Collection at WMU.

DEACCESSIONING MATERIALS

The Library assesses the usefulness, relevance, and physical condition of its collection on a continuing basis. The Reference collection will include current and up to date sources and editions whenever possible as well as materials of historical value.

Criteria

Reference Librarians follow the same principles and guidelines in evaluation as in selection of new materials. Some general criteria which should be considered are:

- Significance of publication
- Age and currency of the publication
- Availability of later editions
- Availability of this edition; e.g., is it still in print?
- Physical condition of the publication
- Duplication of the contents in more recent works
- Language of the publication
- Space needs; e.g. do we have room for these materials?
- Use. In-house use counts are taken for each Reference item to be shelved.
- Appropriateness to the demonstrated needs of the college community; e.g., mission, curricula, reference queries
- Standing order obligations, if applicable
- If a title appears in *Guide to Reference Books* by Robert Balay, *Reference Sources for Small and Medium Sized Libraries* by Scott Kennedy, *Books for College Libraries*, or *Choice's Outstanding Academic Titles*, the item is generally kept and noted in the back of the book that it appears in one of these bibliographies.

Method

The reference collection is evaluated in two important ways: automatic weeding of older editions of a work and periodic evaluation by Reference Librarians.

Older volumes of many publications, particularly standing orders such as encyclopedias, directories and yearbooks, are automatically removed from the Reference collection when newer, updated editions arrive. Reference Librarians decide whether to keep older editions on a title-by-title basis. Standing order titles are also reviewed along with all other reference titles during the continuous Reference review. Faculty members and other library staff may be consulted when appropriate.

Titles that are moved out of the Reference Collection are sent to Technical Services for processing. Reference Librarians decide whether to move Reference materials out of the Reference Collection into another library collection, or whether the materials should be withdrawn. Print materials withdrawn from the Reference Collection may be dealt with in the following ways:

- Materials may be moved to Reference Storage
- Materials may be moved to the circulating collection
- Materials may be withdrawn. These materials are discarded, recycled, or given to other libraries at the discretion of Technical Services.

Electronic resources are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Reference Librarians gather statistics on database usage and compile them in the Annual Report. These statistics aid the Reference Librarians in determining the usage patterns of particular databases. Databases with little use may be discontinued if there are few compelling reasons to keep the subscription.

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM. CONTROVERSIAL MATERIALS, CRITICISM, AND CENSORSHIP

Kalamazoo College is a private college governed by its own board of trustees. Therefore, censorship efforts on the part of persons or groups outside the corporate structure of Kalamazoo College shall not be acknowledged. In order to evaluate the criticism of persons or groups legitimately related to the college and to establish guidelines for the acquisition of materials of potentially controversial nature, the following is the policy of the Kalamazoo College Library:

A. In an effort to support the College's mission, that the Kalamazoo College "prepares its graduates to better understand, live successfully within, and provide enlightened leadership to a richly diverse and increasingly complex world," the Kalamazoo College Library shall make available to the Kalamazoo College academic community materials offering the widest possible variety of viewpoints, regardless of the popularity of the viewpoints or the popularity or unpopularity of their authors.

B. Selection of materials for the Kalamazoo College Library shall be based on the criteria expressed in the Acquisition of Materials section of this document regardless of the frankness of language or controversial manner an author may use in dealing with subjects of religion, politics, sex, social, economic, scientific, or moral issues.

The principles of intellectual freedom as outlined in the Library Bill of Rights of the American Library Association will be adhered to in the acquisition and retention of library materials. Possession should not be interpreted as endorsement by the Library or the College but rather as the fulfillment of a responsibility to present all sides of issues by the best spokespersons available. The maturity of the readers for whom these materials are made available is assumed.

Procedure for Challenges

Complaints concerning material in the collection should be directed in writing to the Dean of Libraries and Information Services. The Dean will respond, sending a copy of the complaint and the response to the Director of the Library and the President of the College.

REVIEWING THE COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

This Collection Development Policy will be reviewed by the Reference Librarians annually.

Revised December 2006