

## UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO GENERAL LIBRARY POLICY ON WITHDRAWAL OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

### Introduction

These recommendations for a policy on withdrawal of library materials are based on the following assumptions:

1. The General Library's goal in collection management is to define, develop and maintain a dynamic body of materials serving the instructional and research needs of the University.
2. The General Library has commitments to the specialized needs of faculty and graduate students as well as to the more generalized support of undergraduate instruction.
3. The General Library, as the largest library in the state, serves as a major regional resource. The Library will continue to serve needs beyond the immediate University community.
4. Judicious weeding, which is responsive to changing program needs, subject obsolescence and physical deterioration of materials, is inherent in systematic collection management.
5. Withdrawal decisions should be made in consultation with all affected academic interests and should be monitored by a cross-section of selectors.

These guidelines are based on the premise that the major institutional factor determining library policy should be adequate service to present and future library clientele. As with other selection decisions, service should be the primary consideration in making withdrawal decisions.

### Guidelines to Consider in Withdrawal Decisions

The following four criteria should be applied in the priority given. Consideration given to the sub-headings listed will vary by discipline.

1. Content and academic level:  
Are the materials specialized, unique scholarly, general, or popular? What is the geographic coverage? Are the authors or publishers known for their eminence in field? Are the materials of historical interest? Is the subject obsolete, and unrelated to areas of historical research? Is the edition superseded by later versions?
2. Instructional and Research Support

What academic levels of teaching and research do the materials support? Do they support local, regional or national research activities?

Have the materials been used in the past? Do they show physical signs of use? Will they be used in the future? What do colleagues and faculty in the relevant subject areas predict? Are there relevant circulation statistics for the items and the related areas?

### 3. Access and Availability

For serials: are they indexed in major indexes or abstracts? Do they have indexes for the titles, whether annual or cumulative?

Are the materials readily available from other libraries in Albuquerque? Are they readily available in the state or region? Are they readily available nationally?

If title is insignificant in terms of criteria 1 through 3, its presence in the collection should be questioned.

### 4. Physical Condition/Completeness

Does the Library own most of the published issues of a serial? If the Library has less than half of the published issues, perhaps the title should not be retained.

Have the issues been bound? If the issues of a serial are loose, scattered issues that are worn, perhaps the title should not be retained.

If the title is important in terms of criteria 1 through 3, and the Library wishes to retain the title, the Library should attempt to acquire the missing issues or obtain microform or digital access to the title.

## Procedures

1. Selectors evaluate the titles using the Guidelines.

2. Selectors consult with teaching faculty, their Collection Management Coordinator, other selectors and others as appropriate. Interdisciplinary titles require consultations with all interested areas.
3. Selectors inform the Collection Management Coordinator and the Director of Collection Management and Resource Acquisitions of any proposed withdrawals that may involve titles that have extensive holdings covering many years, or that may involve the proposed withdrawal of multiple titles in a specific subject area.
4. Disagreements between selectors will be resolved by the Collection Management Team and the Director of Collection Management; disagreements between the Director of one of the libraries and the Director of Collection Management shall be referred to the Dean and/or the Dean's Cabinet.
5. After the disposition (storage, either onsite or offsite, or withdrawal) of materials is approved by Collection Management, the information is forwarded by the Director to the appropriate Collections and Technology Services Department for implementation. The relevant academic units are informed of the final decisions.
6. Technical Services staff follow prescribed procedures for withdrawal of library materials.

### Guidelines for Withdrawals of Materials held in Multiple Formats

When materials are held in multiple formats, such as print and microform, or print and digital, it might be appropriate to withdraw the print copy. The selectors and collection management personnel make these decisions title-by-title, with advice from the faculty liaisons and relevant faculty. There is not a library-wide policy that encourages or discourages the withdrawal of items held in multiple formats. Here are some factors to consider when evaluating such materials for retention or withdrawal.

Is the content identical? Some electronic versions of journals do not include all illustrations, ads, or columns. Some digital newspapers and periodicals do not include all articles issued in the original publications in print or on microform.

Is the electronic version available from an aggregator that promises to keep the content available? Some aggregators, such as Lexis-Nexis, remove titles and change coverage

frequently; it would not be appropriate to discard the print copies of titles available from these sources.

Are the graphics reproduced in acceptable quality? Sometimes the digital graphics are better than the original print; other times the digital version is worse. Most microform is black and white, and some color microforms do not reproduce the colors adequately. Some digital versions may not include all charts or graphs. Can the graphics be viewed and printed easily? Some digital versions do not print the graphs with the text.

Is the digital version archived at a reliable site? Does it have mirror sites that serve as back-ups?

Will the library retain access to the archival digital files even if it cancels its current subscription to the digital product? Does the library have rights to the archived versions in perpetuity, as the library does with JSTOR?

What is the physical condition of the print or microform copy? Is the print collection complete?

Before recommending that print or microform copies be discarded, selectors should consult with other selectors in related subject areas, with the Collection Management coordinators, the Director of Collection Management, and with the concerned departmental liaisons, chairs and faculty. If selectors present proposals to withdraw multiple titles, extensive files, or major collections, the Dean's Cabinet should be involved in the final decisions.

If materials are to be withdrawn, the process is handled by Collection Technology Services (CTS).

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