

## **MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY, UNIVERSITY CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY**

### **1. OBJECTS AND GOALS**

The library materials selection policy is intended as a guide to the library staff and as an interpretation to the public of the criteria by which all materials are selected.

The major goals of the library are to provide groups and individuals of all ages in the community with an organized, well-balanced collection of books, periodicals, audio-visual materials, and online resources which will stimulate education, advance knowledge, enhance recreation and serve as a core of reliable reference information.

There should be prompt coverage of current concerns on the local, national, and international levels from divergent views.

The library takes cognizance of the purposes and resources of other libraries in the local area and shall not needlessly duplicate functions and materials.

The library acknowledges a particular interest in local and state history; therefore, it will seek to acquire a collection of state and municipal public documents, and it will take a broad view of works by and about Missouri authors as well as general works relating to the state of Missouri. However, the library is not under any obligation to add to its collections everything about Missouri or produced by authors, printers or publishers with Missouri connections, if it does not seem to be in the public interest to do so. In most cases, the library will not purchase self-published materials that are not reviewed in established review journals. Exceptions may be made for self-published materials of local interest that meet the selection guidelines. Because the library serves a public embracing a wide range of ages, educational backgrounds and reading skills, it will always seek to select materials of varying complexity.

### **2. RESPONSIBILITY**

Ultimate responsibility for book selection rests with the director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Board of Trustees. The director may delegate to members of staff authority for implementing and interpreting the policy.

### **3. INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM AND PROCEDURES FOR COMPLAINT**

This library subscribes to the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read statement, both of which have been adopted by the American Library Association. Complete texts of both statements are appended.

Any patron who objects to material in the library may register a complaint by filling out the form available in the library. The material will then be reviewed by the responsible staff members and a decision will be made on its retention in the collection.

### **4. SELECTION GUIDELINES**

#### **a. Criteria For Selection**

Ideally, all publications in all media should be available to everyone. Because all libraries are limited by budget and space, it is necessary to establish qualitative and quantitative standards to assist in the evaluation of materials to be purchased or accepted as donations.

Each item will be judged on the basis of its overall content and style, not on the basis of any isolated or random portion.

Some criteria for selection of materials may include:

1. Scope and depth of present collection
2. Current interest or relevance
3. Expressed or anticipated patron demand
4. Significance of subject matter
5. Accuracy, quality, authenticity (for nonfiction only)
6. Sufficiency of scope
7. Presentation of diverse viewpoints
8. Acceptability of format
9. Effectiveness of presentation
10. Inclusion of title in standard bibliographies or indexes
11. Favorable reviews in professional or popular media
12. Consideration of the collections of other members of the Municipal Library Consortium
13. Continuation of a series already held

In considering which materials to place in the library, an attempt will be made to provide a diversity of viewpoints in all areas, including political, social, and religious. The library's selectors will not automatically include or exclude an item based solely on any of the following criteria:

1. Race, religion, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, or political views of the author;
2. Frankness or coarseness of language;
3. Controversial nature of the item;
4. Endorsement or disapproval of an item by any individual or organization in the community.

Selection tools may include the following:

1. Professional review media, such as *Publishers Weekly*, *Library Journal*, Kirkus Reviews, etc.
2. Popular media, including newspapers, magazines, Internet, and broadcast programs
3. Subject bibliographies chosen by specialists, including persons from local organizations

#### b. Adult Collection

Materials for adults are selected by a committee of librarians and staff members. Where there is a great demand for a particular title, multiple copies are provided in sufficient quantity so that no patron will have to wait an unreasonable amount of time for a copy.

#### c. Children's Collection

Children's books, periodicals and audio-visual materials are selected by the Youth Services Librarian and staff reviewers. While it is the library's aim to provide only books of quality and merit, final responsibility for children's reading matter must rest with their parents or legal guardians who are the most capable judges concerning the contents of material and the reading and comprehension levels of their children.

#### d. Gifts and Special Collections

Gifts are accepted with the understanding that there are no restrictions or limitations regarding their disposition. The same criteria for inclusion in the library's collection apply to gifts as to purchased material.

It is not the function of the library to maintain separate collections provided by or intended for any special interest groups. If books of interest to members of such groups are not already in the collection, an effort will be made to acquire some suggested titles, providing that the number of titles added is not in excess of existing standards for maintaining a balanced collection.

The library staff cannot assess gifts for tax purposes. Donors will be offered a form, signed by the accepting staff member, which they may complete and retain for their files.

The University City Public Library does not attempt to provide exhaustive collections for the serious researcher; these are considered to be the province of the academic and special libraries in the metropolitan St. Louis area. Also excluded from consideration are items which require long-term usage in excess of the library's normal loan period and those materials which should be in school or academic libraries, including:

1. Textbooks
2. Curriculum-related items
3. Professional materials, except for library and information science
4. Those of interest only to one specific group
5. Highly technical items

Some of these excluded items might be purchased if nothing else is available on a needed subject. They may be added to the collection as donations, which are governed by Gifts and Special Collections, section 4d.

## 5. REQUESTS FOR BOOKS NOT IN COLLECTION

University City residents may make a written request that the library purchase a book or periodical and each request will be considered on the basis of individual merit. Patrons living outside of the University City Public Library's taxing district will be referred to their home libraries for purchase requests.

## 6. WEEDING AND DISCARDING

Weeding is a continuous project and is an integral part of the selection process. The same care, thought and judgment must be exercised in weeding as in the original selection. Decision for discard will be made by those responsible for selection.

### a. Criteria for Weeding

The decision to weed will be made on an individual, item-by-item basis, using the following criteria:

1. Physical condition is beyond reasonable repair
2. Library has more than one copy of the title and multiple copies are not needed
3. Edition is superseded
4. Material is outdated
5. Material is not being used or checked out, except for the exceptions in 6b.

Besides aiding in the retention of a current and appealing collection, weeding facilitates effective use of available space and helps define categories in which additional material is needed. Periodicals will also be reviewed each year for retention or cancellation when the next year's renewal list is compiled. The removal of materials on this basis will be guided by established collection management procedures. The disposition of materials which have been removed on the basis of accepted professional practices will be at the discretion of the director.

### b. Criteria for Retaining Seldom Used Materials: Materials that are little used may be retained rather than weeded in certain situations. These include:

1. Local author, setting, or topic
2. Unique and/or out-of-print subject matter
3. Famous illustrator or unique/unusual illustrations or photographs
4. Prize winner
6. Considered primary source material in its subject

7. Part of a series that is retained
8. Reflects the mores of a particular time and place

c. Withdrawal and Disposal of Weeded Materials

When material is discarded, undamaged materials will be offered to library patrons via a sale table. A reasonable price will be charged. Materials may also be offered to other libraries that can use them. Materials not sold within two months will be discarded.

7. ARCHIVAL MATERIAL

The City of University City has a rich history spanning over one hundred years. The library maintains an archive of historical documents, photographs, memorabilia, art works, and books pertaining to this history. The library will continue to seek additions to this collection, both of historical items, and by actively collecting our on-going history through the inclusion of appropriate recent materials. Materials not deemed relevant to the library's archives will be offered to the Historical Society of University City.

Adopted May 13, 2009 by the University City Public Library Board of Trustees