Warren Hunting Smith Library
Collection Development Policy

Collection Goals

Student Learning and Research

The main purpose of Warren Hunting Smith Library’s collections is to support student learning and research in all disciplines and programs that comprise Hobart and William Smith’s curriculum. The collections aim to offer students the resources for exploration and study to fulfill their course requirements and to expand their learning beyond the structured environment of the classroom. The resources of the Warren Hunting Smith Library are maintained and developed for students to:

- Find current as well as historical information about their topic in general and specialized reference sources
- Follow the main arguments that have shaped the discussion of their topic in core scholarly journals and monographs
- Learn about the construction of knowledge in their subject areas from a selection of representative primary sources

For the disciplines and programs offering an undergraduate major or a master’s degree, the collections are developed at the advanced study level that includes “a wide range of basic monographs both current and retrospective, complete collections of the works of more important writers, selections from the works of secondary writers, a selection of representative journals, and the reference tools and bibliographical apparatus pertaining to the subject.” (Guidelines for Collection Development, David L. Perkins, editor, American Library Association, 1979; p. 4)

Faculty Teaching and Research

Warren Hunting Smith Library supports the teaching mission of the Faculty by maintaining and developing collections that correspond with the courses offered in Hobart and William Smith’s departments and programs. Particular collection support is given to courses that are taught on a regular basis and are part of the core requirements for an undergraduate major or master’s degree. Collection development for new faculty, programs or courses is dependent on the level of additional funding made available for library resources.

Faculty research is supported by a combination of locally acquired resources and interlibrary loan services and cooperative borrowing/visitation. Taking into account purchase cost, availability of funds and documented value for a long-term research project, Warren Hunting Smith Library evaluates requests from tenured faculty or faculty with tenure track appointments to purchase more narrowly specialized research publications or primary sources of lasting benefit for an established project. Requests for journal publications or specialized databases are carefully reviewed as they present ongoing commitments of library funds and staff resources. In many cases, resources not purchased by Warren Hunting Smith Library can be requested on interlibrary loan from larger research libraries. The library also participates in a regional program that allows faculty to acquire borrowing privileges at other libraries throughout the greater Rochester region, and the Provost’s Office underwrites access to the Cornell libraries.
General Academic Interest

Warren Hunting Smith Library collects publications of general academic interest that represent current thinking on historical as well as contemporary topics. The Library also strives to anticipate future curricular needs by collecting publications that offer groundbreaking research in new fields of inquiry or are judged to become landmark publications in established fields of scholarship within the scope of Hobart and William Smith’s liberal arts education. Typically, these titles are selected from major US and British review sources and reflect contemporary intellectual or scholarly debates as published in the English language.

While Warren Hunting Smith Library does not support an extensive collection of contemporary literature, attention is paid however to selecting exemplary works that are anticipated to be of lasting interest. Some writers may be represented in the collection only selectively while others who are expected to become part of a canon are collected more comprehensively.

Collection Guidelines and Parameters

Content: The focus of the main collection is on scholarly publications in all disciplines taught at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, critical editions of primary texts and historical resources, and substantive treatments on topics of general academic interest. Criteria for selection include the reputation of the publisher, the authority of the author or editor, the extent of bibliographic documentation, and the relevance of the title to the collection goals of the Warren Hunting Smith Library.

Audience: The main collection is primarily aimed at advanced undergraduates, with graduate level scholarship added for programs offering master’s degrees. The reference collection and the special collections may offer additional depths of resources for independent study and research both on general and advanced levels.

Language: The collection is developed primarily with titles published in English. Exceptions include titles acquired in support of teaching modern and classical languages and literatures. The works of major authors are collected in their original language. Other selected primary source material and significant scholarly publications in languages other than English may be added upon faculty request.

Textbooks: In general, Warren Hunting Smith Library does not purchase textbooks required for classes or any kind of exercise books or teacher’s manuals. Exceptions may be made if a textbook is a recognized source of reference for a particular subject and is expected to be used repeatedly over a longer period of time. Also, some types of historical manuals or instructional guides, particularly for the performing arts, may be considered for addition.

Editions: New editions of a title are only purchased if they include significant revisions and/or substantial amounts of new material. Older editions may be withdrawn if they are superseded by the new text.

Duplication: Warren Hunting Smith Library purchases one copy of each title/format. Second copies of material written/produced by Hobart and William Smith faculty members are purchased for the archives collection. Other exceptions include materials requested for reserve for classes with more than 30 students. Occasionally, second copies may also be added for titles anticipated to be in continuously high demand by students.

Formats: Books that serve the core of the Library’s collection goals will continue to be purchased and preserved in paper copy, exceptions may be made if they are available as part of a persistent online monographic collection. However, for titles that have higher utility in online versions, are more marginal, or only of passing interest the online copy will not be duplicated in print.

Journal subscriptions are evaluated on an ongoing basis, with a preference for electronic copies. However, for titles that have higher utility in print versions, they may be purchased in print. Normally journal titles will not be duplicated in both electronic and print formats. Departments will be asked to periodically review journal subscriptions for cancellations and additions; this review process will be initiated and overseen by the Library.
Films and other non-print media that serve curricular goals will be purchased based upon need, and only in the most current format available and applicable for the campus’ media infrastructure. Non-print formats will be regularly assessed for de-accession based upon use. Titles that are more marginal, of passing interest, or cost prohibitive may to be rented or borrowed rather than purchased.

Database subscriptions are evaluated on an ongoing basis, with preference given to subscriptions that fulfill the overall goals of the collection and fall within the audience scope.

**Cost:** The cost for a title/format is considered in relation to its anticipated use and usefulness, its scholarly significance and its long-term value for the Warren Hunting Smith Library collection. Within the given annual budget, every effort is made to purchase core titles that represent significant scholarly contributions to the disciplines taught at Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

**Note:** Additional discretionary guidelines and selection criteria apply for non-print resources and special collections

**Collection Maintenance**

Reasonable funds and staff time are allocated to care, repair and replacement of damaged or lost collection materials. The review of damaged materials first considers whether the resource is still relevant to the collection scope; if it is not, the item is transferred to the weeding process. If the item remains relevant or has enduring value, the decision will be made to replace or repair the item. Collection Services in consultation with the liaison librarian shall determine whether an item should be withdrawn.

As with damaged materials, Collection Services in consultation with the liaison librarian routinely reviews records for lost or missing materials and replacements are sought when the item meets selection criteria as described in this policy. Replacement will be made with an exact, similar, or updated edition, depending on the circumstances. To allow Library staff adequate time to search for or recover missing materials, orders for replacement copies may not be generated immediately.

Periodic review of the Library's holdings is conducted to evaluate the condition, purposefulness and overall content of the collection. As shelf space is a finite physical resource, the Library's annual additions must be balanced with some de-accession. The ongoing removal, repair or replacement decisions made for damaged, lost and missing materials extend to the review and weeding of the collection; a task performed in a targeted, rotating fashion. To maximize growth opportunity and cultivate a collection particularly relevant to the curriculum, librarians may pull for review materials that meet one or more criteria:

- Have another copy, duplicate copy no longer needed
- Have a later edition of the title, earlier edition no longer needed
- Have more up-to-date sources for this same information
- Show infrequent circulation or no circulation for sustained period of time
- Are no longer relevant to the curriculum
- Are duplicated within the collection in different format

Librarians carefully select materials to be weeded based on knowledge of the curriculum gained from conversations with departments, and familiarity with current selection trends. In the case of curricular relevance, materials that are selected for de-accession are made available for faculty review and comment prior to withdrawal.
Acceptance of Donations for the Warren Hunting Smith Library

Donations of books or other library material are a welcome opportunity for Warren Hunting Smith Library to augment its holdings in areas of teaching and learning within the parameters of the College’s undergraduate liberal arts curriculum. Donations may be accepted if they fall within the scope of the Library’s collection goals as defined above. Additional criteria include the quantity of material offered, anticipated duplication, age and type of publications, and physical condition.

Before a donation is accepted, the Library requests a list of titles or an onsite visit. Because of storage and labor constraints, the Library will rarely accept entire collections. Exceptions for special collections may apply. Normally, the donor will be also asked, as part of the donation, to bear costs associated with transporting the materials to the Library. All donations should be formalized with a completed Deed of Gift. The Library does not accept any responsibility for material dropped off without prior agreement by the Director of the Library or the Associate Librarian for Technical Services.

Donations are accepted with the understanding that the Library is free to dispose of materials not added to the collection. They may be offered to other libraries, sold to a dealer or discarded. Any sale revenues are added to library funds for purchase of new material. This process is communicated to the donor in the first contact about a potential donation. Alternative arrangements may be considered if feasible.

Donations are inventoried upon receipt and counted according to number of hardcover/paperback volumes, journal issues, or other material types. The count along with a brief description of the donation is forwarded to the Library Office for the acknowledgement letter. A copy of the letter will also be sent to the Development Office. The appraisal of a donation’s value is the responsibility of the donor.

The Director of the Library, the Associate Librarian for Technical Services, and the Archivist review all potential additions to special collections. The Director of the Library, the Associate Librarian for Technical Services, and the Visual Resources Librarian review all potential additions to the art collections. All materials added to the collections are cataloged as part of the existing respective collections.

Large donations, or donations to the library that are made in conjunction with other gifts to the Colleges are done in consultation with the Vice President for Institutional Advancement. Any exceptions to this process need to be discussed in advance with the Director of the Library and the Vice President for Institutional Advancement.