

University Libraries Collection Development Policy Statement

Mission

The St. John's University Libraries commit themselves to the teaching and learning processes by providing content-based information resources, instructional services, and other support in the most effective formats for University programs and student and faculty research. The Libraries provide the foundation for the University's mission of academic excellence and lifelong learning.

Vision

The University Libraries will be a physical and virtual information crossroads community, helping all library users achieve success through quality service and ubiquitous access. To achieve this vision, we must sustain excellence by both honoring and renewing tradition.

Purpose of the Collection Development Policy Statement

The purpose of the Collection Development Policy Statement is to plan for the future of the University Libraries' collection; provide guidance for selecting within subject areas; and communicate the Libraries' goals and guidelines to the wider University community. The Collection Development Policy Statement is designed to be a dynamic and flexible document that responds to changes within and outside the University. It applies to the main campus library in [Queens](#), NY, and the libraries on our [Staten Island](#) and [Manhattan](#), NY, and [Rome](#), Italy, campuses; at our [Paris](#), France, location; as well as the University online learning environments and University [study abroad](#) programs.

Collection Development has been radically transformed as academic libraries continue to move to a digital environment. The Libraries have migrated most journals and government documents from print to online. At this time, we expect the size of the print collection to remain stable, with new acquisitions counterbalanced by withdrawals of unneeded materials. We will rely more heavily on demand-driven acquisition, short-term loans, and subscriptions. We plan to reduce expenditures on large online packages in favor of acquiring individual titles and articles that are more closely aligned with user needs. We plan to collect more selectively by concentrating in areas of our strength and local interests. We will provide information-related resources that meet the evolving needs of library users, such as digital archives containing primary source materials or streaming video.

User Population

The St. John's University Libraries support academic programs on all University campuses and study abroad sites. Many courses are taught online or have a distance-learning component. The [Office of Institutional Research](#) provides information on the St. John's student population and enrollment trends.

Patron Needs

The Libraries are committed to building a collection that supports teaching, learning, collaboration, and research at the University. The collection should be unbiased, current, and useful. When possible, the

Libraries endeavor to provide resources in a format that supports online learning and study abroad, as well as the on-campus population.

As a supplement to local and online holdings, [Interlibrary Loan](#) (ILL) allows patrons the opportunity to obtain academic resources not available in the St. John's University Libraries. ILL may also be used for materials that are specialized, rare, or outside collection guidelines. ILL is available to all current St. John's students, faculty, administrators, and staff.

Brief Description of the Collection

Each campus of St. John's is served by our digital library, accessible through the Libraries' website, as well as a collection of print books and other physical materials on-site. The Libraries use general collection management principle and constraints to select and withdraw materials.

Levels Collected

The Libraries collect at appropriate levels to support the University's academic programs, including undergraduate, master's, and doctoral levels. Preschool and school-level materials are collected for Education, including the Library Youth Collection. The programs of study offered by each school can be used to determine the collecting levels needed for a subject area.

Formats Collected

Formats collected are primarily based on the need to support current University programs, whether in the physical classroom or online. Future growth is expected to be mainly in digital formats, such as ebooks, online journals, digital archives, databases, and other online resources based on the Libraries' electronic resources selection criteria. The Libraries will continue to collect print journals, print books, and microfilm on a case-by-case basis for subject-specific reasons, as required. Media will be acquired via streaming or digital downloads whenever possible.

Reserves

[Reserves](#) in the Libraries are provided to meet current course needs and faculty requests. Whenever possible, reserve materials are made available online. Print is provided only when online materials are not available.

Collection Maintenance

The Libraries contain both open and closed stacks. In order to make the best use of limited shelf space, priority is given to keeping materials that meet current academic needs and do not have corresponding online versions.

Related Policies

- [Library Policies](#)
- [Intellectual Property Policy at St. John's](#)

- [eResources Committee Policy and Guidelines](#)
- [Disability Services](#)

Positions

The Libraries subscribe to the following positions

- [ALA Library Bill of Rights](#)
- [ALA Freedom to Read Statement](#)
- [ALA Intellectual Freedom Principle for Academic Libraries](#)

Responsibility for Collection Development

The subject areas collected are based on the academic needs of the University, with one or more librarians assigned as subject specialists. Subject specialists' responsibilities include

- Selecting and withdrawing library resources
- Acting as conduits for selection requests by other faculty, staff, and administrators
- Creating and updating the subject area policy statement

Library Collections

A. Subject Area Policy Statements Art and Design

1. Biological Sciences
2. Business and Economics
3. Chemistry
4. Communication Sciences and Disorders
5. Computer Science and Math
6. Criminal Justice and Legal Studies
7. Education
8. Environmental Studies
9. Government and Politics
10. History and Geography
11. Hospitality—Hotel, Restaurant, Travel and Tourism
12. Language and Literature
13. [Library and Information Science](#)
14. Mass Communication, Journalism, Television and Film
15. Pharmacy and Health Sciences
16. Philosophy
17. Physics
18. Psychology
19. Rhetoric, Communication, and Theater
20. Sociology and Anthropology
21. Sport Management
22. Theology and Religious Studies

Distinct Library Collections

1. Asian Library
2. Library Youth Collection
3. Reference Collection
4. Special Collections and Archives

Selection and Deselection of Library Materials

I. General Policy

The Libraries acquire materials in digital format whenever appropriate, in order to support multiple campuses, distance education, as well as classroom-based learning.

Subject specialists are responsible for recommending materials for the collection in all formats. Students, faculty, administrators, and staff are actively encouraged to recommend items. Because of the need for current materials, selection must be done throughout the year. The Libraries use demand-driven acquisition to offer a wider selection of ebooks.

1. Selection Sources

Subject specialists can use publishers' catalogs and announcements, Choice and Library Journal reviews, and professional library journals to find appropriate materials for the collection. Subject specialists are also responsible for scanning subject periodical literature and standard review sources to identify potential titles. Teaching faculty may receive publishers' catalogs and announcements directly from the publishers and/or from the Libraries.

Librarians and faculty can request automatic e-mail notifications of new books/ebooks in their area of interest by contacting [collections](#).

2. Selection Criteria

a) General Criteria for Selecting Materials

1. Support of the curricula, especially undergraduate study and learning.
2. Appropriateness for use in St. John's programs.
3. Level of St. John's program in subject area (undergraduate, master's, or doctoral).
4. Currency and timeliness.
5. Lasting or scholarly value.
6. Author qualifications and reputation.
7. Publisher authority and reputation.
8. High standards of quality in content, format, and/or literary merit.
9. Favorable review in a professional journal.
10. Gaps in the collection in subject area.
11. Language: other than for the Asian Collection, only English materials are acquired with rare exceptions.

12. Budgetary considerations and price.
13. Format, with an emphasis on acquiring digital formats whenever appropriate.

b) Guidelines for Selecting Periodicals

In addition to the general criteria, the following criteria are used when selecting periodicals:

1. The academic program(s) that will benefit from title, and the program(s) relative size and academic level.
2. The periodical's reputation.
3. Whether the periodical is considered to be a core journal.
4. Whether the periodical is available in electronic format, and whether it is subject to an embargo period.

c) Guidelines for Selecting Digital Materials

The Libraries actively acquire electronic resources whenever appropriate. Among these are online databases, online journals, ebooks, electronic government documents, and streaming media. Considerations for selecting digital materials are listed below:

1. Cooperative collection development
 - Collaborate with WALDO and other consortia to obtain the best mix of electronic resources at the most favorable terms.
2. Overlap with other electronic resources
 - Materials should not significantly duplicate the contents of other database subscriptions or print holdings. The Libraries must consider the increase in coverage versus costs incurred.
3. Community served by electronic resources
 - Intellectual level of material and depth of coverage consistent with the needs of St. John's undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and administration.
 - Ease of search, and suitability of search methodology for the academic environment.
4. Technical and service concerns
 - Vendor reputation and performance.
 - Timeliness of updates.
 - Compatibility with existing hardware and software.
 - Remote access for authorized users both on and off campus.
 - Availability of various file formats, i.e., Word, PDF, or Excel.
 - Interoperability with bibliographic utilities.
 - Support for collaborative learning.
 - Ability to customize search or other session preferences, and to save information between sessions.
 - Ability to download and print selected materials.
 - Restrictions (if any) on multiple users.
 - Requirements for proprietary or special software, individual accounts, or individual passwords.
 - Ability to integrate with OPAC, discovery layer, or other databases.
 - Ease of removal if subscription is cancelled.

- Copyright and licensing restrictions.
 - Provisions for adding or removing individual items as required to the subscription.
 - Web usage statistics and reporting tools that conform to ICOLC standards.
 - Provisions for long-term ownership of archival copies.
 - Adequacy of online help or other documentation.
 - Availability of timely technical support.
 - Need for staff assistance and training.
5. Relationship to materials in other formats
- Will electronic resources duplicate, replace, or supplement print sources?
 - Do electronic resources reflect the excellence, comprehensiveness, and authoritativeness expected of materials in other formats?
 - Are the same materials available electronically from other aggregators or publishers?

II. Specific Formats

The Libraries collect print, nonprint, and digital materials.

1. Print Materials Collected by the Libraries

- Monographs: books, pamphlets, and sets acquired through firm orders and on approval. These are selected as per the appropriate subject section of this policy.
- Periodicals, magazines, newspapers, and newsletters: acquired through subscriptions. Periodicals are defined as publications of a nonmonographic nature that appear more than once a year and are expected to continue for an indefinite time.
- Nonperiodical serials: annuals, yearbooks, irregular serials, indexes, directories, and loose-leaf services acquired through standing orders.
- Children's books: books written at the reading level of children and young adults.
- St. John's University dissertations and theses: publications written as part of degree requirements have been collected in both paper (Reserve) and microform (Reference).
- Textbooks: publications used for the study of a particular subject or as manuals of instruction. Intended for classroom use, they often come with teacher guides and are frequently updated. A textbook may be purchased for a subject collection if it is a classic, if it represents a major achievement in the field, or is written by a University faculty member.
- Other print materials: study guides, maps, posters, musical scores, and tests should be acquired in accordance with appropriate subject sections of this policy.

2. Nonprint Physical Materials Collected by the Libraries

- Media and Audiovisual Materials: materials in audio and visual formats which convey information primarily by sound and image rather than by text. Many of these materials require the use of special equipment in order to be seen or heard.
- Microforms (film, fiche): microfilm is a photograph on cellulose tape. It may be negative or positive and is either 16mm or 35mm. Microfiche is a flat sheet of photographic film which has microimages of the text of a publication. Ultrafiche (Ultramicrofiche) is a microfiche with such small images that approximately 3,000 pages may be accommodated on one 4 x 5 fiche. The Queens, NY, campus library has collections on ultrafiche, including the Library of English

Literature (LEL) and the Library of American Civilization (LAC) series in the General Periodicals Area. When possible and appropriate, microforms are being replaced with digital counterparts.

- Other nonprint materials should be acquired in accordance with appropriate subject sections of this policy.

3. Digital Materials Collected by the Libraries

Digital materials formats utilized by the Libraries include online databases, online journals, ebooks, DVDs and CDs, streaming media, and digital materials. Types of electronic formats include a) bibliographic files, such as abstracting and indexing services; and, b) nonbibliographic files which present full text or numeric data.

The following are some specific examples of digital formats:

- DVDs and CDs.
- Online databases: subscriptions to online databases are available through the Libraries' webpages, both on and off campus.
- Ebooks, online journals, and streaming video.

III. Languages and Translations

General Policy

- Materials are collected primarily in English.
- Foreign Languages: selected foreign language materials should be added, as appropriate, for specific collections or subject disciplines if required by curriculum.
- Translations: if an English translation of a foreign language title is not available, acquiring a translation into one of the languages collected by the Libraries is acceptable. Translations of works originally published in English are collected only if necessary for comparative study or literary criticism. Otherwise, works originally published in English that are translated into other languages are not added to the collection.

IV. Acquisitions Procedures Affecting Collection Policy

General Policy

Library materials are acquired through a variety of methods, including approval plans, blanket orders and memberships, standing orders, firm orders, gifts and exchanges, and government documents through depository programs. Library staff facilitate all order processing and expenditure control. All materials for the Queens, Staten Island, and Rome campuses are acquired and processed through Collections and Information Management at the Queens campus library.

Firm Orders

The Queens campus library acquires materials selected by library and teaching faculty, regardless of format or language. These materials are purchased from domestic and foreign vendors or directly from publishers.

Approval Plans

Approval plans provide materials for Queens and Staten Island campuses. Comprehensive approval plans assure the greatest possible representation of current materials to support academic programs. They complement the selection of monographic materials by Library and teaching faculty. Approval plans supply materials published in the US, Canada, United Kingdom, and Australia. The Libraries develop specific profiles by discipline with individual vendors. Approvals must be carefully monitored and supplemented with firm orders made by subject specialists in order to best serve the needs of the St. John's University community.

Blanket Orders and Memberships

The Libraries maintain membership in professional organizations for the purpose of receiving their publications if they cannot be acquired in any other way, or if there is a cost advantage. Blanket orders are maintained with organizations (e.g., American Library Association) so that the Libraries receive all their publications. Blanket orders must be carefully reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Standing Orders and Continuations

Both the Queens and Staten Island campus libraries maintain a number of standing orders for works published as continuations. Continuations include series, nonperiodical serials, supplements to existing works, indexes to serials or sets, and works that are likely to have supplements or frequent revisions. All standing orders must be reviewed on an ongoing basis. Careful examination and reevaluation of titles placed on standing order is required, since the cost of these publications is generally high. If no justifiable need exists and they do not directly support the curricula, their purchase should be deferred. If a standing order is necessary, selectors should also consider whether each continuation of the work needs to be acquired.

Periodicals

When a new subscription is recommended, the Head of Serials reviews the publication using the guidelines for selecting periodicals. The Head of Serials may consult with subject specialists; teaching faculty and academic departments; the Electronic Resources Committee; and others.

V. Gifts

General Policy

The Libraries selectively accept donated materials. The Libraries prefer to obtain a list of materials to be donated before accepting a gift, so that its appropriateness can be determined. If the donated materials

cannot be used at St. John's, the Libraries reserves the right to recommend other worthy causes that may benefit from the gift.

All gifts are accepted with the understanding that upon receipt, the Libraries acquires ownership and therefore may use materials at their discretion. Many items that are not added to the collection may be sent to nonprofit organizations to promote literacy and raise funds for the Libraries.

Prospective donors may contact the acquisitions department in Queens or the director of the Staten Island campus library.

Acknowledgments of Gifts

Gifts for the Queens campus library are acknowledged by the acquisitions coordinator. Gifts for the Staten Island library are acknowledged by the director of the Staten Island library. Acknowledgments are usually made for the entire gift. In the case of rare or valuable gifts, individual titles may be listed when requested by the donor. Monetary appraisals of gifts are not provided.

VI. Materials Not to Be Acquired

While it is the policy of the Libraries to be open to the purchase of all appropriate materials, the following selected categories are usually not acquired

- Textbooks that are frequently updated
- Hobby materials, such as practical, how-to books
- Mass market paperbacks
- Catalogs, such as stamp, coin, boat, and automobile pricing guides
- Preliminary editions
- Ephemera
- Subject areas outside the Collection profile
- Duplicate materials available in other formats

In addition, the Staten Island library does not collect the following categories of material:

- Audiovisual materials, including videocassettes, films, slides, records, and CDs/DVDs
- Rare books and manuscripts
- Dissertations and theses
- Artworks and posters

Exceptions are made on a case-by-case basis if it can be determined that these materials meet specific curricular needs.

VII. Reserves

General Policy

Reserve collection information is available in the Libraries' catalog. Reserve materials include books, pamphlets, and photocopies that have been selected by teaching faculty for either recommended or

required reading. These materials may be part of the Libraries' collections (class reserve) or they may be faculty's personal copies (personal copy reserve). Certain heavily used reference materials and University publications are also kept on reserve to ensure access for all who need to use them. These items may be placed on reserve by library personnel due to anticipated high use and/or probability of mutilation or theft. Where possible, and in accordance with "fair use" guidelines, reserve materials are made available electronically via eReserves.

The loan period for reserve materials in both Libraries can be up to two hours, overnight, or up to and including seven days. The loan period can be determined by the teaching faculty.

Requests to place items already available in the collection on reserve in the Queens campus library require a two week notice in advance of the assignment. Staten Island reserve materials require a one week notice. For both campuses, reserve requests are handled in the order they are received.

Reserve materials are removed on request of the faculty member who placed the material on reserve.

Collection Maintenance

I. Collection Maintenance: Withdrawals

General Policy

To eliminate dated information and in view of space considerations, Libraries' collections should be systematically reviewed for potential deselections using withdrawal guidelines. Some distinctive library collections have individual withdrawal guidelines. When in doubt about withdrawal decisions, consultation with the acquisitions department and appropriate teaching faculty is advised.

1. Method of Withdrawals

The circulation statistics can be used as an aid in making withdrawal decisions. Relevant information may include the number of historical charges and the date of the latest transaction.

2. Withdrawal Criteria

Withdrawal decisions are based on the material's relation to the academic curriculum and the type, level, and quantity of faculty or student research being carried on in a particular area. Also, the material's physical condition, language, age, and appropriateness of its content are directly related to weeding decisions. To determine whether to withdraw a title, the following criteria should be taken into account:

- Age of the book and its relation to the curriculum: Retain materials that are still current and relevant to the program. Use the copyright date and the date of purchase to determine the book's age. Withdraw dated materials or those that contain inaccurate or misleading information.

- Availability of later editions in the collection: Only retain earlier editions if there is a compelling reason, i.e., they contain sections useful for comparison, research, instruction, or historical value.
- Circulation/In-house use: Heavy, recent circulation, or in-house use (browsing), indicate the need to retain a title. If an item did not circulate within the past 10 years, it should be considered for withdrawal. This does not apply to noncirculating works or multivolume sets.
- Works that have been superseded or cumulated in more comprehensive publications.
- Incomplete series or series/serials and subscriptions that have been dropped when they no longer support the academic programs.
- Volumes acquired by mistake, e.g., textbooks and vanity press titles.
- Volumes whose poor physical condition make them unsuitable for circulation, and cannot be repaired. If appropriate, consider replacement with the most current edition, or a similar title in the same subject area.
- In general, duplicate copies should be withdrawn. There should be no duplication among campuses, except for special circumstances.
- Availability of electronic copy.

3. Withdrawal Guidelines for General Subject Areas

Humanities

Withdraw previous editions if later editions are available containing new or revised information. Be guided by usage patterns and a title's support of the curriculum.

Pure and Applied Sciences

Weed systematically, since scientific information changes very rapidly.

- Pure Science: withdraw after five years.
- Mathematics: withdraw after 10 years.
- Computers hardware and technology: withdraw after five years.
- Computer software: withdraw when dated, usually less than five years.
- Medicine and health: withdraw after five to 10 years.
- Pharmacy and allied health professions: withdraw after five to 10 years.

Social Sciences

Withdraw books that contain outdated information no longer current; however, keep if useful, even when old. Generally, withdraw when works do not reflect current knowledge on the subject. Since topical materials in social sciences often become dated, they need to be reviewed frequently for continued retention.

4. Withdrawal Guidelines for Periodicals and Serials (Print and Online)

As journals are increasingly available online, many print journals are being used less frequently by students and faculty. In addition, the Libraries' space restrictions make it less possible to keep large numbers of journals "just in case" they may be needed. If articles are not available online or in print,

Interlibrary Loan can be used to obtain articles for patrons. Liaison and faculty recommendation can be very useful in helping to identifying candidates for withdrawal.

The following considerations should guide the weeding process

- Electronic counterparts

If there is an electronic counterpart, the journal can be withdrawn. It is not necessary to have the complete archives available online in order to withdraw the journal.

- Support for the curriculum

The periodical collections should support the curriculum as it exists today. Sources can include faculty recommendations, bulletins, course schedules, and the Office of Institutional Research. The Libraries should collect most extensively in areas that are central to the curriculum or in which there are graduate programs.

- Periodicals that are primarily in a foreign language

These are strong candidates for withdrawal. A possible exception are theological or philosophical journals, where core foreign language journals may be retained. Literary, science, and social science journals that contain more than half foreign language materials should be withdrawn in most circumstances.

- Popular journals

These do not fit the Collection's profile and can be withdrawn in most instances.

- Trade journals

In general, trade journals do not match the Collection's profile. However, trade journals may have continuing value, especially in business.

- National journals other than US

Unless there is a very specific reason, these journals should not be kept, i.e., *Indian Journal of Sociology*, *Israeli Journal of Mathematics*.

- Availability

Periodicals that are ubiquitous may be withdrawn since they are easy to acquire elsewhere. For more obscure journals, librarians will research if libraries in the metropolitan area have the journal. If the University Libraries is the only holder, the journal may be retained.

When applying general criteria to the weeding process, consider the following:

- Does the title still support the curriculum?

- Has the serial ceased publication?
- How complete is the set?
- Is information in the periodical or serial obsolete?
- Is it already available on microfilm or microfiche?
- Has the material been indexed?
- Is the journal available online? If so, how complete are the backfiles? Is there an embargo period? Do the Libraries have ownership or access rights?

5. Materials That Should Not Be Withdrawn

- Items listed in one of the standard catalogs or bibliographies
- Classics and books of historical value to research and instruction
- Works published by St. John's University Press
- Works written by St. John's University faculty

6. Discarding Withdrawn Materials

After evaluation, items withdrawn from the collection should be disposed of in a way most beneficial to the Libraries. This includes by sale or gift to the University community, or by donation to humanitarian or other worthy causes.

II. Collection Maintenance: Preservation

General Policy

The Libraries take measures to preserve the physical condition of materials contained in the collection. The majority of new paperback acquisitions are bound to extend their shelf life. Items that become damaged or worn may be repaired by the Preservation Unit; or they may be replaced by print or online versions, provided they still support the curriculum.

1. Preservation of New Items

Some new paperback items are bound after acquisition. The Head of Serials or other Library faculty determine which items are bound in-house by the Preservation Unit and which are sent out for commercial binding. One criteria is the cost of replacement versus the cost of binding.

Paperbacks receiving in-house binding include items that are saddle-stapled, i.e., items with a strong original binding that are not expected to have heavy use.

Paperbacks sent for commercial binding receive either Class A binding or the less expensive Commercial Shiny binding. Expensive items, science books, and items with glossy pages receive Class A binding. All others receive Commercial Shiny binding.

2. Preservation of Older Items

The Preservation Unit of the Libraries is responsible for repairing and rebinding certain older, damaged books in the collection. The decision to repair, rebind, or withdraw a book is made by the acquisitions department or a subject specialist who determines whether or not the item should be retained in the collection.

The acquisitions department determines whether it is feasible to repair an item and recommends a method of preservation. Old items will be checked for online availability before being sent to be repaired or bound, especially those that are out of copyright.

If the text block is clean and intact and the paper is not brittle, books can be rebound. Torn or loose pages can be repaired, and missing pages photocopied from another copy. Items beyond repair are replaced if they are available and if the cost is not prohibitive. If they cannot be replaced, the Preservation Unit should place the damaged item in a wrapper or a box to prevent further deterioration.

The only items in the Collection that are eligible for microfilming or digitizing for preservation purposes are materials in the University Archives. These include all vital University records, some fragile materials, and some important historical items.

III. Multiple Copies

General Policy

It is the general policy of the St. John's University Libraries to purchase one copy of a title and avoid unnecessary duplicate purchase of library materials, with the following exceptions:

- Reserve items needed on multiple campuses.
- Items that circulate frequently, or that are needed by a large number of students in a given subject area.
- Reference materials duplicated among various library departments as necessitated by demand, access, or library hours.
- Some faculty publications (one circulation, one Faculty Publications Collection)
- In general, those materials that require simultaneous usage should be acquired in digital format.

Duplication between St. John's Campus Libraries

The Libraries' multiple campuses requires proportional distribution of resources and services to enable them to accomplish their mission. Each campus library should purchase essential materials which support the curriculum regardless of duplication in another campus library. Whenever possible, materials that are needed on multiple campuses should be acquired in digital format. Very expensive reference items should be purchased for one campus only. A core collection will thus be housed on both campuses to provide adequate services.

Staten Island relies on the Queens campus library to provide subject depth and research-level materials, through intercampus loan. Typically, multiple copies are not purchased for Staten Island.

IV. Replacement of Lost or Damaged Material

The general criteria for selection apply to lost and worn materials, if these materials are to be replaced in the collections. In addition, consider the following:

- Past usage
- If the item is still in print and date of publication
- Availability of later editions or other comparable titles in the subject area
- Availability in the collection of other materials and formats covering the subject area