

# COLLECTION DESELECTION GUIDELINES

## *MATERIAL REMOVAL METHODS*

Guilford College  
Hege Library  
Greensboro, North Carolina

### Weeding the Collection

Maintaining a useful and current collection requires the deletion of no longer appropriate materials as well as the addition of new acquisitions. Criteria for weeding will be consistent with priorities in acquiring materials. Candidates for withdrawal are those items not recently circulated, those with superseded, dated or obsolete information, or materials in poor condition. Surveys of usage and opinions of public service librarians and teaching faculty should determine the retention of any titles in question. An ongoing process of review, evaluation, and replacement will aid in these decisions.

Houston Community College System  
Houston Community College Libraries  
Houston, Texas

### Weeding

Weeding is an integral and important aspect of the collection development/management process. It is an ongoing process, reflecting changing needs and current developments in every area.

Responsibility for weeding rests with library faculty.

The following are general guidelines that may be applied to the weeding process both generally and within each subject area. Subject Specialists may provide more specific guidelines in their areas as need indicates. The general guidelines are valid for print and non-print materials except where otherwise indicated.

**Multiple copies**—Generally there should not be more than one copy per title on any campus. Additional copies should be either reassigned or withdrawn. Exceptions are heavy use of a title, but this should be monitored closely, and as soon as the demand lessens, additional copies should be weeded.

**Editions**—In most cases, a later edition will replace an earlier edition of a work. When 2d, 3d, 4th, etc., editions are received, older editions should be examined closely and weeded if appropriate.

**Erroneous or outdated information**—especially applicable in the sciences and technical areas. Works that may contain out-of-date information should be weeded. This is an area where consultation with appropriate faculty may be necessary. Generally, works over five years old should be looked at carefully.

**Discontinued programs or courses**—print materials supporting programs or courses that are no longer offered on a particular campus or in the system should be examined for general relevance. Materials should be moved to the corresponding campus when a program or course moves, or may need to be withdrawn if areas are no longer covered at all by the system.

**Use patterns**—materials that have not been checked out for 4–5 years should be considered for withdrawal. For whatever reason these materials are not meeting students' needs.

## THE ACADEMIC LIBRARY MANAGER'S FORMS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

**Serials/Annuals**—When newer editions of serials or annuals are received, the older editions should be withdrawn. Generally, these are reference materials, and if the Librarians determine that the need exists, the older editions may be placed in the circulating collection, but these also should be withdrawn as they are replaced.

**Textbooks**—Although the library tries to avoid acquisition of textbooks, this is not always possible. However, all textbooks should be examined carefully whenever newer texts become available or when a course no longer uses a text or is no longer taught.

**Age**—Except in some areas of the humanities and social sciences materials of a certain age have a very limited value and should be withdrawn or replaced with new materials. Generally, any title over ten years old should be looked at carefully to determine its continuing value.

**Physical condition**—Materials that have been damaged or are missing some part should be either replaced or withdrawn entirely.

**Level of materials**—Level of materials should be that which is most accessible to student body. Advanced works may need to be replaced by more basic works appropriate to a community college setting or basic works may need to be replaced or supplemented by more in-depth, comprehensive coverage if the need exists.

Audiovisual media weeding should be done in conjunction with the appropriate instructional personnel.

### 1.9.1 Inter-college cooperation.

Materials weeded from one college collection may still be of use or value at another college within the HCCS system. Before materials are discarded, each college will notify the other HCCS college libraries about the availability of materials and transfer to other colleges any that are requested.

Los Angeles Valley College  
Los Angeles Valley College Library  
Valley Glen, California

Recommendations for specific titles may be made to the acquisitions librarian by filling out an order card; just ask one of the librarians for one. We encourage faculty members to review the collection in their discipline for possible discarding (weeding) of dated or obsolete materials. Additionally, professional development credit is given for “review and assessment of library holdings in your discipline.”

New Mexico State University Alamogordo  
David H. Townsend Library  
Alamogordo, New Mexico

### Deselection (Weeding)

Deselection of library materials (the process of removing items from the collection) is essential for the maintenance of a current, academically useful library collection.

Deselection provides quality control for the collection by elimination of outdated, inaccurate, and worn-out materials. Librarians are responsible for conducting an ongoing deselection effort. Faculty members are regularly consulted when specific items are recommended for deselection.

- Print and audio-visual resources deselection:
  - Superseded editions are routinely deselected from the collection.
  - Materials which cannot be repaired or rebound or for which the cost of preservation exceeds the usefulness of the information contained are deselected.
  - Because currency of information is extremely important in some fields such as health sciences, technology, and business, older materials must be regularly deselected so that outdated or inaccurate information is eliminated.
  - Material that has not been used, based on circulation and browsing statistics, may be

## COLLECTION DESELECTION GUIDELINES

deselected after five to ten years of inactivity. However, some library materials, such as items considered classic works in their field, have long-term value and should be kept in the collection despite lack of use.

- The title may be retained if it is included in a standard list or bibliography such as Books for College Libraries or if the author has a reputation for being an authority on the topic.
- Online resources deselection:  
Ongoing deselection of Internet resources is a necessity because of the dynamic nature of such resources. The following guidelines are used:
  - An Internet resource is no longer available or maintained
  - The currency or reliability of the resource's information has lost its value
  - Another Internet site or resource offers more comprehensive coverage
  - A comparable fee-based or free resource provides more affordable access
- Serials Deselection:
  - Incomplete and short runs of a title may be withdrawn, particularly when the title is not received currently.
  - Titles which contain information that is not useful long-term, such as newsletters and trade magazines, usually have automatic discard patterns established such as "Library retains one year only"
  - Annuals, biennials, and regularly updated editions of guidebooks, handbooks, almanacs, and directories have a deselection pattern established depending on the value of the information contained in earlier editions. Often one or two older editions are retained in the reference and/or circulating collections or the latest edition is retained at the Townsend Library.

Lake Sumter Community College  
Lake Sumter Community College Libraries  
Sumterville, Florida

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#### Print and Audio-Visual Resources Deselection

Superseded editions are routinely deselected from the collection.

Materials that cannot be repaired or rebound or for which the cost of preservation exceeds the usefulness of the information contained are deselected.

Because currency of information is extremely important in some fields such as health sciences, technology, and business, older materials must be regularly deselected so that outdated or inaccurate information is eliminated.

Materials that do not support the current curriculum may be deselected.

Material that has not been used based on circulation and browsing statistics, may be deselected after five to ten years of inactivity. However, some library materials such as items considered classic works in their field have long-term value and should be kept in the collection despite lack of use.

The title may be retained if it is included in a standard list or bibliography such as Books for College Libraries or if the author has a reputation for being an authority on the topic.

Deselected items may be disposed of according to the following guidelines, after approval by the LSCC

## THE ACADEMIC LIBRARY MANAGER'S FORMS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

### District Board of Trustees:

Immediately, where severely damaged or containing material so outdated as to be grossly inaccurate or dangerous

After being offered at no cost to library patrons where of little or no intrinsic or historical value

After being offered to another library or collecting institution where unsuitable for the LSCC collection but thought to be of significant intrinsic or historical value

### Serials Deselection

Incomplete and short runs of a title may be withdrawn, particularly when the title is not received currently.

Titles that do not contain substantial amounts information supporting the current curriculum

Items where information currency is of the essence such as newsletters and trade magazines have pre-determined holding limits such as "Library retains one year only"

Annuals, biennials, and regularly updated editions of guidebooks, handbooks, almanacs, and directories have a deselection schedule established depending on the value of the information contained in earlier editions. Often one or two older editions are retained in the reference and/or circulating collections or the latest edition is retained at the Leesburg Library and earlier editions placed in the Sumter or South Lake campus libraries.

Due to lack of space, issues that are replaced by microfilm are routinely discarded.

Deselected serials may be disposed of according to the guidelines listed under print and audiovisual materials. Disposal of individual journal, magazine, or newspaper issues does not require District Board of Trustees approval.

### Online Resources Deselection

Ongoing deselection of Internet resources is a necessity because of the dynamic nature of such resources.

The following guidelines are used:

An Internet resource is no longer available or maintained

The resource is no longer sufficiently current or reliable

Another Internet site or resource offers more better coverage of the same topic

LINCCWeb provides statewide access to the resource or a comparable resource

A comparable fee-based or free resource provides more affordable access

Lansing Community College  
Library at Lansing Community College  
Lansing, Michigan

### Deselection (Weeding)

A. Generally, consider "drop" titles on a one-by-one basis.

#### B. Request form

1. Use a separate Periodical Request for each title considered for deselection.
2. With assistance of a LIS staff member, a requester should thoroughly document their reason for suggesting a periodical deselection. See also Request for Reconsideration—Attachment A.
3. LIS staff member assisting requester or initiating a "drop" request complete as much of the form as possible.
4. Send a completed Periodical Request and a sample issue from the collection to Periodicals Coordinator.
5. Coordinator checks for current subscription price and verifies completeness of the "drop" request.

#### C. Routing the request

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1. Coordinator routes drop request form and sample issue to Reference staff soliciting their comment.
2. Upon completing routing, the Coordinator forwards drop request to Library Director with a summary recommendation based on Reference staff comment.
3. Library Director returns drop request form to Periodicals Coordinator with final decision. Coordinator notifies the requester, LIS staff member assisting requester, and DCM.

D. Reference staff review a portion of the Periodicals Collection, or perhaps the entire collection, as may become necessary. Reviews of this type may result in deselection and weeding of a number of titles at one time.

### LCC Library is Curricula Based

Lansing Community College Library Information Services will remove obsolete materials to maintain a quality and current collection best meeting the needs of currently enrolled LCC students. To keep the collection up to date Librarians will remove older materials that no longer contain current information and duplicate copies of once popular items where demand has diminished. A purpose of the LCC Library is to have books that students use. If shelves have become crowded and shifting potential remains limited, are all the present books in the topic currently serving LCC needs? Materials taking space that ought to be used more profitably are subject to re-evaluation and weeding when warranted. Replace titles withdrawn due to physical condition, loss, or damage, if they meet current selection criteria and are in Books in Print plus with Book Reviews.

Weeding, an ongoing part of Collection Development work, is a regular responsibility of each Reference Librarian in areas where they are Selector & Liaison. Other areas may be agreed upon from time to time with the Collection Development Coordinator.

Criteria for removal correspond to the "Guidelines for Selectors" (II. B). Current principles for deselection are essentially the same as for selection. Procedure is the deselector places a self-stick red dot on the "spine" call-number label signaling the item is a candidate for withdrawal from the collection at a later time. DCM (Database & Collection Maintenance) will call for the red-dotted items to be pulled by Circulation.

Weed an item when it is not wanted by LCC clientele. If someone wants items from the collection these items should not, therefore, be weeded. Such desire for the material indicates apparent continued usefulness for LCC.

Remove unused materials from the general collection when the topic is otherwise adequately represented. Systematic discarding is important to keep the collection alive. Predominantly older less attractive books that just sit on the shelves may divert clientele away from more currently useful materials. Re-evaluate materials continuously when selecting new or replacement materials. Weed obsolete materials. Newer editions replace superseded editions. When possible, place a "red dot" on superseded non-reference materials.

Different types of libraries will retain different materials. In awareness of this, and with encouragement, resource sharing in the LCC service area shall continue. Refer LCC clients to scholarly and historical depositories as necessary. Use LCC's comprehensive "reference" sources for coverage of many specific information requests. Use available periodical publications and electronic delivery of information for current data.

### Guidelines for Deselectors

Consider the following when suggesting material for deletion from the Library:

1. Check the current Lansing Community College Catalog. Do the subject matter and scope of the material suit the purpose of the LCC curriculum currently being supported?
2. Be aware of recent reading-level test results, LCC student profile, etc., when this information is shared. Does the treatment of the subject suit the needs of LCC students studying in the discipline? Does the item serve student interests in more than one LCC curriculum? Be aware of current LCC enrollment trends. Freshmen-Sophomore students find introductory works, surveys of the topic, study guides,

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handbooks, manuals, to be very useful. Is the item a partial or more extensive coverage? LCC Library clientele look for very specific information material that is often found within more encyclopedic sources. Is the item speculative?

Is it contemporary or retrospective in nature? Historical coverage of a subject is in relatively lesser demand. What emphasis occurs in the curricular areas that the item supports?

Is the item a scholarly, technical, or popular work? While instructors seem to want LCC student use of research level materials, Library Information Services Librarians must continue an awareness of student readiness in introductory level courses.

3. What is the original publication date; if revised, how extensively? What is the reputation of the publisher? What are the author's qualifications? Does the item under consideration have an index? Does the item draw on primary or secondary sources? Is the information based on observation or research?

4. Does the item contribute to pro and con interpretations of current issues? Is the point of view partisan or sectarian? Does it present fact or opinion? Does it show unredeemable bias? Is it a contribution to community values, citizenship, cultural diversity? Does it challenge and promote critical thinking skills?

5. What elements of quality identify the item as among the best of its type, for retention in the LCC Library? What degree of creativity is represented? Is there a freshness in the presentation? Is the material aimed at community college students and adult amateurs? Is the format of the material suitable for the message? What is the quality of illustration? Are there more appropriate similar publications in the LCC Library collection?

6. Is the physical format (introductory material, print, indexing, paper quality, binding) of the item attractive? Is it unusual in size? Are standard format items available that may effectively substitute?

7. In weeding works of literature, does the item add to an understanding of cultural diversity, personality, human nature, and the human condition? Retain works that are representative of an author or of a genre of current and lasting interest. Retain works of minority authors. Is the item among the best in representing its author or genre? When available, give preference to study editions containing notes. Give preference to anthologies of poetry, drama, etc., over individual works. As in other curricular areas, non-usage is a criterion for consideration when weeding.

Procedure:

### 1. Physical presence

Check the physical condition of the material. Is the cataloging adequate? Does the Library own a newer edition? Check for other works by the same author. Check the quantity of other works in the same subject headings.

### 2. Usage

Check the acquisition date (this appears in various forms in the book). "Last activity dates" (LAD) appear in the catalog for the input or updating of a bibliographic record and again for the inputting or updating of an item record. Check the last date of circulation. Consider weeding an item if it has not circulated in ten years. When possible, check frequency of recent circulation. If duplicates are present, consider frequency of circulation among the duplicate items. Be aware of usage within the classification area where the item is shelved. If the work is now out-of-date, individual item usage might be disregarded.

### 3. Networking

Keep in mind that LCC is but part of a network of resources. Be ever ready to refer to other library and information services in the LCC area. Additional developments in electronic "document delivery" and automated information services will have an impact on materials retention. Be familiar with and ready to use Interlibrary Loan procedure.

### *DAMAGED AND LOST MATERIALS REPLACEMENTS*

New Mexico State University Alamogordo  
David H. Townsend Library  
Alamogordo, New Mexico

#### Replacement of Materials

Decisions must be made regarding the replacement of lost, damaged, missing, or worn-out materials, based on the following criteria:

- Does the material being replaced meet the general library collection policy?
- Does the frequency of use justify replacement?
- Is the item used for class reserve reading or is it on a faculty recommended reading list?
- Is the item listed in Books for College Libraries or other recommended book list?
- Is an electronic version available that would provide remote access for users?

Lake Sumter Community College  
Lake Sumter Community College Libraries  
Sumterville, Florida

#### Replacement of Materials

Decisions are made regarding the replacement of lost, damaged, missing, or worn-out items, based on the following criteria:

Does the item being considered meet the general library collection policy?

Does the frequency of use justify replacement?

Is the item used for class reserve reading or is it on a faculty recommended reading list?

Is the same item available in another format that would better meet the needs of users or is the content better covered by another title?

Is an electronic version available that would provide remote access for users?

University of Texas at Austin  
University of Texas Libraries  
Austin, Texas

Library materials are normally replaced when lost, missing, worn, mutilated or defective. It is the responsibility of the appropriate subject bibliographer to decide, within the guidelines of the Collection Development Policy, whether to replace such materials and in what form.

#### Status of Materials

Officially lost or missing materials: Review should be made by the appropriate bibliographer in accordance with the schedule stipulated in Procedures for Implementation of the Withdrawal Policy. Usually a title reported lost in circulation will be needed, and a replacement copy should be purchased immediately. Likewise, once a title is officially declared lost, it should be considered for immediate replacement. The decision whether to replace may be affected by the replacement, or because of the provisions of current collection policy.

Worn, mutilated, or defective materials: Materials requiring other than routine repair should be referred to the appropriate bibliographer as they are identified. If the decision is made to retain, the material may be repaired or rebound, and additional copies may be acquired. Defective, in-print titles may be returned to publisher.

## THE ACADEMIC LIBRARY MANAGER'S FORMS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

### Guidelines for Replacement

Replacement is always preferred over rebinding for inexpensive in-print titles. Current editions are preferred over previous ones unless the earlier edition has special distinguishing characteristics.

Replacement in part, by insertion of bindable photocopied pages, may be employed for mutilated or defective serial and monograph titles, especially for those out of print.

It is usually desirable to replace monographs or serials in their same format; however, microform rather than hard copy should be considered for extensive serial replacements.