Wesley College Collection Development & Management Policy

Overview

Robert H. Parker Library is committed to providing an environment which supports and encourages learning and research by students, staff, and faculty members. Resources acquired and made available by the library are intended to support the learning goals of the college and its community.

Purpose of Policy

One of the main things that defines a library is its collections of resources, both physical and digital. This policy will serve to guide the librarians of the Robert H. Parker Library at Wesley College in their collection development efforts now and in the future. This policy will also serve to explain our decision making processes to our immediate community, including the students and faculty and staff of Wesley College, and beyond.

Purpose of Collections & Philosophy of Collection

The primary purpose of the collections at the Robert H. Parker Library is to support and enhance the curricular and research needs of members of the community. In practical terms, this means that we will spend the most money and effort towards shaping our collections in a way that reflects what is taught to our students and what is being researched by our faculty. In times of limited finances, we will do our best to spend our time and money on resources that will support a broader base. However, when money is more readily available, we will add specialized resources. Additions will be made and items will be removed, so the collection does not stagnate. We aim for a vibrant library collection.

Material Selection Responsibility

We will seek out and consult with important stakeholders on major decisions. We also encourage suggestions from any member of our community with regards to additions and deletions. However, ultimate responsibility for decisions about adding or removing any materials, whether electronic or physical, to or from the collection rest with the Library Director and the Reference/Instruction Librarian.
Collection Users

Because this is a library that is part of a teaching focused institution, the students of Wesley College are our primary audience and we therefore place priority on materials that serve their needs. Our secondary audience is comprised of the faculty and staff of Wesley College. Beyond that, we will take into account the needs of the patrons at the member libraries of the Delaware Library Consortium and patrons of other OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) member libraries.

Criteria for Selection

1. The value of the resource as a permanent and/or contemporary support to the mission of the library, the institution, or the consortium.
2. Where the resource falls within the curricular, research, or recreation needs of the community.
3. How the resource differs and/or duplicates other resources available. (For example: second copies are rarely, if ever, included.)
4. The reputation of the publisher and author/editor for quality materials.
5. The intended audience of the resource.
6. Cost of the resource.
7. Format:
   a. For books, we have a preference for hardcover books over paperback except for when the cost difference is prohibitive.
   b. We also have a preference for physical books over digital, at least for now.
   c. Our electronic resources are primarily selected for breadth of coverage. When and if money becomes available to move beyond our current slate of databases, we will consider adding specialized resources.
8. Relationship of the author(s) and/or editor(s) to the school. (We will always buy at least once copy of a work by Wesley College alumnæ/faculty/staff for the archives. If it is appropriate for our collection in other ways, we will also buy a copy for the circulating collection.)

Deselection of Materials:

1. Assessment of Collection: Multiple factors are taken into account when we make decisions about which materials to remove from the collection. There is no hardline when making these decisions, and faculty input is sought when possible.
a. Age;
b. Condition;
c. Relation to the curriculum;
d. Quality of content;
e. Circulation history;
f. Availability from other libraries in the consortium;
g. Significance of item.

2. Disposal of Materials: We attempt to sell or donate materials we have removed from our collection through multiple venues (on site book sale; third party vendor; other local library book sales). Sometimes materials are not accepted elsewhere, in which case we recycle what we can and dispose of the rest.

Other Considerations:

• Non-English Language Materials: While the library does already have materials in languages other than English, in both its physical and digital collections, we do not currently purchase such materials. We will, if the materials are appropriate to the school’s limited foreign language curriculum, accept donations.

• In-print vs. Out-of-print Materials: We prefer to add in-print editions of materials. There are a few instances where exceptions will be made, such as replacing damaged materials (although we will make every effort to repair damaged books) that have unique value or when one book out of a multi-book set is missing, but these instances are rare.

• Textbooks: Materials that were designed and written with the sole purpose of serving as textbooks will not normally be added to the library’s permanent collection. Exceptions will be made, such as when a book is authored by a Wesley community member, but these exceptions will also be rare.

• Mass Market Paperbacks: We do not add mass market paperbacks to the Parker Library collection unless it is completely impossible to get books in any other size or format. These are books that are approximately 4¼” x 6¼” and are usually printed on low quality materials. They are not designed for long term use by multiple people, and fall apart more quickly than typical books.

• Video: This collection does not see a lot of circulation, which may be a result of the collection having been neglected in the past or may be a result of a preference for streaming media. We will not add VHS materials to the collection, instead preferring DVD copies.

• Software: The library does not purchase software except for items for use strictly by the staff of the library.
• Electronic/Online Resources: At this time, we do not purchase online and/or electronic resources that are separate from our database subscriptions.

• Popular Materials: The library seeks to support the whole patron, not just their academic needs, and as such we do collect some popular reading and viewing materials, as well as some board games. However, since this is not the primary purpose of our collections, we purchase these materials with money made from our book sale - reserving the money in our budget for more academic materials.

• Duplication of Materials & Variant Editions: Because of limited shelf space, we do not keep multiple copies of one book. Also, except in very specific circumstances, we only keep the most recent edition of materials.

• Inventory: We will conduct an inventory of all of our physical materials once per year.

• Location: All materials purchased with money from the Parker Library budget are to be housed in the Parker Library, with the exception of times when they have been checked out by members of the community.

• Repair and Replacement of Materials: When possible, and using the same criteria mentioned above for additions and deselection of materials, we will repair damaged materials and return them to the circulating collection. If repair is not possible, we will use those same criteria to decide whether or not to replace the materials.

Please note that there are a few policies that relate to our collections that are intentionally separate from this document:

• Special Collections & Archives: the Wesley Collect Archives, including the George Washington Society Special Collection, are intended to preserve local and school history, and so have a very different (although not mutually exclusive) purpose from the rest of the library’s collection.

• Gifts and Donations: We have specific procedures for handling books and other donations that go a bit beyond what is covered here.

• Challenges to the Collection: We take our ethical responsibility for the intellectual freedom of our students, faculty, and staff, very seriously. As such, the kinds of considerations that must be made when dealing with a challenge to materials in our collection is a separate - and extensive - policy.