

Collection Development Policy

Reed College Library

March 2025

I. Goals of this Policy

This document provides structured principles for ensuring the library's collections are relevant, responsive, and reliable. In accordance with the library's mission statement, this policy guides the acquisition and management of materials that (a) advance the educational mission of Reed College; (b) ensure collections have the greatest curricular impact and, (c) respond to the holistic pursuit of student inquiry, growth, and scholarship.

Questions about this policy or any other matter pertaining to Reed Library collecting policies can be submitted to library@reed.edu.

II. Scope of this Policy

This policy concerns all monographic, serial, and electronic materials found through the library website, the Eric V. Hauser Memorial Library, and the Performing Arts Resource Center. The policy encompasses all formats including print and non-print resources, including video, audio, and born-digital resources. The intention of this policy is to inform the acquisition and management of general collections. For information covering the rare, distinctive or archival collections of Reed College, please see Special Collections and Archives and the Visual Resource Center.

III. Faculty Involvement

Reed Library values the close relationship that faculty have to both collections and librarians. The Library Board is the primary faculty group through which new collections policies, major revisions, and substantial collection management decisions are evaluated and approved. The library is committed to reporting major proposed changes to the board for review and discussion in advance of implementation. Collections development and management are directly informed by faculty actively voicing questions, concerns, suggestions, and teaching priorities. All Reed faculty are invited to participate in the collection development process at any time through consultation with librarians.

IV. Selection Responsibility

The responsibility for developing the library's collection is based on the active, collaborative relationship between librarians and faculty, students, and library staff. Final responsibility for the collection rests with the college librarian, who delegates operational management to specific library staff and/or departments. The director of collection services manages and optimizes the budget for library materials. Subject librarians select materials based on faculty recommendation, student input, and their own subject area expertise.

Subject librarians leverage library collections to support the curricular needs in their assigned departments and program areas, as well as the broader academic needs of faculty and students. With these curricular needs in mind, librarians select published materials to fill collection gaps and address emerging needs. Librarians promote awareness of these materials to students and faculty through instruction, workshops, exhibits, reference assistance, and additional course support.

The library department of collection services works closely with the college librarian, librarians, and faculty to inform strategic funds management of the library's collections budget. Collection services staff assess fund allocations that reflect the evolving needs of users and the collections themselves. This work requires balancing the initial purchase investment and the total cost of maintaining and providing access to these materials throughout their lifecycle. Considerations include: ongoing maintenance fees; price increases for ongoing subscription fees; costs relating to access and discovery such as metadata, linked data, and physical processing; storage and space requirements.

V. General Collection Development Priorities, Principles, and Values

The library develops collections that prioritize the educational mission of Reed College. To this end, librarians follow these principles when acquiring materials and assessing the collection. Adhering to these principles and values ensure the library's collecting decisions are made with purpose and intentionality.

- A. **Commitment to the curriculum.** The library positions the curriculum at the heart of its collection development priorities. Collections are grown and maintained to support the learning outcomes and activities outlined in current coursework, programs, departments and the research needs of faculty, students, and staff, from introductory courses for first year students to the research needs of seniors writing a senior thesis.
- B. **Access to materials.** The library acquires items for use by the entire Reed community, and enters into all collection development activities with this aim in mind. The library does not acquire materials for which access or use would be restricted to specific individuals.
- C. **Accessibility.** The library makes every attempt to ensure the content we provide follows evolving national standards for accessibility.
- D. **Consortial participation.** The holdings of libraries with which Reed has shared collections and/or cooperative borrowing agreements may be considered when making decisions.
- E. **Evidence-based decisions.** The library practices responsible information gathering to inform collections-based decision-making. Quantitative and qualitative data is gathered on the access and usage of library materials as appropriate. For electronic resources, the library arranges for trials of new electronic resources to gauge interest in and usage of materials before acquisition.
- F. **Open Access.** The library supports barrier-free access to information and therefore seeks out open access materials and open educational resources that support the curricular needs of the college.
- G. **Ownership vs. access.** The library strives to acquire collections that result in perpetual ownership of those materials. In some cases, perpetual ownership is either unavailable or unaffordable, but leasing options exist. Leased access will be considered when resources are important to the Reed curriculum. In all cases, the conditions of access will be weighed carefully by librarians in the context of user needs.
- H. **Physical vs. electronic formats.** The library considers materials in different formats based in the context of the needs of appropriate disciplines. The library prioritizes electronic formats when content, coverage, access, and discipline preference is equal, or when electronic formats offer improved discovery or user-based enhancements.

VI. Selection Criteria

The primary criteria for selecting library material are the immediate and enduring value of an item or resource within the context of the library's mission, priorities, and principles. This, and each of the following criteria are present in the decision-making of subject librarians, with some variance depending on the needs of a specific discipline/subject area and available resources. Adhering to these criteria ensure the library's collecting decisions are made with purpose and intentionality. All current and potential library materials should be evaluated for the following factors:

- Supports the current curriculum as represented by established and emerging coursework, programs of study, department interests, or student research;
- Introduces new or underrepresented perspectives or influences to an established subject area or discipline;
- Meets a current need communicated by faculty, students, or staff;
- Demonstrates literary, artistic, or scholarly value;
- Accessible through reasonable means;
- Within the means of the current and foreseeable budget;
- Fits in the available space

The following additional criteria are considered when applicable:

- **Binding Preference.** Cloth (hardcover) binding is preferred over paperback.
- **Donated Materials.** The library accepts donated materials that fall within the scope of its collection development policies. Please refer to the library's [Gift in Kind policy](#) for the specific conditions required to accept gift-in-kind materials.
- **Duplicates.** A single circulating copy is acquired except when additional copies are justified by reasonably projected or proven consistent and continued use.
- **Formats.** Formats readily accessible using library/campus equipment or platforms are preferred: Film, audio, data, and some digital formats.
- **Language.** English materials and non-English materials in curricula-supported languages are preferred: Chinese, French; German; Greek; Latin; Russian; Spanish.
- **Multiple Editions.** When acquiring a new title with multiple editions, the library will pursue the most recently published edition. Older editions may be selected if demonstrated to have significant curricular value.
- **Physical Condition.** Item quality of new/like new is preferred over heavily used, annotated, or damaged materials.
- **Textbooks and Classroom Materials.** New textbooks and classroom materials are only acquired at faculty request for the purpose of course reserves.
- **Thesis support.** Monographs may be acquired at the request of current junior and senior students to support thesis research and development.

VII. Collections Maintenance

The library requires an active and consistent maintenance plan for its collections. A well-maintained collection enables discovery and invites usage. Collections maintenance is the responsibility of all library staff. The library adheres to the following parameters in order to sustain the general collection's relevance for current and future library users.

A. **Government Documents.** The library has been a member of the Federal Depository Library Program since 1912. Maintenance of the Government Documents collection is governed by the legal requirements and program regulations of the Federal Depository Library Program.

B. **Preservation.** The library monitors the condition of the collection. Preventative measures are enacted to reduce the risk of exposure to the elements which may devalue or damage physical materials. This includes consistent temperature and humidity regulation, periodic sweeps for damaged binding, and occasional shifting projects to ensure adequate shelving space. Materials identified as damaged will be marked for evaluation and physical mending or rebinding when possible. Any materials showing signs of mold or insect damage are quarantined or discarded to minimize the risk to other materials.

C. **Replacements.** Lost, missing, or damaged materials will be replaced at the discretion of the appropriate subject librarian.

VIII. Other Documents

- Collection Development Policies for: Special Collections, Rare Books & Archives; Visual Resource Center
- Collection Priority Statements for: Artist Books; Equipment; Zines
- Expectations for Collections Vendors
- Mission Statement
- Gift in Kind Policy
- Staff Guidelines on Deaccessioning