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CUL Policy on the Disposition of Library Materials

All libraries throughout the CUL system need on occasion to dispose of library materials --primarily books and journals. The purpose of this policy is to prescribe the appropriate methods for such disposition in CUL. There are generally two broad categories of traditional materials subject to disposition: (a) materials in the CUL collections that have been withdrawn and (b) materials given or otherwise provided to CUL, which are found, for whatever reason, to be inappropriate for the collections. The former group of materials must be deselected and withdrawn, prior to disposition; the latter group can normally be disposed of as soon as the decision is made not to add them. In the case of large gifts, however, it may be necessary to forego disposition for at least two years, in order for the donor to receive tax benefits for the donation; this temporary retention of materials should be negotiated with the donor in advance. For further information, contact Library External Relations.

1. **Deselection.** Because shelf space is a key Library resource, and because the cost of maintaining library materials is increasing, all CUL selectors should always be watching for materials that can be withdrawn from the collections. Discussions with CUL selectors in the past about deselection have revealed three primary criteria:
 - a. duplicate copies on the CUL Ithaca campus;
 - b. superseded editions with no historical or bibliographic utility;
 - c. materials no longer needed for current instruction and research, that are unlikely to be needed by future users.

2. **Withdrawal.**
 - a. Procedure. Prior to making plans for larger withdrawal projects (more than twenty titles), selectors should consult with their processing unit, in order to agree upon schedule and workflow. For technical services procedures on withdrawals, see the section "Procedure for Withdrawal, Reinstatement, Transfer" in the CUL Technical Services Manual (accessible through the Staff Web).
 - b. Coordination. When decisions on withdrawals are being made, it is the responsibility of the withdrawing unit and the selector(s) assigned the CPCR for the material being withdrawn to consult with other selectors whose subject areas may be affected by the withdrawal decisions. Individual selectors may be contacted by the withdrawing unit--or, for larger withdrawal projects, a general announcement may be issued, inviting all interested selectors to review the materials scheduled for withdrawal within a specified time frame. Those selectors may opt to have some materials retained. Items thus selected for retention could (1) remain in the original unit library, (2) be transferred to the unit library of the selector deciding on retention, or (3) be transferred to the Annex; this decision should be made on the basis of negotiation among the appropriate selectors and processing units. On the process for coordinating the withdrawal of serials, see the Serials Cancellation and Withdrawal Policy on the StaffWeb.

3. **Disposition Methods.** There are four approved methods for the disposition of CUL library materials: sale, donation, exchange, and discard. (For a detailed description of more recent disposition activities throughout CUL, see the final report of the CUL Task Force on Disposition, 4 June 1997.) All four of these methods are appropriate both for unwanted gifts and for materials withdrawn from the collections. The method selected in each case is at the discretion of the unit library, with the consent of the responsible AUL.
 - a. Sale. There are three general methods for selling withdrawn materials or unwanted gifts: (1) a public sale

for the Cornell community, (2) a sale to a dealer, and (3) a sale to another institution. No Library materials should be sold privately to any individual member of the Cornell community; sales to members of the Cornell community should take place only through public book sales. A public sale is one that is open to all--or all potentially interested--members of the Cornell community. The availability of such materials for public sale should be announced in advance, in such a way as to give all potentially interested Cornell buyers an equal opportunity to purchase items of interest. Items for public sale to the Cornell community may be represented and sold online. Prices should be set by the unit library director(s) responsible for the sale, in consultation with the appropriate subject selectors.

When selling to a dealer, it is advisable that bids be openly solicited from all dealers who might be potentially interested. Some arrangements with dealers or with other institutions include the stipulation that the dealer or the institution take all of the materials being offered. It is normally the responsibility of the dealer or the institution to pay the shipping costs. All revenue from the sale of library materials should be deposited in the materials budget; the specific budget lines, to which this revenue will be added, will be decided by the unit responsible for the sale. Statutory units should take care to ensure that all sales of library materials are consistent with State requirements.

- b. Donation. Unit libraries may elect to donate withdrawn materials or unwanted gifts to other organizations, agencies or groups. The main organization to which CUL has traditionally donated materials is the Friends of the Tompkins County Public Library Booksale. Donating CUL materials to the TCPL Booksale has the advantage of returning these materials to the community, so that local residents, including Cornell faculty, students and staff, can purchase them at reasonable prices. Selectors considering donations to the TCPL Booksale should contact TCPL through the CUL G&E Department. Not all materials are appropriate for, or are desired by, the Booksale.

Library materials may also be donated to other organizations for charitable purposes. When arranging to donate materials to libraries or other groups at some distance from Ithaca, care should be taken to negotiate ahead of time the payment of shipping costs, which are usually borne by the recipient.

No Library materials should be donated to any Cornell individuals, offices, departments or other Cornell units without the authorization of the appropriate AUL.

- c. Exchange. Units may exchange withdrawals or unwanted gifts with other libraries or book dealers in return for materials that are wanted for the CUL collections. HSS and EMPS units planning on such an exchange effort should coordinate this planning with the CUL G&E Department.
- d. Discard. For a variety of obvious reasons, sale, distribution and exchange are, as methods of disposition, preferable to discarding--and units should make reasonable efforts to sell, donate or exchange materials before deciding to discard them. However, once it has been determined with reasonable certainty that specific items are unsuitable for sale, donation or exchange, then the unit library should not hesitate to discard them. If a larger number of materials are to be discarded, the unit library undertaking this action should consult with the Deputy University Librarian on the method of discarding; in such cases, it is also recommended that the unit library write a memorandum for the record (MfR), which should include a brief summary of the process used (including individuals consulted) to come to this decision to discard. This MfR should be kept on file at the unit library, with a copy sent to the Office of the University Librarian.

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