COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND PROCESS
TURPIN LIBRARY
DALLAS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Rev 3/2024

In supporting the mission of Dallas Theological Seminary, the library aims to assist DTS faculty and students in their teaching, learning, research, and course-related ministry, by providing information resources, discovery systems, reference assistance, instruction in research methods, study facilities, and writing and media production resources.

The library provides access to information by purchasing physical and perpetual-access digital resources, by leasing temporary-access digital resources, by linking to free open access resources in our discovery system, by providing inter-library loan and borrowing agreements with other libraries. This document guides selection of resources for the collection, and it summarizes some selection procedures.

General Selection Guidelines

Goals and Priorities

We select information resources useful in achieving our mission primarily according four sub-goals, prioritized one through four: 1) to support every aspect of the curriculum; 2) to support faculty research and instructional preparation; 3) to support practical ministry, spiritual growth, and personal development; 4) to document Christian thought as it touches on theology and ministry. Subject matter is often the most important component in determining whether a resource is likely to be "useful" in furthering these goals.

Subject Matter

We select widely and deeply in our core fields of study, focusing on biblical and theological studies and practical ministry from a conservative Protestant perspective, but also documenting the historical, confessional, and socio-cultural diversity of the global Christian tradition while remaining attentive to the broader world of religious studies. We selectively acquire resources that lie outside our curricular parameters, representing disciplines useful to theological research and ministry such as linguistics, philosophy, education, communication, psychology and social sciences; selectively documenting major cultural ideas, worldviews, and movements that support or challenge evangelicalism; selectively documenting general social and human problems pertinent to ministry; and responding to the general reading interests of the seminary community. Appendix One lists collecting intensity for specific topics.

Scholarly, Vocational and Popular Materials

We collect scholarly, practical, and popular works. The majority of items we select are scholarly materials (i.e., technical materials written by scholars). We also select works which provide practical vocational preparation for ministries. We collect popular works which reflect current issues or have made a big impact on culture, public opinion, or the practice of ministry.

Use Patterns

Demonstrated demand is an important selection criterion. The library attempts to tabulate use of materials (circulation, online downloads, in-house use, holds, interlibrary loan requests, purchase requests) by topic. We select resources to meet areas of proven demand, and we systematically

acquire additional copies of high-use items. We may also add high-use resources to reserve and reference collections.

Languages

To support advanced research and doctoral programs, we collect primary sources in many languages, ancient and modern, but for secondary sources we strongly prefer English language materials. We acquire scholarly works in German and French selectively and only if they contain unique scholarly content or are otherwise essential. We maintain small collections of basic works in Chinese and Spanish. We are beginning to collect miscellaneous volumes in Arabic but we don't have actual collections in these languages. We seldom acquire secondary literature in other languages.

Media, Formats, Online Resources

We strive to minimize the variety of media, formats, carrier agents, and delivery mechanisms, preferring print and modern digital technologies instead of microform or older AV technologies.

We prefer online e-books and e-journals instead of print volumes (but we may purchase both print and online versions of the same resource). We aggressively collect ebooks, ejournals, databases and online resources. We prefer digital materials free from cumbersome and restrictive digital rights management technologies and free from proprietary vendor technologies. We prefer online digital resources instead of digital resources that are transported by physical carrier media, such as DVD or CD discs, or digital resources that are tethered to specific devices, such as ebooks that can only be used with one specific physical device.

Predefined Packages of Online Resources

We prefer title-by-title selection because it guarantees relevance and quality. But we do purchase heavily discounted pre-defined packages of online resources even though those packages may include many items which do not conform to our selection policy. The vendors determine the content of the packages. We seek to determine the portion of a package which conforms with collection policy and the cost per "conforming item." This is true for both perpetual access and temporary access packages.

Ownership vs Temporary Access to Online Resources

We prefer ownership or perpetual access rather than limited-term access (subscribing/leasing). This is especially true of high-priority, high-use items. We do, however, lease temporary access because it tends to have a low initial cost, provides flexibility, and is sometimes the only option.

Open Access Resources

We value open access online resources, and we select OA materials for inclusion in our collection. We deem OA items to be part of our collection only after they have been selected and included in our discovery system (cataloged). This may include selection of supplier-defined OA packages, and those packages may contain items that do not conform to our selection policy.

Cost

The library seeks to spend in a responsible manner, and may decline to purchase a very expensive resource even if it is very relevant and very good quality. The library requires extra justification to purchase books or journals which cost more than $400 per volume.

Juvenile Literature

To assist child rearing, we maintain a very small collection of wholesome fiction and non-fiction material for children grades K-6.

Special Collections

The archival collection includes institutional papers, presidential and professorial papers, and other materials closely linked to the seminary's history. The modest collection of rare books reflects our theological heritage and curricular interests, particularly dispensationalism. The library welcomes donations but we very rarely purchase material for the archives or rare book collection.

Branch Campus Collections

All extension sites rely on the Dallas collection and the online collection. The Houston and Washington DC branches have small collections consisting of basic works, reserve materials, and high-use materials.

Ideological Diversity, Unrestricted Access and Filtering and Confidentiality

We aggressively strive to represent a broad range of viewpoints, including criticisms of our evangelical tradition. Inclusion of an item in the collection does not imply endorsement or agreement. Inclusion of a book does not imply approval of the public or private conduct of the author. All faculty, students and staff have unrestricted access to the complete collection (other than restricted archival documents). Borrowing records are confidential. However, Internet filtering software blocks certain content such as suspected pornography, and the juvenile collection is limited to wholesome and age-appropriate materials.

Responsibilities and Procedures

Responsibility for Selection and Deselection

The library director is responsible for building the collection and has final authority in selection and deselection decisions. Faculty members bear a responsibility to assist in seeing that the collection, particularly in their respective areas of expertise, responds to curricular needs and emphases. However, in practice, the collection development librarian selects most items purchased by the library. Other library staff assist, particularly reference staff.

Identification of New Publications

On a weekly basis, library staff utilize GOBI to monitor new publications in all formats and subject areas. The library uses approval plans, blanket orders and standing orders for some series and reference works. Staff consult scholarly review sources, but often the library needs to obtain resources long before reviews are published. Staff occasionally use reprint and used-book databases when there is a need to retrospectively strengthen specific subject areas.

Identification of Areas of Need, Opportunity, or Demand

Staff periodically examine the course catalog and syllabi, giving particular attention to new offerings. The collection development librarian periodically canvases the faculty concerning changing needs and their perception of overall collection strengths and weaknesses. Faculty are encouraged to submit requests at any time. The Library Committee discusses the issue as needed. Interlibrary loan records are monitored for collection gaps. All lost and long-missing materials are reported to the collection development librarian who considers replacement. Students and staff are invited to request specific items for acquisition. We encourage continuous feedback via

special request and comment forms, and through occasional surveys administered by the library staff.

Staff use WorldCat and the ATLA religion database to compare DTS holdings with other institutions and with the universe of published or reviewed material by topic and call number ranges. We use ATS and ATLA statistics to compare expenditure levels and collection size with peer institutions and to track historical trends. We use circulation statistics and reports from database vendors to identify low-use and high-use items and subject areas. Staff randomly check new scholarly bibliographies to determine what percentage of items DTS owns and to identify needed materials. Expenditures are categorized and tabulated in several ways including by broad subject area and material type, by branch location, and by special collection. Need, demand, and opportunity are matched to expenditure levels. All this information is used to guide selection decisions and budget requests.

Gift Policy

Materials donated to the library may be added to the collection if they meet the same selection criteria as purchased items. The library will not place restrictions on gifts, and they will be integrated into the general collection. Donated materials that are not added to the collection will, at the discretion of the librarian, be exchanged, sold, given away, or discarded. The library does not appraise or estimate the market value of gifts. Gift books should be delivered to the seminary; we do not ordinarily pay for shipping but exceptions are possible.

Weeding

Weeding refers to the process of discarding/removing an item from the collection. The physical collection must be weeded because space is limited; thus far we see no need to weed digital/online materials.

Weeding involves some subjective judgment, but we are guided by the following criteria.

Items may be considered for withdrawal from the collection for the following reasons. Item is badly deteriorated; item no longer complies with collection development policy; item is obsolete or has been superseded by more current, comprehensive or useful resources; item is not in demand; we own multiple copies; item has little unique information (we have many other works on the same specific topic); physical item can be replaced by digital online copy.

We usually retain any item that complies with current collecting criteria and also meets at least one of the following criteria: it is considered a classic in its field; it is regarded as a primary source for theological studies; we have very few other works on its specific topic.

Before weeding, the library may check to determine if the title is owned by other libraries or is available for purchase or is available free via the Internet (e.g., Hathi Trust). The library may make a preservation copy in digital format. If we discard our last copy of an item, and five or fewer libraries own copies, then we ordinarily send our copy to Internet Archive for scanning/preservation.

Special collections (archives and rare books) follow different guidelines.

Appendix One: Collecting Intensity by Topic

The following intensity levels apply to various segments of the Turpin Library collection. The number of the level will be used throughout the classification outline on the following pages.

1. Minimal Level. A subject in which few selections are made beyond very basic works.

2. Basic Level. A highly selective collection which serves to introduce and define the subject and to indicate the varieties of information available elsewhere. It may include major dictionaries and encyclopedias, selected editions of important works, historical surveys, important bibliographies, and a few major periodicals in the field.

3. Study Level. A collection which is adequate to support graduate course work, that is, which is adequate to maintain knowledge of a subject required for limited or generalized purposes, of less than research intensity. It includes a wide range of basic monographs, complete collections of the works of more important writers, selections from the works of secondary writers, a selection of representative journals, and the reference tools and fundamental bibliographical apparatus pertaining to the subject.

4. Research Level. A collection which includes the major published source materials required for dissertations and independent research at Dallas Seminary, including materials containing research reporting, new findings, scientific experimental results, and other information useful to researchers. It also aims to include all important reference works and a wider selection of specialized monographs, as well as a very extensive collection of journals.

NOTE: the most intensive level of collecting is the Comprehensive Level, in which a library aims for an exhaustive collection of all significant works of recorded knowledge in a defined field. Turpin Library does not attempt to collect at this level.

NOTE: Levels 3 and 4 can be further divided into decimal 1 (basic) and decimal 2 (advanced). For example, 3.2 is advanced study level.

CLASSIFICATION		COLLECTING LEVEL
A	General Works	1
B-BJ	Philosophy & Psychology	2.2
BL	Religions, Mythology, rationalism	2.1
BM	Judaism, except:	2.2
	160-178 Ancient Period	3.2
	487-488 Dead Sea Scrolls	3.2

BP	Islam, Bahaism, etc.	1
BQ	Buddhism	1
BR	Christianity:	
	1-85 Collections, Patristics	4
	95-139 Philosophy & Psychology of Christianity	2.2
	140-1689 Church History	3.2
	1690-1725 Christian Biography	2
BS	Bible:	
	1-399 Texts and versions	4
	410-680 Works about the Bible	4
	701-2970 Bible commentaries & criticism	4
BT	Doctrinal Theology	4
BV	Practical Theology:	
	1-589 Worship	2.1
	Ecclesiastical theology, except	2.2
	1450-1 583 Christian Education	3
	2000-3799 Missions & Evangelism	3.2

		4000-4470 Pastoral Theology	3.2
		4485-5099 Christian life	3.2
BX		Denominations & Sects:	
		1-189 Eastern Churches	2.1
		200-750 Orthodox Eastern Church	2.1
		800-4795 Roman Catholic Church	2.2
		4800-9999 Protestantism	3.2
C		Auxiliary Sciences of History	1
D-DR		History, General & Old World	1
DS		History of Asia, except	1
		36-99 Near East	2.2
		101-154 Israel & Jordan	3.2
DT		History of Africa, except	1
		43-154 Egypt	2.1
E-F		American History	2.1
G		Geography, Anthropology	1
H		Social Sciences, except	1

	HQ Family, Marriage, Sex	3.1
J-K	Political Science & Law	1
L	Education, except	2.2
	LB 2300-2430 Higher Education	3.1
	LC 251-951 Moral and Religious Education	4.1
M-N	Music, Fine Arts	1
P	Philology & Linguistics	2.1
PA	Classical Languages, except	3
	Materials related to New Testament Greek	4
PC-PE	Romance, Germanic, English Languages	1
PJ	Oriental Languages, except	2.2
	Biblical Hebrew	4
Q-R	Science, Medicine, except	1
	RC 435-571 Psychiatry	2.2
Z	Bibliography, Library Science	2.1