



AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY
OF BEIRUT

University
Libraries

ACQUISITIONS & COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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SCOPE

The Acquisitions and Collection Development Department plays a central role in supporting the mission of the University Libraries by selecting, acquiring, and ensuring timely and cost-effective access to relevant, authoritative, and high-quality resources that support the institution's teaching, learning, and research needs. The department is also responsible for developing and maintaining the general library collection housed in Jafet Library, which primarily includes print monographs, serial publications, and audiovisual materials.

Objectives and Functions:

- Negotiate subscription agreements, read-and-publish agreements, and various electronic resources licenses to ensure optimal value for money and cost-effective access to digital resources.
- Ensure timely and continuous access to diverse digital and print resources while maintaining a balanced, authoritative, diverse, current, and relevant collection.
- Place and process orders for materials in line with the department policy and budget allocation.
- Build, maintain, and evaluate the library collection, housed in Jafet Library, to support the university's programs and research activities.
- Manage the material budget, monitor expenditure and ensure accurate tracking of commitments and payments.
- Identify, evaluate, and manage vendor records and communications.
- Match invoices with purchase orders and receipts, inspect incoming materials to verify their completeness, accuracy, and physical condition, and process payments through the institution financial system in compliance with audit requirements.
- Manage the binding process for all serials and monographic series.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Acquisitions and Collection Development Department shall collaborate with subject librarians, academic departments, faculty, researchers, and other stakeholders to identify, select, acquire, evaluate, and manage resources that effectively support the University's current and evolving teaching, learning, and research needs.

1. Budget:

- a. A proposed budget for the University Libraries material is prepared annually by the University Librarian in alignment with the academic priorities and the Acquisitions and Collection Development Department policy and allocated at the beginning of each fiscal year.
- b. Budget allocations to various departments shall be based on a combination of factors, including but not limited to historical expenditure patterns, current needs, program development, and research activity. Adjustments may be made to reflect institutional priorities and emerging academic requirements.
- c. The University Librarian shall retain a centrally managed contingency fund to support new programs, urgent resource needs, and strategic acquisition.

2. Ordering and Receiving Items

- a. Requests for items by faculty members, students, and other eligible users must be submitted online via a standard form and are subject to approval by the Head of the Acquisitions and Collection Development Department. Priority is given to online format whenever available, suitable, and cost-effective, taking into consideration accessibility, licensing terms, functionality, and perpetuity.
- b. Requested items that are readily available in the University Libraries collection, print or electronic, are rejected.
- c. Orders and the cataloging process of the electronic resources are handled by the department.

3. Selection:

- a. Materials requested by AUB-affiliated users may be considered for acquisition when they support the university's teaching, learning, research, or institutional needs and meet the selection criteria established in this policy.
- b. Materials that demonstrate literary merit, authored by reputable scholars, of historical, cultural, or institutional significance, relevance, and showing research impact through criteria such as the number of citations, h-index and other bibliometric indicators may be added to the collection.
- c. Faculty publications, early imprints, limited editions, rare books, as well as special collections including but not limited to manuscripts, personal papers, photographs, postcards, and comics, will be added to the Archives and Special Collections. If feasible, a second copy will be added to the general stacks.
- d. Irrelevant, juvenile, novels, fiction, e-textbooks, popular works, recreational reading materials, and low-quality commercial publications will not be ordered.
- e. The department will not duplicate titles either print or online unless the publication is authored by an affiliated member of the institution, a prominent alumni or Lebanese figure, in addition to AUB Press publications. One copy will be housed in the general stacks and the second in the Archives and Special Collections.
- f. The department will strive to maintain a strong collection of materials related to Lebanon, the Arab world, Islam, and the Middle East.
- g. Modified editions (revised, annotated, corrected) as well as edited books with different editors, compilers or annotators, mainly in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies can be added to the collection while keeping the first edition if quality permits.
- h. Translations are to be avoided, unless specifically ordered. Translated books of special importance to Lebanon, the Middle East, Islam, and the Arab Countries, or of prominent authors are studied on a case-by-case basis.
- i. The department will primarily acquire materials in English and Arabic; French is considered a secondary language. Requests in other languages will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. For Middle Eastern, Islam and Arab studies, items in Turkish, Persian, and Hebrew are also collected, if ordered specifically. For archaeology, German might be selected, if ordered specifically.
- j. Priority is given to online formats whenever available and suitable for library requests (books, journals etc.), and for multimedia resources digital files are preferred. Taking into consideration accessibility, licensing terms, price, and long-term access.

- k. Rare and high value books and serials that are deteriorating will be digitized and preserved, where copyright permissions allow, to ensure their long-term accessibility and protection.
- l. The University Libraries does not routinely catalog open access resources. Open access resources may be added selectively when they meet established collection, curricular, research, and quality.

4. Weeding:

- a. Decisions are based on the following criteria: citation counts, authors' and editors' h-indexes, usage data, content relevance, uniqueness, authority, language, publication date, historical, cultural, or institutional significance, and value.
- b. Torn, physically damaged, obsolete, or outdated titles will be discarded and replaced or repaired only if they are highly cited, authoritative, assigned for a course, or rare.
- c. Duplicate copies in the general stacks will be removed unless they are highly cited, pertain to Lebanon-related topics, AUB, assigned for a course or are vital and rare.
- d. Older editions will be replaced by newer ones unless they are highly cited, authoritative, or rare. In this case more than one edition can be kept.
- e. Titles to be discarded are gathered and compiled into lists along with the reasons and sent by the Head of the Acquisitions and Collection Development Department to the University Librarian for approval. They are then forwarded to the Head of the Cataloging and Metadata Services Department for processing and stamping, and to the Director of Library Systems and Applications for storage in a special weeding file on the system.
- f. Discarded titles will be donated to other institutions or individuals if their condition permits.

5. Gifts and Donations:

- a. The University Libraries accept gifts and donations with no conditions or restrictions attached. Restricted gifts or donations may be accepted only if the restrictions are reviewed and approved by the University Librarian and the Head of the Acquisitions and Collection Development Department.
- b. The Head of the Acquisitions and Collection Development Department reserves the right to determine whether donated materials will be rejected or added to the collection, shelved according to standard practices, retained, weeded, donated, or discarded when appropriate.
- c. All gifts must align with the department's policy and support the teaching and research needs of the university community. Irrelevant, juvenile, damaged or non-academic titles are rejected. Duplicate copies are also rejected unless a second copy is needed.
- d. In case of large donations, a detailed list of items is required so that only needed or replacement materials are selected.
- e. Once donated, all gift items become the property of the University Libraries and are not returnable.
- f. The Head of the Acquisitions and Collection Development Department reserves the right to provide or decline monetary appraisals of donated items for tax exemption or any other purpose.
- g. A formal thank-you letter will be sent for donations of 50 or more items.

- h. For donations of 200 items or more, a label holding the donor's name will be added to the donated materials.

6. Exceptions:

- a. Exceptions to this policy may be authorized by the University Librarian, in consultation with the Head of the Acquisitions and Collection Development Department, when exceptional curricular, research, institutional, historical, cultural, or strategic considerations warrant deviation from standard practice.

7. Policy Review and Revision:

- a. This policy should be reviewed at least every five years, or earlier when significant changes occur in the university's academic programs, financial environment, licensing practices, or applicable institutional requirements.

PROCEDURES

1. Ordering and Receiving Items

- a. Bibliographic and order records are created in the library system for the titles to be ordered. Once received, print titles are verified, processed and sent to the Cataloging and Metadata Services Department. Serials are to be sent back to the Acquisitions and Collection Development Department to finalize their item-level cataloging.
- b. Invoices are first verified, then approved and signed by the Head of the Acquisitions and Collection Development Department and subsequently added to the institution's financial system.
- c. Print orders placed with suppliers and vendors are typically allowed for 4 to 6 weeks for delivery.
- d. The Head of the Acquisitions and Collection Development Department follows up with the IT Manager in the University Libraries on access matters like IPs, SSO and any other authentication method.

2. Accounting guidelines:

- a. The Accounting Section in the department receives the invoices approved by the Head of the Acquisitions and Collection Development Department and processes them in both the library system and the AUB I-Procurement system.
- b. The Accounting Section forwards invoices to the Comptroller's Office for payment after securing the University Librarian's approval on the I-Procurement requisition.
- c. The Accounting Section updates the budget and the financial records as needed.
- d. Payments for online purchases made via credit card are processed in collaboration with the Executive Administrator of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer and in coordination with the Acquisitions and Collection Development Assistant Librarian.
- e. The Accounting Section maintains accurate records of committed funds, actual expenditures, and running balances for each active account and keeps all invoices for 5 years.

3. Selection Responsibility:

- a. Selection tools include a range of traditional and electronic resources such as review journals, publishers' catalogs, bibliographic databases (e.g., OCLC), bookstores, users' requests, and peer library collections, with additional emphasis on regional sources for Arabic material.
- b. Faculty members play a major role in selecting library materials and hence, in shaping the collections. They act as subject specialists in their different fields. Materials are selected based on their teaching, instructional, and research needs.
- c. Through the University Libraries liaisons, the department complements, cooperates, and works actively with faculty in selecting, identifying and addressing collection gaps, needs, new course offerings, as well as maintaining and managing the collections.

4. Collection Evaluation:

- a. Evaluate the collection in relation to the different levels and purposes of the academic programs, including undergraduate, graduate, professional, and faculty research needs.
- b. Gather and analyze relevant data from circulation statistics, electronic resource and database usage figures, COUNTER data, faculty recommendations, curriculum changes, and applicable accreditation requirements.
- c. Conduct continuous assessment of the collection to evaluate its relevance, currency, depth, coverage, value, strengths, and weaknesses.
- d. Benchmark the library's holdings against applicable accreditation standards and the collections of peer and aspirant institutions to identify any opportunity for improvement.
- e. Assess the quality and cost-effectiveness of subscribed and licensed electronic resources, considering usage, accessibility, overlap, faculty and student needs, and value relative to their cost.
- f. Before renewing the electronic resources, the Head of the Acquisitions and Collection Development Department obtains the previous 12 months of COUNTER usage data, reviews cost-per-use, checks license terms and accessibility, and consults the relevant liaison librarian.

5. Lost Items

- a. The Head of Access Services Department sends a list of lost items to the Head of the Acquisitions and Collection Development, along with the circulation history and the availability of other copies or editions in the collection, who will decide whether to replace it or not, based on citations, relevance, usage, availability, authorship, and price. If not to be ordered the Cataloging and Metadata Services Department will be informed to suppress the title from the library system with the reason attached.