

# Butler University Libraries

## Collections Policy

*Adopted August 2013; Updated February  
2024*

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for the development and maintenance of online, print, and media content acquired by or created through the work of Butler University Libraries. This includes the selection of new materials as well as the ongoing review of existing collections plus the creation or curation of local digital files. The two main objectives of library collection development are: first, to provide access to an active, useful collection that reflects the curricular, research and cultural needs of the students, faculty, and staff of the university; and second, to distribute and promote the intellectual output, special collections, and history of the university. This policy will continue to be developed and modified in response to the changing information needs of the university and the evolution of information delivery and access models.

### **Guiding Principles**

- Information discovery is no longer tied to physical collections.
- The main purpose of the library's collections is to support students engaged in Butler's curriculum.
- We strive to build collections that support research and learning that represent a multitude of perspectives.
- Given Butler's mission and nature as a comprehensive institution, we are limited in how we support faculty research. We provide faculty with tools to identify information resources and the infrastructure to deliver access to, but not always ownership of, those resources.
- We fulfill user requests for resources in a timely fashion without relying on "just in case" purchasing based on anticipated needs
- As stewards of university resources (including content, space, and financial resources), we will take a standards-based approach to the maintenance of collections (tangible and digital) based on relevance to the curriculum, and discipline-based evaluation criteria (e.g., usage, currency and life expectancy, accreditation standards, core bibliographies).
- Tangible gifts and donations from individuals are not a sustainable strategy to build non-archival collections.
- We will preserve and promote the history and intellectual output of the university through archiving, publishing, and digitization

## **Mission of the Library**

Butler University Libraries advance the academic mission of the University by providing expertise, resources, and services that stimulate learning. Central to our mission is preparing undergraduate students to navigate a complex information environment.

The Libraries also have a responsibility to support teaching and scholarship, to promote the ethical use and creation of information, and to preserve the intellectual heritage that is at the core of the University.

## **Responsibility for Collection Development**

The Libraries have established a liaison program which assigns individual librarians to academic departments or colleges in order to support their information resource needs. Liaisons work to stay aware of the curriculum in their assigned department or college, as well as the needs of their assigned faculty, in order to develop collections and services that suit the specific needs of that unit. Liaison librarians, in consultation with academic faculty, are responsible for the balance and quality of resources acquired or licensed and are expected to use both their professional expertise and knowledge of institutional needs in the selection and deselection of information resources. While requests are encouraged, librarians will consider them through the scope of this policy and may fulfill requests in a number of different ways. Liaison librarians are also expected to work with staff and faculty in the library acquisitions unit to develop an understanding of different acquisitions models that may be available to them.

All Liaison librarians and selectors have a responsibility to build a diverse and inclusive collection for their discipline, including learning more about voices, communities, histories and perspectives that have been traditionally underrepresented in library collections and selecting materials to fill those gaps as they become available, and budget allows.

New database or serial requests need to be evaluated by both the subject liaison and the Head of Resource and Systems Strategies as these are generally larger, ongoing expenses with annual increases that need to be figured into overall library material budget. The library will also evaluate serial additions which have had a high volume of previous interlibrary loan requests.

The Libraries also intend to address rising textbook costs by licensing ebook versions of assigned texts when fiscally prudent. Licensing restrictions or costs may make this impossible in certain cases, but we encourage the use of licensed content via the Libraries in order to reduce out of pocket costs for Butler students.

The Libraries are not responsible for purchasing instructional content to be used in lieu of textbooks, or intended solely for in-classroom use by faculty.

## **Allocations**

Budget allocations for formats and subject area funds are made by the Dean of Libraries and Head of Resource and Systems Strategies and are intended to accommodate the university's six colleges as equitably as possible, taking into consideration library space, usage statistics, and the size and nature of each department and its curricular needs. As new courses, programs or departments are added to the university, funds may be reallocated to provide additional support.

Additionally, the library has several endowed and gift funds dedicated to the purchase or support of the curriculum in a specific subject area, and these funds are spent according to the guidelines of the gift, with selection by the liaison to whose area of responsibility the fund most closely pertains.

## **General Guidelines**

The Libraries are tasked with providing materials to support the current instructional and general information needs of Butler students and faculty. This task can be accomplished both by acquiring materials as well as providing access to information sources and tools that facilitate the discovery of items not currently owned or licensed. The Libraries also have a responsibility to make reasonable and prudent efforts to collect, preserve, and provide access to materials relating to the history of the institution as well as the scholarship of its faculty and students. As a secondary responsibility, the Libraries also provide content of current popular value to the university community.

General selection guidelines for the acquisition of resources will also take into account the timeliness of the material, our current holdings in that subject area, the long-term usefulness of the requested format for that subject area, and the price of the resource relative to other available options that would fill the same need. Overall, the Libraries cannot maintain a research level library, but will work to fill information needs for the Butler community through a combination of purchasing physical items, licensing access to online resources, providing discovery indexes that help users identify items to be requested (via consortial delivery, interlibrary loan or short-term rental), and through helping users identify and navigate free resources available to all.

The Libraries will purchase single copies of requested physical items. Titles are purchased in English except when identified as essential to support curricular needs. Items marked as "lost" will not be automatically or immediately replaced but will be reviewed yearly or at liaison discretion. The works of faculty or alumni will be purchased only if they are in scope of curricular or research needs.

## **Format Guidelines:**

### *Print Monographs*

The format (paper, hardcover, or electronic) for monographic purchases will be at the

discretion of the liaison, in consideration of departmental needs and expected life of the resource. Paper books are still purchased to support areas that are traditionally monograph-based in their scholarship, or require items be preserved for long-term research. The Libraries do not purchase print textbooks, but will accept copies from faculty for placement on reserve. Out of Print or secondhand print monographs will only be purchased if identified as essential to supporting the curriculum, and if there is no other available option (online edition, ILL) to obtain the content. If a requested title is already available to the campus as an e-book, the Libraries will only purchase a print copy if there is a reasonable explanation why a print copy would also be required.

Additionally, the Libraries maintain a Browsing collection of recent popular books, which is a limited resource provided as a convenience to the Butler community. Users are encouraged to obtain Indianapolis Public Library cards to gain access to non-scholarly titles not owned by the Libraries.

### *Electronic Books*

The Libraries encourage the purchase and/or license of e-books where appropriate, both for the shelving and access advantages they offer. The Libraries will work with a limited number of e-book vendors both to maintain fewer platforms and also to not deal with publishers or vendors that engage in business practices that discourage equitable and fair access. In cases where multiple access levels are available on an e-book title, the Libraries will purchase the most cost effective option (usually with a lower simultaneous user limit) except when asked directly to pursue a multiple simultaneous user license. If an owned e-book title on a single-user license is identified by faculty as a good fit for a course text, the Libraries will negotiate an elevated user license when requested (if available).

### *Reference Books and Sets*

As the Libraries are no longer the primary discovery location for users to look up basic facts, our commitment to a robust reference collection has been lessened. We will maintain electronic access to general and subject reference books but will not be buying new paper reference books unless requested by faculty. Standing orders for directories or annuals, where information is updated yearly and still viable in a paper format, will be maintained.

### *Serials*

Serials are of primary importance for current information in many academic disciplines. In order to ensure easy access, the Libraries will select an electronic subscription if one is available. Paper journals will be selected for subscriptions only if there is no online site license available as a subscription option (we will not opt for online access if the authentication is username/password only), or if the content does not lend itself to online usage (i.e., art or design periodicals, titles with features missing from their online versions). The Libraries will subscribe to a limited number of print popular magazines and newspapers for browsing and entertainment purposes, but will retain copies only for a limited time (up to one year in some cases, one month in others).

Any Print Serial backfiles (bound volumes) maintained by the Libraries need to be relevant to the curriculum. We will rely upon neighboring consortial partners, and potentially shared print

agreement providers for access to low usage print serial backfiles, if the cost and expected usage of an online backfile do not merit purchase.

### *Aggregated Content Databases*

The Libraries main collection activities concern subscribing to online resources, and the bulk of these are aggregated content databases which may contain a variety of different content formats (streaming media, monographs, full text journal articles, article abstracts, primary source material etc.). Since many of these products contain full text articles from scholarly journals, the Libraries will often rely on the presence of article content in an aggregated subscription package instead of acquiring a direct subscription to a particular journal title. In cases where a database maintains an embargo on the availability of new full-text content, the Libraries will weigh the volume of interlibrary loan requests and the cost of an individual subscription when choosing to purchase additional access. Given the size and budget of the Libraries, we will most often fall on the side of access in the "Ownership vs. Access" debate.

### *Video*

The Libraries purchase DVDs to support all curricular areas, and will also license streaming access to individual titles if the license can be obtained for full campus access. The Library does not negotiate rights to rip DVD content to Butler's streaming server, or license access to streaming content hosted on a 3rd party server that is restricted to a single Butler course. The Libraries also license subscription access to packages of streaming academic video content, and where streaming access to a work is available, we will not purchase an additional DVD copy of the same version. VHS recordings will no longer be purchased, and PAL format DVDs will be purchased only after consultation with the requesting faculty.

### *Music Scores*

The Libraries purchase print music study scores, full scores, and performing editions to support music history, theory, and composition courses and private study of individual instruments, voice, and conducting offered through the School of Music performance curriculum. In addition, the Libraries purchase study scores and performing editions to support the various chamber music course offerings of the School of Music. As a rule, the library does not purchase performing editions for ensembles that require more than twelve parts. Multiple copies of choral music and parts for larger instrumental ensembles are purchased out of the School of Music budget and are housed and maintained in Lilly Hall with oversight provided by the appropriate ensemble directors.

### *Sound Recordings*

Sound Recordings are purchased in CD format, primarily to support Music students and faculty. The Libraries also purchase online subscriptions to streaming music services that suit Jordan College of the Arts' curricular needs.

### *Microforms*

The Libraries will no longer purchase microform content. Existing microform will be maintained when the content is relevant to the curriculum and the content is not duplicated in

either print or electronic holdings.

### *Theses and Dissertations*

Theses written by Butler students are bound, cataloged, and added to the collection. Digital copies are added to our Digital Commons repository with the permission of the author. The Libraries do not purchase print copies of theses from other institutions to add to the Butler Libraries collection, but may purchase or borrow a digital copy to fulfill interlibrary loan requests.

### *Digital Resources*

Currently, the Libraries maintain an institutional repository on Digital Commons as well as Digital Image Collections on CONTENTdm. The Digital Image Collections site contains a small selection of digital image collections used to support Butler classes, as well as historic photographs.

Content deposited in the bepress Digital Commons site reflects the intellectual output of Butler faculty, researchers, staff, and students, including pre- and post-prints, working papers, technical reports, research data, conference papers, presentations, theses, and other materials.

The Libraries also Content of archival value produced or sponsored by Butler administrative offices, academic units, or student groups may also be appropriate for deposit in the digital collections. Examples could include digital departmental newsletters, administrative reports, compilations of University data, meeting agendas, and minutes. Future digital collection projects will be selected by the Head of Special Collections and library leadership based on their scholarly value, historical impact, and preservation considerations.

Content produced by others that is of research or teaching value to the university may also be appropriate for addition to the digital collections. Such materials identified by Butler faculty, researchers, staff and students will be reviewed by an ad hoc committee.

Digital Collections may also include back files of previously purchased data, preserved by the Libraries after the license has expired or if the product is removed from the market.

### **Collection Maintenance**

Since the mission of the Libraries is to offer an active, useful collection of materials that primarily support undergraduate and graduate course work, liaison librarians must engage in ongoing collection maintenance, mainly involving deselection (or, “weeding”) of rarely used or out of date materials. Liaisons use the following criteria when making decisions to remove items - both physical and electronic:

- Damage or deteriorated condition (brittle pages or binding), markings, water/mold damage)
- Unnecessary duplication of a single title, or its editions

- Low circulation statistics, or infrequent use compared to similar materials
- Usage/Circulation primarily via interlibrary loan (i.e., not by Butler students)
- Obsolete or inaccurate information (or superseded by new edition)
- A physical item which is freely available via an online source
- Item's availability at larger local libraries (i.e., easily requestable on interlibrary loan)
- Item's relevance to current Butler programs and curriculum
- Incomplete sets or series
- Foreign language no longer taught at Butler.
- Formats no longer supported by the University
- For serials; title's presence in stable online archives, purchased or freely available
- For individual serials; lack of available indexing or abstracting
- For online resources; usage statistics

Low use items will be retained if they are included in core subject bibliographies, needed to maintain collection levels for discipline level accreditations, have limited regional availability, or are listed as the "last copy" in WorldCat. Records for weeded materials are removed from the library's catalog but may be replaced with links to free online copies if available. Materials removed from the collection are donated, sold, discarded or recycled. Any funds derived from the resale of weeded items are returned to the Libraries' budget for future purchases.

### **Interlibrary Loan & Document Delivery**

Interlibrary Loan is a service provided for *current* Butler University students, faculty, emeriti faculty and staff in order to obtain materials not owned by Butler University Libraries from other libraries or commercial document suppliers in the continental United States.

The library absorbs all the costs connected with borrowing material through ILL. However, patrons may be responsible for charges resulting from damaged or lost materials.

Interlibrary loan activities are governed by Section 108 of the U.S. Copyright Act. Accordingly, Interlibrary Loan materials may not be placed on Reserve.

### **Cooperative Agreements and Consortial Agreements**

As a member of both the Academic Libraries of Indiana (ALI) and Private Academic Library Network of Indiana (PALNI), the Libraries are provided with both discounts on electronic resource purchases and an extended network of collections. Current agreements allow for Butler users to visit other academic libraries in the networks and obtain services or materials, but the extension and expansion of cooperative activities is currently being planned by both consortia. The development of new shared collections and delivery policies at the ALI and PALNI level will be reflected in this policy once adopted.

### **Preservation and Digitization**

In order to distribute and promote the intellectual output, special collections, and history of the university, the Butler University Libraries digital initiatives exist to provide long-term access to a broad range of Butler-related digital content of enduring value. It does so by accepting, describing, organizing, storing, and preserving that content. A further policy document will describe the characteristics of content appropriate for submission to the Butler University digital collections.

### **Legal and other Principles**

The Libraries abide by U.S. Copyright Law at all times and will not add items to the collection that have been created in violation of the law.

The Libraries, as an institutional member of the American Library Association, subscribe to the tenets of the ALA's [Library Bill of Rights](#)

### **Gift Policy**

In accordance with our desire to maximize the benefit of Butler University Libraries to our patrons, we have established the following policy regarding acceptance of gifts.

Special Collections, Rare Books, and University Archives staff will review offers of unique or rare books, personal papers, photographs or collections that support the teaching mission of the university or document its history, for inclusion into their collection. Materials accepted for the Archives and Special Collections will be processed and made available for use through that department, as well as through Digital Collections platforms if possible. The Library does not otherwise accept gifts of books, journals, magazines, or other physical materials, and does not accept unsolicited or anonymous gifts of any kind. Butler Faculty wishing to donate their scholarly work should contact their liaison to make appropriate considerations. Monetary gifts to support ongoing collection expenses are especially welcome and if you are considering making such a gift please contact University Advancement.

Please feel free to contact us should you need more information. To discuss a potential donation to Special Collections, contact Head of Special Collections, Gayle O'Hara at 317-940-9265 or [gmohara@butler.edu](mailto:gmohara@butler.edu) and for general questions about the Collections and/or Gift Policy contact the Head of Resource and Systems Strategies.