Collection Development Policy

I. Introduction:

The planned development of the collection of a library requires the application of a stated selection policy. No policy statement can be definitive for all time, since a library is not a static institution. Ideas about its nature and contents are constantly evolving. Many of these changes are precipitated by reorientation of the institution’s curriculum or technological innovations within the library community. Therefore, a policy to guide the development of a library’s collection must be responsive to change.

II. Statement of Purpose of this Policy:

This codification of a materials selection policy for the library will serve as a guide to those responsible for building the collection of the library. It is hoped that this statement of policy will aid selectors in making judgements from a clearly recognized point of view so that the growth of the collection will be consistent with its stated objectives.

III. Objectives:

Indiana University Northwest Library's goals are parallel to the objectives of the University. They are concerned and try to create a climate in which the intellectual, emotional, social growth and development of the students, faculty and staff are provided for.

Specifically, the library supports the teaching, research and service missions of the University by providing information and information sources to students, faculty and staff through a well selected and organized on-site collection, through formal and informal information networks and through public and private information brokers. The on-site collection is the traditional means for meeting the needs of the library’s clientele. To the extent that money allows, this collection should make it unnecessary for students to go to other libraries for materials used in their studies or for faculty to go elsewhere for materials which are directly related to their teaching.

Optimally, any material of sufficient importance to be mentioned in a course ought to be represented in the collection. In addition, the collection should include selected material in all major subject fields whether taught at the University or not. Books and other items in areas of cultural and recreational interest should be supplied for the use of students, faculty and staff in limited fashion because of the commuter nature of the University and the number of easily accessible public libraries in the metropolitan area. Sources needed by faculty for class preparation or research which can be made available only through purchase should be obtained for the collection. Where the collection does not include the sources students and
faculty require, it should provide indexes, abstracts, bibliographies, and other appropriate means for identifying the existence and location of required sources.

Another objective of the library is to serve as the archive for all official records of IUN. Materials relating to the history, development and character of the University should be preserved.

Finally, in order to keep the collection alive and useful, an active and continuing program of selection for withdrawal, or weeding, should be maintained. It is important to prevent the shelves from becoming cluttered with materials of questionable historical value, even though they once had a temporary significance.

In order to meet these objectives within the library's limited budget, each purchase should meet at least one of the following criteria:

A. Sources which contain assigned readings and which the students can not be expected to buy.
B. Books and periodicals which supplement classroom and laboratory work, provide information for papers and reports, and provide additional material for the motivated student.
C. Sources which are judged necessary for a liberal education, for the development of an informed individual capable of independent judgement. These sources will include the works of standard authors, representatives of the best modern fiction and non-fiction, and outstanding periodicals.
D. Reference sources used frequently for short factual answers.
E. Indexes, abstracts, and bibliographies which identify sources of interest to students or faculty.
F. Research and reference tools that are used regularly in the professions which our students can be expected to enter.
G. Current awareness publications.

Material which meets the general objectives of the library collection but which does not meet one of these general criteria may be purchased if purchase is the only way in which the needed information will be available to the faculty or student body member.

IV. Responsibility for Acquisitions:

The most important aspect of acquisitions work takes place before materials are actually ordered. This work involves the planned selection of items best qualified to strengthen the University's resources for instruction and research. The importance of wise selection has grown in proportion to the increase in the volume of available materials, the cost of those materials, and the costs of acquiring, cataloging, housing and servicing.

Responsibility for the selection of library materials for the University lies with the entire university community. Faculty members are largely responsible for recommending the acquisition of materials in their special subject fields. Any member if the faculty or staff may
request that an item be added to the collection by completing a request form and submitting it through the department liaison to the librarian assigned to that department. Students may also submit recommendations for purchases if they are within the guidelines of selection policy.

The Library Staff should encourage the interest and activity of individual faculty members in selecting materials for the library to assure the building of a comprehensive collection. The librarians assume responsibility for systematically reviewing current and retrospective bibliographies and making selections from them in areas neglected by the faculty. Responsibility for coordination the collection as a whole, for aiding the faculty with bibliographic assistance, and for making judgments as to format and degree of completeness rests with the librarians, Final responsibility regarding acquisitions rests with the Head Librarian in the context of broad consultation with the faculty as described above.

V. Guiding Principles:

In striving to meet its objectives within the limits of its resources, the library should follow these general directives:

A. Students should be supplied with appropriate materials to supplement their textbooks.
B. In the acquisition of new titles, the major emphasis should be on current publications, and among those, works which promise to fulfill future as well as current needs should receive preference. Both in-print and out-of-print materials should be purchased as required.
C. Before materials that are rare, highly specialized, or very expensive are purchased for students or faculty engaged in research, the holdings of other local libraries should be consulted to avoid unnecessary duplication. If the items desired are available within the metropolitan area or through Interlibrary Services in Bloomington there is no justification for the library buying them, unless they are required reading for a course.
D. Materials in foreign languages which can be used for teaching and exercise in language courses offered at the University are desirable purchases for the library. However, materials in non-language courses which are published in languages other than English, with the exception of dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other reference tools, shall be bought only in those instances when there is evidence of their immediate usefulness to students and faculty.
E. No materials should be excluded from the collection because of the race or nationality of the authors, or the political, moral, or religious views expressed therein. All sides of a controversial issue should be represented in the collection.
F. When there is a choice, hardbound books should be selected over paperbacks unless the initial cost of the paperback coupled with the cost of binding it is less expensive than the hardcover edition.
G. It is the responsibility of students to buy their own copies of assigned textbooks. The library should only purchase a textbook when it is a known classic in its subject area.
H. For back files of serial publications, microforms should be selected over paper copies when both are available.
I. Recreational materials should be provided in a limited fashion because of the commuter nature of the University and number of easily accessible public libraries in the metropolitan area.
J. Gifts of either library materials or money to purchase them will be accepted provided they fit into the above policies and provided there are no restrictions attached. The library must be free to dispose of any materials which are not needed.

K. Weeding, or the removal of obsolete materials for purposes of discarding, should be considered an integral part of the total organized effort to study and develop the collection. Badly damaged copies should be withdrawn and items should be weeded if they contain outdated or inaccurate information. Weeding should be done with the advisement of division or departmental representatives.

Approved by the Library Committee of the Faculty Organization on November 20, 1981.