

Meadville Lombard Theological School Wiggin Library Collection Development and Management Policies

Last updated December 4, 2015

All policies are subject to change.

All questions and comments about this policy can be directed to the Library Director.

- I. Introduction
 - A. Mission Statement of Meadville Lombard Theological School

At Meadville Lombard Theological School, we educate students in the Unitarian Universalist tradition to embody liberal religious ministry in Unitarian Universalist congregations and wherever else they are called to serve. We do this in order to take into the world our Unitarian Universalist vision of justice, equity and compassion.
 - B. Purpose
 1. The purpose of the Wiggin Library collection development policy is to:
 - i. Provide criteria and guidance for the library staff in selecting and weeding the library collection.
- II. Criteria and Methods for Selection of Materials
 - A. Objectives
 1. The primary objective of material selection is to support the education programs at MLTS. Materials should support the curriculum and course related research, and should represent a variety of perspectives.
 2. As the only Unitarian Universalist library, we also collect materials to support the larger UU community. Materials selected should support the continued development of Unitarian Universalist religious professionals, lay leaders, and congregation members.
 3. Due to budgetary restrictions, a limited amount of materials will be selected for faculty research. The library will support faculty research by providing information access through reciprocal and consortial borrowing agreements, and interlibrary loan.
- III. Responsibility for Selection
 - A. The Library Director is the primary selector for all library materials. Members of the library staff may compile lists of titles for consideration, but the Library Director will make all final decisions about which materials are selected for the library collection.
 - B. All students and members of MLTS faculty and staff are encouraged to recommend titles for inclusion in the library collection. All book recommendations should be submitted by email to the Library Director.
- IV. Selection Criteria
 - A. The following criteria should serve as a guide for the selection process:
 1. Relevance to the current MLTS curriculum;

2. Needs of the Wiggin Library community, including religious professionals and lay UUs as well as MLTS students;
 3. Significance of the subject matter;
 4. Faculty interests;
 5. Favorable reviews or inclusion in bibliographies;
 6. Reputation of the author and/or publisher;
 - i. Single copies of self-published or print-on-demand works may be collected in limited quantities, depending on the relevance of the content to the needs of the Wiggin Library users. Biographies, autobiographies, and memoirs will not be collected unless specifically related to Unitarian Universalist history or theology.
- B. Textbooks
1. The library acquires two copies of all titles listed on syllabi as required or recommended reading. When required reading titles are out of print and hard to find, the library staff endeavors to acquire a single copy of the title or works with the teaching faculty to find a suitable replacement.
 2. Because many texts required for MLTS courses appear on [the Ministerial Fellowship Committee Required Reading List](#), the library works to maintain two copies of all required MFC readings and one copy of all titles that appear either on the required reading list as a “read one” option or on the [Recommended Reading List](#). Additional copies of readings that are freely available on the Internet will not be purchased.
- C. Single copies of titles will be purchased, except when required to support course work.
- D. Faculty Publications
1. The Wiggin Library aims to obtain at least one copy of all book-length publications written, edited, or including contributions by core members of MLTS faculty.
 2. Materials written, edited, or including contributions by adjunct faculty will be collected as deemed appropriate by the Library Director.
- E. Standing Orders
1. The Wiggin Library keeps a standing order for library copies of all Skinner House Books, furnished through Midwest Books. Additional standing orders will only be purchased when and if all the titles in a series are considered to be necessary additions to the library catalog and are only available through a standing order.
 2. The UUA currently sends the Wiggin Library complimentary copies of new titles published by Skinner House Books. These copies will be added to the collection according to the Gifts and Donations policy (see section IV.G).
- F. Reference
1. Due to the distance-based model of MLTS and the Wiggin Library, reference books in general will not be collected. Exceptions to this rule include:

- i. Unitarian Universalist Association, American Unitarian Association, and Universalist Church of America yearbooks and other annual publications.
- ii. Style manuals and seminary-specific writing guides.
- iii. A limited number of subject-specific encyclopedias and dictionaries.

G. Gifts and Donations

The Wiggin Library may accept gifts of books and other materials with the approval of the Library Director. All donated materials become property of the Wiggin Library upon receipt, and will be evaluated with the same criteria applied to purchased materials. The library is free to dispose of any materials donated to the library if they are deemed unnecessary by the Library Director, or a person appointed by the Library Director, whether because they do not fit the collection needs of the library or due to poor condition. Both parties should be aware of this stipulation at the time the gift is offered, and may be put in writing if it seems necessary.

The Library Director will have final review of all materials donated to the library, particularly when the donor requires special care or restrictions related to their access, circulation, or use.

All gifts will be acknowledged by a member of the Library and Archives Staff, at the discretion of the Library Director, although the library cannot provide an itemized list or appraisal of gift materials.

H. Suggestions

1. Students, faculty, and staff can request library purchases by emailing the Library Director. Purchases are made on a monthly or quarterly basis, and the requester will not be automatically notified when or if the purchase has been made. If the requester would like to be notified of the purchase, s/he should email the Library Director and the Library Assistant.

V. Controversial Materials

A. The Wiggin Library supports intellectual freedom and the pursuit of knowledge, and therefore makes available materials that represent a broad range of thought. It is the right and the obligation of both library staff and teaching faculty to select and keep these materials in the collection, in order to support both scholarly communication and democratic access to information. The library does, however, recognize that challenges to the merit of specific materials may arise. In these situations, users may request to remove an item from circulation by completing the Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources form (appendix A). The Library Director will review the material and may confer with other members of the Library and Archives staff, as well as MLTS faculty. The Director's decision will be communicated to the requestor once the review is complete.

B. These policies are guided by the [American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights](#).

VI. Selection Sources

In selecting new materials, sources will be consulted including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Publishers
 - i. Beacon Press
 - ii. Skinner House Books
2. UUA Bookstore
3. Choice Reviews Online
4. Reviews, review articles, abstracts, and bibliographies in relevant journals

VII. Formats

A. Print materials

1. Books

- i. Print is the primary format for selection. When both the hardcover and paperback of a title is available, the hardcover will be purchased, when cost allows, due to the longer lifespan of the book.

2. Periodicals

- i. Subscriptions of print journals will be purchased when:
 - a. the title is unavailable electronically,
 - b. an electronic subscription is significantly more expensive than a print subscription,
 - c. or when a print journal comes with an electronic subscription.
- ii. Back issues of periodicals are not retained by the library. The number of back issues of periodicals stored by the library will depend on the space required and electronic availability.

3. Congregational newsletters are not collected by the library.

B. Non-print materials

1. Ebooks are not currently collected.
2. Audiovisual media will be collected only when courses require them.

C. Language

1. English is the primary language collected by the Wiggin Library. Materials in other languages may be collected when the material is relevant to the library's Unitarian Universalist mission.

VIII. Main Collection Subject Areas

Because the Master's degree is the highest degree currently offered by MLTS, and because of the Unitarian Universalist focus of the school, it is unnecessary for the Wiggin Library to build an inclusive collection in Unitarian Universalist theology. As of November 2015, approximately 20% of the Wiggin Library's titles are unique or uncommon holdings in WorldCat, with only 1-20 libraries holding the titles worldwide. Materials selected for the library collection should maintain or improve this ratio. Reciprocal borrowing privileges with multiple seminary consortia in the Chicago area and across the country, as well as borrowing access at the University of Chicago's Regenstein Library, allow Wiggin Library users to rely on other libraries for materials that cover more mainstream areas of religion, theology, and philosophy. Library of Congress Classification class numbers are included to aide selection of new titles.

A. Comprehensive Collection

The Wiggin Library endeavors, as much as it is possible, to include significant, secondary, and minor monographs, as well as journals and other resources. Although English is the primary language for all Wiggin Library materials, other applicable languages may be collected for the subjects in this collection level. Out of print titles may be acquired at this collection level, if the search process and cost of the materials are not prohibitive.

1. Unitarian, Universalist, and Unitarian Universalist History (BX9801-BX9869, BX9901-9969)
 2. Unitarian, Universalist, and Unitarian Universalist Theology (BX9801-BX9869, BX9901-9969)
 3. Unitarian, Universalist, and Unitarian Universalist Religious Education (BX9801-BX9869, BX9901-9969, BV1460-1615)
 4. Unitarian, Universalist, and Unitarian Universalist cultural contributions, including:
 - i. Hymns (BV445-BV447)
 - ii. Meditations and Reflections (BV4800-4911)
 - iii. Sermons (BX9842-BX9853)
 5. History of Meadville Lombard Theological School and its antecedents
 6. Spiritualism (BF1228-BF1389)
 7. Practical Theology and Worship Arts (BV1-5099)
 - i. Pastoral Theology (BV4000-4470)
 - ii. Practical Religion (BV4485-5099)
- B. Advanced Study Collection

A collection at this level will support the course work required for both the MDiv and MALS programs, and is enough to maintain the level of knowledge required for general needs, though with less intensity than is required for research. Areas within these topics will be collected when relevant to current course offerings and faculty research needs. It includes current, historical, and retrospective monographs, and basic reference and bibliographic tools.

1. American Religious History (BL2500-2530), including
 - i. Puritanism
 - ii. Congregationalism
2. Congregational Leadership (BV646-652.9, BV4000-4470)
3. Ecology (GF1-900)
4. Ethics (BJ1-1725)
5. Hebrew and New Testament Bible (BS1-2970)
6. Humanism (BL2747.6)
7. Paganism, Neo-paganism, Occult, Earth Religions, and New Religions (BL473-619, BL900-980)
8. Philosophy
 - i. Modern philosophy (B790-807)
 - ii. Special topics or schools of philosophy (B808-849)
 - iii. American philosophy (B21, B850)

- iv. Eastern philosophy (B121-149)
- 9. Political Theory
 - i. Modern state (JC131-273)
 - ii. Forms of the state (JC348-497)
 - iii. Purpose, functions, and relations of the state (JC571-605)
- 10. Religious Education (excluding Unitarian, Universalist, and Unitarian Universalist) (BV1460-1615)
- 11. Social sciences
 - i. Social conditions and social reform (HN1-995)
 - ii. Communities, classes, and races (HT51-1595)
- 12. Transcendentalism (B905, PS217.T7)

C. Initial Study Collection

This level of collection supports introductory study of the following fields. It includes significant monographs, as well as a limited number of secondary monographs, and a limited number of recent reference tools and journals. At this collection level, books that are easily accessible through reciprocal borrowing programs and/or interlibrary loan will not be collected.

- 1. Atheism (BL2747.3)
- 2. Buddhism (BQ1-9800)
- 3. Christianity (BR1-1725)
- 4. Comparative Religion (BL410-490)
- 5. Islam (BP1-610)
- 6. Hinduism (BL1100-1295)
- 7. World Religions (BL74-99)

D. Basic Collection

This level of collection is highly selective and includes selected reference materials and important monographs, surveys, and bibliographies. This collection level serves mainly to introduce and define the subject, and to direct users to information available elsewhere.

- 1. American history (E151-889)
- 2. Literature and the arts (PR1-PS3576)
- 3. Science, medicine, and technology (Q, R, T)

E. Not collected

Due to the limited amount of space to store library materials, subjects not listed in the above sections of this document will not be collected

IX. Weeding/Deselection

In order to maintain a collection that is both vibrant and useful, and to allow for the continued growth of the collection, the library staff will regularly and systematically weed materials from the collection. Weeding decisions will be made by the library staff, based on the following criteria, and faculty members will be consulted about the titles chosen for deselection whenever necessary.

- A. Weeding will be done by the Library Assistant and the Library Director using the following criteria:
 - 1. Within the scope of this collection development policy.
 - 2. Relevance to the field.
 - 3. Relevance to the current curriculum of MLTS.
 - 4. Relevance to the needs and interests of both current and future users.
 - 5. Currency of the publication.
 - 6. Future value for research and historical purposes.
 - 7. Physical condition.
 - 8. Circulation history.
 - 9. Retention schedules (when applicable).
- B. Last Copy Project
 - 1. Items selected for weeding will be assessed for eligibility to the [Last Copy Project](#) at CARLI. Weeded items that are determined to be the last copy in Illinois will be submitted to CARLI. Items rejected by CARLI will be sold, donated, or discarded as appropriate.
- X. Cooperative Agreements
 - A. Reciprocal Borrowing Agreements
 - 1. The Wiggin Library has reciprocal borrowing agreements with ACTS, CATLA, and ATLA library consortia, as well as the University of Chicago (through the Hyde Park Seminars).
 - B. The Wiggin Library does not maintain any formal cooperative collection development policies with any libraries or consortia.

Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources

Meadville Lombard Theological School has delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of the library collection to the Library and Archives Staff. If you wish to request reconsideration of library resources, please complete and return this form to the Library Director.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

1. Type of resource on which you are commenting:

Book Magazine or Journal Electronic resource/network

Other (please specify): _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

2. What brought this resource to your attention?

3. Have you examined the entire resource?

4. What concerns you about this resource? (use other side or additional pages if necessary)

5. What resource(s) would you suggest to provide additional information or viewpoints on this topic?