Curry Library
Policy Manual

Collection Development
Section 4.2
Deselection Policy

Revised Date: February 5, 2010

Deselection Policy

WJC is not a major research institution nor is it a member of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL). Because other regional libraries provide for in-depth historical research, WJC's library collection needs to be continually evaluated in order to identify materials that have outlived their usefulness or for which no clear curricular purpose is evident so these materials can be withdrawn from the collection.

The goal is to maintain an up-to-date, well-balanced, useful, and reliable collection to support the information needs of the WJC community. Deselection, or weeding, is done as a conscientious effort to achieve a balanced and up-to-date collection suit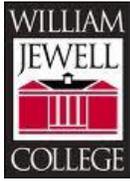able for WJC and should be an ongoing process. Weeding is as important as acquiring materials and should be done according to the same principles and policies that determine selection.

Significant amounts of material that no longer meet the needs of the WJC community impede the efficient selection of appropriate material. Items in poor physical condition discourage use and detract from the general appearance of the collection. Outdated and inaccurate material obstructs use of the collection and frustrates users. Unnecessary items left in a collection can weaken a library as much as, if not more than, insufficient acquisitions.

Several factors should be considered when deciding whether or not to withdraw materials from the collection, such as:

- Value to the collection.
- Physical condition.
- Coverage of the subject by other printed or electronic materials in the collection.
- Age or obsolescence.
- Historical value and use.
- Copies held by consortial partners.

Responsibility for weeding falls to the subject librarians who use their judgment, subject expertise, and understanding of the current and future needs of the WJC community to evaluate the collection. Weeding should be carried out on a routine schedule. The Library will also make a conscientious effort to involve the college community.

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General Criteria for Deselection

Curry Library librarians will use the following criteria, according to the requirements of the discipline, when selecting materials for withdrawal.
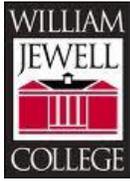
1. **Outdated and shabby materials.** It is a disservice to the College to keep shelves crammed with outdated, shabby materials. However, the content may qualify some material for replacement or repair. Also, caution should be taken to avoid discarding rare books or works of importance to a field of study.

2. **Material not actively used.** It is important to have a collection of materials that are needed and used by the WJC community. Warehousing unused books is not within the mission of the library.

3. **Multiple copies.** Unneeded multiple copies.

4. **Age.** Older, superseded editions that have not circulated in three years if a newer or improved edition has been acquired, depending on the discipline.

5. **Poor content.** Materials that contain obsolete or incorrect information and are not of historical value. Materials on computers, law, science, technology, health, and travel need to be current to be useful.

6. **Material that is damaged and cannot be repaired.** Attention must be given to broken spine, fragile, brittle or dirty paper, torn or missing pages, and insect or mildew infestations.

Specific Criteria for Retention

1. Material that meets accreditation standards.
2. Items identified by faculty, which should be retained.
3. Items, such as clearly identified "classics", considered valuable for the integrity of the collection by the subject librarians.
4. Local or College history.
5. Faculty or alumni authors.
6. Special collections.

Updating the Reference Collection

To present an up-to-date reference collection that serves the needs of the WJC community, the collection must be weeded on a regular and on-going basis. Currency of information is the primary function of a good reference collection, so outdated materials should be withdrawn in a timely manner.

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Withdrawn reference materials may be placed into the circulating collection if deemed appropriate by the subject librarian and if the items meet the selection criteria for circulating materials described in this document.

Guidelines for Updating the Reference Collection

1. **Encyclopedias:** The demand points toward online resources. However, if in the subject librarian's opinion, they are of historical significance, they will be moved into Closed Stacks.

2. **Dictionaries:** The library will buy updated editions of dictionaries when these are available. Superseded editions are withdrawn and discarded.

3. **Indexes/abstracts and bibliographies:** All indexes/abstracts and bibliographies are retained. Once the cumulative issue of an index/abstract is received, superseded loose issues should be discarded. The library will consider removing print indexes/ abstracts and bibliographies when an appropriate electronic equivalent is available and the print version no longer serves an educational purpose.

4. **Directories:** Only the latest issues of directories are retained. Librarians will review directories that are more than 3 years old. Outdated or superseded editions are withdrawn and discarded unless, in the subject librarian's opinion, they are of historical significance, in which case they will be moved into Closed Stacks.

5. **Statistics:** All statistical publications are kept until superseded. Superseded editions will be placed in Closed Stacks.

6. **Atlases:** A current set of atlases is kept. Older editions of atlases with historical value may be retained.

7. **Technical standards and specifications:** Only the latest editions are kept in the Reference Collection. All older editions are withdrawn and discarded unless, in the subject librarian's opinion, they are of historical significance, in which case they will be moved into Closed Stacks.

8. **Codes and regulations:** Only the latest editions are kept in the Reference Collection. All older editions are withdrawn and discarded unless, in the subject librarian's opinion, they are of historical significance, in which case they will be moved into Closed Stacks.