

Collection Management Policy

Introduction

Because of the volume of publishing and material creation, as well as the limitations of budget and space, the Library Board has adopted the following policy to guide the management and curation of its collection with a fundamental appreciation for each patron of the Walter E. Olson Memorial Library and their diverse information needs. This policy creates and shapes the Walter E. Olson Memorial Library's unique collection, the practices that maintain it over time, and the guidelines that help the collection respond to community needs while protecting the collection from societal and political pressures, in line with the tenets of intellectual freedom and [the Library Bill of Rights](#). The Collection Management Policy ensures that over time, the Walter E. Olson Memorial Library's collection will remain on course, reflecting the needs of our community, while creating unique experiences of meaning and inspiration for our patrons.

Policy

Collection Purpose & Scope

The goal of the Walter E. Olson Memorial Library is to provide all individuals in the community with carefully selected materials to aid in the pursuit of information for education, personal development, and enjoyment. The Library provides materials to support each individual's journey, and does not place a value on one patron's needs or preferences over another's. The Walter E. Olson Memorial Library holds materials across many genres, subjects, formats, uses, and audiences and includes popular materials as well as materials of an enduring nature. The Library strives to curate and maintain collections that represent and respect the diverse viewpoints and interests of the communities the Library serves. Because our collection is for popular use, rather than archival/scholarly research purposes, we do not retain items that are primarily of historical/research value.

Selection Criteria

Materials should be selected that satisfy patrons' needs as individuals and as members of groups with concern given for all ages, backgrounds, identities, interests, abilities, and levels of education.

The main points considered in the selection of materials are:

- **Age/Developmental Appropriateness:** The needs of readers of all ages and reading abilities should be accounted for in collections and individual materials will be assessed on their ability to meet the needs of their intended users.
- **Budget:** Additions to the Library collection is ultimately determined by availability of funds for collection development.

- **Completeness:** The Library will rarely, if ever, purchase abridged or condensed versions of materials.
- **Existing holdings:** Is the resource held in a different format (ex: Large Print vs. standard), and/or available through NWLN consortium, WISCAT ILL borrowing, or digital versions? Does the item add to a series already held by the Library?
- **Format/Durability:** The preferred format and durability of materials varies across the collection. In general, preferred formats are those that will be most durable - hardcover books (vs. paperback), DVDs (vs. Blue-Ray or PlayAways), and CD audiobooks (vs. PlayAways or mp3 discs). Obsolete, rare, or novelty formats will not be selected.
- **Popular demand/appeal:** Popular reviews, the holds standards in the Northern Waters Library Network Member Agreement, and patron recommendations are used as an indicator of patron interest and circulation.
- **Representation:** Does the material contribute to the breadth of representation in the collection of “real life” identities, people, communities, & experiences? Preference and priority are placed on [#OwnVoices resources](#).
- **Special collections:** The Library maintains special collections including Ojibwe-focused materials, local history/genealogy, a “Library of Things”, Caregiver & Dementia resources, a Seed Library, graphic novels, and Wisconsin-related materials that are of special interest.
- **Timeliness:** Does the item offer new information, provide value as a replacement for currently held outdated materials, or address current events/topics of interest?
- **Uniqueness of resource:** Will this item be unique to the Northern Waters Library Service/add value for the shared collection of our library system?

Gifts and Donations

The library will accept gifts of books and other materials for addition to the collection using the same criteria of selection which are applied to purchased material. Please see our [Donations, Gifts, & Bequests Policy](#) for more information.

Weeding

The Library’s collection is a living, changing entity. As items are added, others are reviewed for their ongoing value and sometimes withdrawn from the collection. Weeding is essential because it helps Library staff address unnecessary duplicate copies, items that need mending or cleaning, missing items, and areas that are too crowded or need development. Weeding should be on-going, such that the entire collection is regularly weeded on a semi-annual basis, as per the Weeding Schedule.

The Library staff makes use of the [CREW Weeding Manual](#) as a reference for weeding, particularly its MUSTIE weeding criteria:

M = Misleading (and/or factually inaccurate)

U = Ugly (worn and beyond mending or rebinding)

S = Superseded (by a truly new edition or by a much better book on the subject)

T = Trivial (of no discernible literary or scientific merit; usually of ephemeral interest at some time in the past)

I = Irrelevant to the needs and interests of your community

E = The material or information may be obtained expeditiously **Elsewhere** through interlibrary loan, reciprocal borrowing, or in electronic format.

In addition to these guidelines, the Olson Memorial Library also uses the following considerations in the weeding of materials:

- Accuracy, timeliness, and quality: Items that present information that is no longer accurate, relevant, or timely will be weeded. Under this consideration, the question of whether materials perpetuate racial, gender, or other harmful stereotypes will be evaluated.
- Demand and Use: Items that have not circulated for a significant amount of time will be weeded.
- Format: Obsolete or obscure formats (VHS, floppy discs, audio cassettes) will be weeded.
- Literary Classics: Whether an item is considered to be a “classic”, an award winner, or of enduring interest will be considered.
- Local interest: Whether an item has special connection to the local area or special collections will be considered.
- Location/Findability: An item may be moved rather than removed if that might increase its use in the collection.
- Multiple copies: Duplicates will be weeded based on demand, as outlined in the annual NWLN Membership Agreement.
- Series: If an item to be weeded makes up part of a series, the completeness of that series in the collection will be considered.
- Space: When the collection outgrows the available space, more stringent weeding standards may be used. However, the above considerations will guide all weeding decisions.

The library will make every effort to recycle weeded items through sale or offering the items to other libraries or organizations. Sales and offers will precede physical disposal of the items, unless material is judged by the Director to be too damaged or to pose possible harm, as in the case of outdated medical materials.

Inventory

Like weeding, the inventory process is a chance to locate missing items; identify materials that need to be cleaned, repaired, or have their spine labels corrected; and become more familiar with the collection and its development needs. In addition, the process provides a periodic “reset” to the collection so that what is in the catalog is as accurate as possible to what is on the shelves, and also generates useful data for administrative and operational use. As a member library of the Northern Waters Library Service, the Walter E. Olson Memorial Library follows NWLS’s best practices for conducting a full collection inventory every 3-5 years.

Inventory requires that the Library close to the public for a brief period, so that browsing and circulation do not complicate the process.

Requests for Reconsideration

As part of our commitment to access and intellectual freedom, the Walter E. Olson Memorial Library selects materials from a broad spectrum of subjects, interests, and points of view. The Library upholds the right of the individual to access information, even though materials in the collection may be unpopular with some library patrons.

The bulk of challenged materials in the United States are resources for our younger patrons. It is ultimately the responsibility of parents/guardians to guide and oversee the information consumption and Library activity of their children, and the Walter E. Olson Memorial Library will not intrude on that relationship. Library materials for youth are intended to broaden their vision, support recreational reading, encourage and facilitate reading skills, supplement their educational needs, stimulate and widen their interests, lead to recognition and appreciation of literature, and respectfully reflect the diversity of our world.

Library patrons requesting reconsideration and removal of items in the collection must meet the following conditions:

- Be a resident of a municipality named in the Walter E. Olson Memorial Library Joint Library Agreement OR a non-librariated municipality of Vilas, Oneida, Price, Forest, or Iron Counties. Residents’ taxes from these areas pay for the materials held by the Library; therefore, only residents may request that a material be reconsidered.
- Be a Walter E. Olson Memorial Library card holder.
- Have either read/viewed/listened to the material in its entirety.
- Have reviewed the OML policies and ALA values statements referenced in the “Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources” form.

- Complete the [“Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources” form](#). Only completed forms will be eligible for review. The Library does not respond to anonymous phone calls, rumors, or voiced concerns according to the reconsideration process; however, alternative formats to the form will be made available upon reasonable request.
- Individual titles/items will only be reviewed once every five years, unless substantial content changes have been made.

Requests for Reconsideration will be reviewed by the Director and responded to within 30 days of the request. The item in question will not be removed during the reconsideration process. If the person indicates dissatisfaction with the Director’s decision, they may appeal to the Library Board. The Library Board will reconsider the decision based on whether or not the particular item conforms to the criteria outlined in this Policy.

Responsibility

The Library Director is responsible for the administration of the Collection Management Policy, and has the authority to delegate tasks and make final selection and weeding decisions.

Approved: December 19, 1990

Amended: March 17, 2021, June 15, 2021