COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Original policy statement: 1992
Latest review and approval by Library Committee: December 14, 2009

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to document the guidelines by which the collections of the Bishop Payne Library are selected and managed. The goal of this statement is to ensure that the library’s collection development activities are congruent with the seminary’s educational mission, planning, and academic function.

The mission of the Bishop Payne Library is to serve as a physical collection, an electronic portal, and an instructional center for the teaching, learning, and research activities of the faculty, students, staff, Board, and alumni/ae of the seminary. Specifically, the library seeks to identify, acquire, organize, and disseminate all forms of recorded information (print, digital and audio-visual) that support the research, instructional, and administrative programs of the Seminary especially in the fields of Biblical studies, theology, ethics, church history, liturgy, missions, world religions, practical theology, and related areas; and to document the theology, liturgy, and local expressions of worldwide Anglicanism.

PATRONS

The Bishop Payne Library’s primary patrons are the faculty, Board, students and staff of the seminary. The seminary offers four degree programs: the Master in Divinity (M.Div.), Master of Arts in Christian Education (M.A.C.E.), Master in Theological Studies (M.T.S.) and Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) degrees, and two diplomas: a post-graduate diploma in Anglican Studies and a post-graduate diploma in Theology. Individuals enrolled in programs of the Lifetime Theological Education department also have borrowing privileges. Secondarily, the Bishop Payne Library serves VTS alumni/ae throughout the United States, clergy and Christian educators of all denominations in the greater Washington area, and the students and faculty of the seminaries of the Washington Theological Consortium.
OVERVIEW OF THE LIBRARY’S COLLECTION HISTORY

The library collection of the Virginia Theological Seminary dates from the seminary’s inception in 1823. In 1855, Francis Scott Key Hall was built as the first separate library building at the seminary, for a collection that numbered 7,000 volumes. By 1954, the library collection had grown to 40,000 volumes and 86 periodical subscriptions. The Washington Theological Consortium libraries established a reciprocal borrowing agreement in 1972, which allows students to borrow directly from any of seven seminaries in the greater Washington area. In 1983, the library collection numbered 106,000 items and 550 periodical subscriptions. In 1984, a branch library for Christian education was established as part of the Center for the Ministry of Teaching.

By 2009, the Bishop Payne Library collection numbered 173,500 books, 1,050 periodical subscriptions, 28,000 bound volumes of journals, 6,800 microforms, 3,000 audio-visuals, and subscriptions to 50 electronic databases. The archives contained 2,177 linear feet of materials.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

The selection process is a cooperative and interactive effort between the Head Librarian and faculty members. The Librarian has the primary and ultimate responsibility for building and maintaining the library’s collections, and bears particular responsibility to balance acquisitions so that the collection grows in all relevant subject areas. The Librarian typically initiates a large percentage of orders (e.g., 82% in 2008-09).

Many types of resources are utilized for the selection of print and electronic resources for the collection. These resources include reviews in periodical literature, book review sources (e.g., Religious Studies Review, Reviews in Religion and Theology, Book Notes from Africa), publishers' catalogues, and published bibliographies. Standing orders for monographic titles published in series account for approximately nine percent of materials received annually (down from 30% in 2001-02).

Faculty recommendations are encouraged and solicited, especially as new courses are developed. New faculty members are encouraged to submit bibliographies and recommendations in order to build the collection in their areas of research and expertise. The library accepts faculty requests through online requests through the library catalog, publisher catalogs, bibliographic lists, or email requests. Faculty members are individually notified when their selections are available for circulation. Although the Librarian reserves the right to refuse a faculty request when necessary, in practice, faculty requests are almost always fulfilled if the item requested is obtainable and affordable.

The Librarian seeks advice from faculty members for borderline and supplemental materials. Very expensive and/or comprehensive collections, sets or electronic databases may be reviewed by the Library Committee. Student recommendations are also welcomed,
especially from international students. A list of recent acquisitions is always available through the library catalog as a “featured list.”

**CRITERIA FOR MATERIALS ACQUIRED**

Emphasis is placed on the collection of current and newly published scholarly materials. This emphasis, however, does not preclude acquisition of materials of historical interest pertinent to the curriculum nor collecting older materials in new and developing areas of the curriculum. Retrospective purchasing is mainly used for fulfilling faculty requests, building the Anglican studies collection, or replacing missing titles.

The scope of the collections of the Bishop Payne Library is intended to document the historic depth, the intellectual breadth, and the global expression of religious thought and practice. Freedom of inquiry for the library staff and for all patron groups is honored through collecting materials that represent the full range of thought on any given collection topic. Representing the global nature of Christianity with indigenous materials from a variety of sources around the world is an essential part of collection activity. International students often assist the Librarian in identifying and obtaining materials from their home dioceses and countries. Inclusiveness in perspective on gender and ethnicity is also a high collection value.

Multiple copies of titles are purchased when requested by faculty for reserve usage, when a title is needed in both the reference and general collections, or when the topic is deemed to be of high interest in the community. Copies of materials authored by alumni/ae and faculty are purchased for both special collections and for the general collection.

In addition to currency, other criteria for selection include:
- Completeness, accuracy
- Author’s scholarship
- Publisher reputation
- Depth of historic library collecting in that subject area
- Anticipated use
- Accessibility (particularly important with formats that require machinery in order to be read)
- Longevity in terms of format and/or content (e.g. computer manuals; CDs)
- Language
- Cost

The Librarian seeks to collect in ancillary areas to supplement the curriculum with basic bibliography/reference needs and quality representative secondary literature. Areas considered ancillary include: philosophy, history, archaeology, psychology, sociology, anthropology, science, technology, communication studies, art, music, and literature.

**ANGLICAN COMMUNION COLLECTION**
Since 1996, the Bishop Payne Library has actively sought to collect materials documenting the life, history, and practice of the worldwide Anglican Communion at the province and diocese level. Specifically, the library collects constitutions, canons, histories, indigenous versions of the Book of Common Prayer, bishops’ charges, and theses documenting these matters. Faculty and students traveling to other parts of the Communion have served effectively as purchasing agents for the library.

The library also seeks to collect the diocesan journals and newspapers of the Episcopal Church USA. Parish histories are collected for the mid-Atlantic region and representative major parishes of the church.

LANGUAGES

Original foundational works in foreign languages are acquired either upon the request of faculty members or upon recommendations in the review literature. Some foreign language series are purchased through continuation plans. German and French are the most heavily represented non-English languages in the collection, primarily in the subject areas of theology, church history, and Biblical studies. The library continues to collect materials in the biblical and classical languages. Spanish language continues to be an area of growth. Bibles are collected in most of the languages in which editions are available.

Materials for the Anglican Communion project are collected in any language. Recently acquired materials represent a diversity of languages, such as Spanish, Portuguese, Japanese, French, Burmese and Chinese. VTS faculty, international students, and visiting scholars assist with translation for cataloging purposes.

FORMATS

The Bishop Payne Library collects a broad spectrum of theological resources in a variety of formats. Formats collected include printed books, periodicals, electronic resources, sound recordings, DVDs, and maps.

Monographs

Variant editions of a work are added only if the new edition incorporates substantial changes or if the work is significant in its area of study.

Periodicals

Formerly, the library's policy was to subscribe to all periodicals indexed in Religion Index One, beginning with the volume and year of entry into that index. That policy was revised by the Library Committee in 1992 to a selection process for journal titles in accord with the criteria of this policy statement. The seminary continues to build a strong, well-rounded, scholarly journal collection. Scholarly journals are bound and bar-coded in
volumes. In addition to the theological journals, the library subscribes to sermon preparation periodicals, newspapers, current affairs magazines, and Episcopal/Anglican diocesan periodicals and newspapers. These materials are not bound, and general newspapers and news magazines are not retained in the permanent collection.

New subscriptions are added to the periodical collection upon the request of a faculty member, upon the debut of a new title relevant to the curriculum or upon the development of a new area of study in the curriculum. Additional criteria are:

- availability of the text through an electronic database,
- access to the content of the journal through an electronic database,
- reputation and scholarship of editors, editorial board, and publisher,
- availability of the title elsewhere in the Consortium.

Audio-Visual Materials

The Bishop Payne Library has a large collection of music compact discs for use in church music classes and for patron circulation. DVDs relating to the theological disciplines are also included in the collection as relevant to the educational needs of the institution.

Electronic Databases

Materials in electronic formats are evaluated according to the guidelines for printed materials, insofar as those guidelines are relevant. Additional guidelines for consideration include: relationship to print materials, cost, anticipated life span of the resource, availability and cost of updates, availability of hardware to access the resource, availability of the database at Washington Theological Consortium libraries or other libraries in the D.C. area, and user-friendlyness.

Full-text materials are available to students and faculty both on campus and remotely through the library’s subscriptions. Remote access has significantly deepened access to library resources for distance students, such as those in the Doctor of Ministry and Master of Arts in Christian Education programs.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

The Rare Book Collection contains materials primarily in Biblical studies, theology, Anglicana, Books of Common Prayer, and the history of the Episcopal Church. The collection includes a manuscript, several incunabula, numerous pamphlets and about 1,500 books. Titles acquired for this collection come by purchase, gift or transfer from the general library collection. The library will occasionally purchase books that add to the scholarly value of existing special collections. Donations of rare books are accepted if they fit into the collection scope and are in good condition. The gift guidelines specified in this document govern gifts of rare books as well.
Books are considered for special collections under the following criteria:
- European imprints with publication dates prior to 1750
- American imprints with publication dates prior to 1800
- Fine press and limited edition books
- Association copies
- Scarce or rare editions of any age

The Alumni/ae Collection preserves copies of faculty and alumni/ae writings in a special collection in the library. Every attempt is made to purchase copies of these works for the collection as they are published. In every case, the alumni/ae collection copy is considered the copy of last resort for patron use. Patrons are prohibited from photocopying and may use these items on an in-house basis only. Copies of all theses written by Virginia Theological Seminary students (Doctor of Ministry, Master of Theological Studies, Master of Arts in Christian Education, and Honors Theses) are automatically added to the alumni/ae collection.

ARCHIVES

The mission of the Archives is to solicit, collect, arrange, describe, preserve, and make available the historical record of the origin, development, programs, ministry, influence, liturgical practices, and people of Virginia Theological Seminary, the Bishop Payne Divinity School, and the Episcopal Church in Virginia. The archives collects the institutional records of enduring administrative, legal, fiscal, and historical value of VTS and the Bishop Payne Divinity School; personal papers of selected notable administrators, officers, faculty, and students of VTS and the BPDS; and records and personal papers of historical value of other Episcopalians and Virginia Episcopal institutions significant in the life and ministry of VTS and BPDS.

In 2003 the African American Episcopal Historical Collection was established at the VTS Archives as a joint project with the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church. Through documents, institutional records, oral histories, personal papers, and photographs, the collection documents the experience of African American Episcopalians in the U.S.

The Archivist, in consultation with the Head Librarian, has the primary responsibility for building and maintaining the archival collections. Institutional records are acquired through transfer to the Archives from the various departments of the Seminary. Manuscript collections and personal papers are solicited from their owners by the Archivist. Recommendations for manuscript collections to be acquired are encouraged from other members of the Seminary community, but the decision to solicit collections from outside the institution is the responsibility of the Archivist and the Librarian. Emphasis is placed on collecting original copies of unique documents not held by other institutions or repositories. This emphasis, however, does not preclude acquisition of secondary copies of documents when the original copies are not available and when such
secondary copies directly record the history of the Seminary, its people, or the Episcopal Church in Virginia.

GIFTS

Gift collections play a valuable role in collection development, especially as a source for out-of-print books and replacement and duplicate copies. The Librarian reserves the right to refuse any proposed gift for any reason. The Bishop Payne Library accepts outright gifts only; materials are not added to the collection on a “loaned” basis. Gifts are accepted only if there are no restrictions placed on their use by the donor. Gift materials are selected for the library’s collection under the same selection criteria that apply to purchased materials. Gift materials are integrated into the general collection, exchanged, sold, supplied to other libraries, or otherwise dispersed at the discretion of the Librarian. Appraisal costs are normally borne by the donor. Appraisals of gift collections are never provided by the Librarian.

PRESERVATION & BINDING

The Bishop Payne Library uses a commercial binder to bind some journals in the library’s collection, all copies of VTS theses submitted for the collection, and books that are in poor condition. The Technical Services Technician makes minor repairs in-house and makes phase boxes for rare book room materials as needed.

INVENTORY

The collection was last inventoried in 2008-09. Almost all holdings except bound periodicals were included in the inventory, totaling over 168,000 items inventoried. The final “missing and unaccounted” items loss rate was about .0002 %, a total of 55 items.

WITHDRAWAL/RETENTION

The library staff assesses the collection on an ongoing basis. Materials judged to be superseded, outdated, or no longer within the scope of the collection are weeded, as are duplicate copies that are no longer needed. Books in poor physical condition are evaluated on the basis of uniqueness, extent of availability in other libraries, and availability of replacement. Based on that evaluation, a decision is then made for withdrawal, replacement, binding, repair, or transfer to the “Bad Condition” collection.

EVALUATION OF THE COLLECTION

The collection is evaluated in several key ways. The Library Committee administers and evaluates a formal survey of students and faculty regarding collection
usage every other year and invites feedback from the community on the collection at any time. The Librarian analyzes both circulation data and collection expenditures by subject areas annually. Book requests and suggestions about the library can be made by any patron through the library catalog. Faculty members evaluate student bibliographic sophistication as reflected in papers, projects, and presentations. The Head Librarian teaches a first quarter elective course on “Theological Research and Writing” which includes a substantial component of library resource use and an annotated bibliography assignment.

OTHER AVAILABLE RESOURCES

CENTER FOR THE MINISTRY OF TEACHING

A specialized collection of resources focusing on Christian Education is part of the Center for the Ministry of Teaching. This resource center collects books, curriculum materials, children’s materials, videotapes and periodicals in the area of religious education. The book collection at CMT has been cataloged, classified, and indexed in the Bishop Payne Library online catalog. Acquisitions for the Center for the Ministry of Teaching library are handled by the Bishop Payne Library staff.

WASHINGTON THEOLOGICAL CONSORTIUM

Materials beyond the holdings of the library's collections are available through interlibrary loans and through the Washington Theological Consortium. VTS students and faculty have direct borrowing privileges at the libraries of all the schools of the Washington Theological Consortium (Capital Bible Seminary, The Catholic University of America School of Theology and Religious Studies, The Howard University School of Divinity, the John Leland Center for Theological Studies, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Dominican House of Studies, Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University, Washington Theological Union, Wesley Theological Seminary). In building the collection, the Librarian attempts to be cognizant of the strengths of the consortium libraries to supplement the collection for depth in areas beyond the scope of the seminary's regular program and particularly for depth in specific denominational materials represented by those collections.

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