COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY STATEMENT

ENGLISH

Date: June 2006
Collection Development Librarian: Cathy Eisenhower

I. PURPOSE/PROGRAM SUPPORT

The collection supports teaching and research in the field of literary and cultural studies in English, specifically as they relate to the curriculum and research interests of the English Department of the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences. Undergraduate degrees include a B.A. in English, a B.A. in English (Honors Program), and a B.A. in English and Creative Writing, as well as a minor in English and a minor in Creative Writing. The department also offers an M.A. and a Ph.D. in American Literature and in English Literature.

As of 2005, the English Department was comprised of 39 full-time and 27 part-time faculty. In 2004, approximately 246 undergraduates had declared English their major and 72 students had enrolled in the graduate programs.

The English Department offers students a comprehensive introduction to the study of English and American literature and culture—comprehensive in asking students to experience something of the historical range of English literature as traditionally defined by periods, but also in making them aware of the many developments that are now transforming the study of culture.

II. AREA RESOURCES

A. Washington Research Library Consortium (WRLC)

Students and faculty may take advantage of the resources of the other members of the WRLC either through direct borrowing or through the Consortium Loan Service. Offering a Ph.D. in literature, Catholic University collects deeply in the medieval period and Catholic literature, as does Georgetown, which also subscribes to important databases such as Early English Books Online, Literature Online, Early American Imprints (Series 1), and Eighteenth Century Collections Online, among others. Because of their M.F.A. programs in creative writing, American and George Mason have extensive holdings in contemporary fiction
and poetry.

B. Other area resources

Faculty and graduate students have access and borrowing privileges at the Chesapeake Information and Research Library Alliance (CIRLA) libraries. Other local research opportunities include the Library of Congress general and special collections (manuscripts and rare books); the Folger Shakespeare Library; Howard University’s Moorland-Springarn Collection of scholarly materials on peoples of African descent; the National Archives; and other local special collections.

III. GENERAL COLLECTION GUIDELINES

A. Language

English is the primary language of materials selected. Translations from English into other languages will not be acquired.

B. Period of Coverage

All time periods are considered for the collection. The library generally does not purchase first novels or first collections of poetry.

C. Dates of Publication

Current scholarship and current critical editions of literature are emphasized. Older materials are acquired more selectively.

D. Geographical

There is no geographical limitation on the collection of materials. The library is currently collecting selected Washington Metropolitan Area writers.

E. Treatment of Subject

Emphasis is on scholarly and literary texts. Undergraduate, graduate, and specialist levels are included in the collection. Anthologies and textbooks are collected very selectively unless they become classic works in the field. Non-subject-specific English dictionaries are acquired to support student writing across the university. Reference materials are acquired selectively.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS AND FORMAT

Materials in several formats are collected, including monographs and serials. Video and
sound recordings are ordered upon request by faculty. If available and complete, electronic full text is the preferred format for journals. The purchase of digitized literary texts is determined by ease of use, features that enhance research, price, and relevance to curricula and research.

V. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Standard bibliographies, such as the *New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*, are used to determine which editions of primary texts to acquire.

Fiction, poetry, and nonfiction awarded significant literary prizes are acquired.

Graphic novels, particularly historical ones, are acquired with special funds that augment the collection budget for English and American literature.

The library’s collections in support of interdisciplinary areas and ethnic studies, women’s studies, and humanities are relevant to English, as is the Washington Writers Archive in Gelman’s Special Collections Department.

VI. DUPLICATION

In general, duplicate copies are only purchased for high-demand and/or major authors’ literary works.

VII. SELECTION METHODS

A. Selection of new materials generally occurs through five sources:

1. The approval plan through Blackwell’s Book Services is monitored on a regular basis to ensure the profile meets our needs. Any changes in the curriculum, as indicated through library impact statements, are examined against possible changes in the approval profile.

2. Firm orders are initiated by the collection development librarian. Journals in the field are scanned for relevant reviews. Firm order requests from faculty and students are reviewed and approved by the collection development librarian.

3. Standing orders, memberships and serial requests are initiated by the collection development librarian.

4. Gifts are accepted under the same guidelines as other acquisitions. They must fit the criteria spelled out in this collection development policy.

5. The Library participates in the Federal Depository Library Program; collection development librarians review documents available through the U.S.G.P.O. for access or inclusion in the collection.
B. Deselection

The deselection process can be initiated by Gelman staff, by faculty, or by the collection development librarian. Final decisions on deselection are made by the collection development librarian. Items are checked for general condition, availability of newer or replacement editions, and the continuing value of the content.

VIII. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CLASSIFICATION

Literary studies in English are primarily covered by the Library of Congress classifications P, PB, PE, PN, PR, and PS. Because of the interdisciplinary nature of the subject and the importance of cultural studies, relevant material can be found across the humanities and social sciences.