COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY STATEMENT
FORENSIC SCIENCES

Date: June 2005
Collection Development Librarian: Cynthia Holt

I. PURPOSE/PROGRAM SUPPORT

The Forensic Sciences Department is located in the Columbian College of Arts & Sciences. Materials are acquired to support teaching at the undergraduate level, teaching and research for graduate study, and faculty research interests. Current research emphases in the Department include forensic molecular biology, forensic chemistry, forensic toxicology, and crime scene investigation. The department supports study leading to a Master of Forensic Sciences with concentrations in Forensic Molecular Biology, Forensic Chemistry, Forensic Toxicology, and Crime Scene Investigation.

There is currently only one undergraduate class in the forensic sciences department but a topics course in drugs of abuse will be added in the near future.

In September 2003, there were five full-time and twenty-eight part-time faculty. September 2004, there were 178 graduate students in Forensic Sciences.

II. AREA RESOURCES

A. Washington Research Library Consortium (WRLC)

Marymount University offers a B.S. in Criminal Justice with a concentration in Forensic Science and an M.A. in Forensic Psychology; the library at this institution has been working to build a collection in this area, but it is only at the research level in forensic psychology.

B. Other area resources

Faculty and graduate students have access and borrowing privileges at Chesapeake Information and Research Library Alliance (CIRLA) libraries. Also in the area is the National Library of Medicine, which holds several forensic sciences journals not held in the Gelman Library. Students and faculty may enter the facility and use materials on site or request them via interlibrary loan.
III. GENERAL COLLECTION GUIDELINES

A. Language

The primary language of the collection is English. Multilingual publications are selected when works are not available only in English. English translations of works in other languages are acquired selectively.

B. Period of Coverage

Emphasis is on current scholarship.

C. Dates of Publication

Important retrospective works are acquired selectively.

D. Geographical

No areas are excluded, but emphasis is on work done in industrialized countries, particularly the United States.

E. Treatment of Subject

Emphasis is on graduate and research level material. Reference materials including periodical indexes, handbooks, encyclopedias, and dictionaries are important and are acquired selectively. Undergraduate level textbooks are ordinarily not purchased, although some recent texts may be accepted as gifts. Graduate level textbooks are acquired selectively. Accompanying instructors’ manuals and students’ solutions manuals are ordinarily not purchased. Standards are acquired selectively. Non-GWU dissertations are not normally acquired. Popular treatments are selectively purchased. Biographies and histories of the forensic sciences are acquired selectively. Collected works of major forensic scientists are acquired selectively.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS AND FORMAT

Acquisitions include periodicals, reference books, monographs, and monographic series. Of primary importance are journals, other serials, and advanced level monographs. Proceedings and transactions of conferences and symposia are acquired selectively. Collections of previously published articles are not selected. Dissertations are not generally acquired.

The bulk of the collection is still print but periodicals are being increasingly purchased as online subscriptions. Materials in other formats are not normally acquired.

V. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS
Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the forensic sciences, some materials acquired for forensic sciences also support graduate study and research in the fields of anthropology, biology, linguistics, chemistry, computer science, economics, law, sociology, statistics, and engineering. Refer to those policy statements for details, where one exists.

VI. DUPLICATION

In general, at least two copies of a title are purchased as the collection is used so heavily by students in this department.

VII. SELECTION METHODS

A. Selection of new materials generally occurs through 5 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

Much of the material relevant to the forensic sciences falls under the Library of Congress classification at HV8073-8079, HV 6693, RA 1061-1063.47, RA 1148, GN 69.8, BF 176, KF 9666.5, and KD 3492.