COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY STATEMENT

GEOGRAPHY

Date: January 2006

Collection Development Librarian: David Killian

I. PURPOSE/PROGRAM SUPPORT

The Geography collection supports the curricular and research needs of the Department of Geography, which offers undergraduate and graduate degrees through the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences.

The Department offers for undergraduates the Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in geography. Minors are available in both geography and geographic information systems. For graduates, the Master of Arts degree in the field of geography is offered.

The focus of research and education in the Department is on the relationships between the physical world and its occupation and modification by humans. Undergraduate coursework in the Department is grouped into four main areas: physical/environmental/resource geography, human geography, techniques, and regional geography. These four areas cover a variety of subjects. Physical/environmental/resource geography includes the study of climate, energy and water resources, environmental hazards, and geomorphology. Courses in human geography include cultural, political, military, urban, and population geography. Techniques of spatial analysis cover cartography, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and remote sensing. Study of these techniques is supported by the Department’s Spatial Analysis Lab.

Within regional geography, the emphasis of the Department is currently on North America, South Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The Department generally has a strong orientation toward international geography; its courses correlate with those in area studies programs and the Elliott School of International Affairs. Students from the Elliott School significantly populate geography classes.

For MA students, the focus of study is on the regional, international, and global effects of development. These students choose from among three emphases: environmental and resource issues, population and food production in the developing world, or urbanization and
transportation. Thesis and non-thesis options are available.

There are nine full-time and seven part-time faculty in the Department. There were 45 majors and 15 minors in geography among undergraduates last year. There were 11 Master’s degree students.

II. AREA RESOURCES

A. Washington Research Library Consortium (WRLC)

Faculty and students may utilize the collections of the member libraries of the Consortium either on-site or through the Consortium Loan Service. The main libraries of Georgetown University, American University, and George Mason University all have strong collections in geography.

B. Other area resources

Faculty members obtain and utilize information (e.g., data sets or maps) from a number of U.S. government agencies, including: the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Census Bureau, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency.

Internships, fieldwork, or other controlled assignments are available with agencies or organizations engaged in applied geography, including:
- National Geographic Society
- Environmental Protection Agency
- US Geological Survey
- World Bank
- Oxfam
- Library of Congress
- DC Planning Commission
- Private companies that specialize in Geographic Information Systems and cartography

The Geography and Map Reading Room of the Library of Congress holds the largest and most comprehensive cartographic collection in the world and is open to patrons conducting research.

Faculty and graduate students have access and borrowing privileges at the Chesapeake Information and Research Library Alliance (CIRLA) libraries. The libraries of the University of Maryland, the University of Delaware, and Johns Hopkins University all have significant holdings in geography.

III. GENERAL COLLECTION GUIDELINES
A. Language

English is the preferred language of the collection, but materials in Western European languages may selectively be acquired.

B. Period of Coverage

Materials pertaining to the contemporary period have the highest priority. Materials offering historical perspectives on current geographical concerns may also be acquired. As the Department offers coursework in historical geography, items on the geography of earlier periods may selectively be acquired.

C. Dates of Publication

Current scholarship (within the last five years) receives the highest consideration; older materials may selectively be acquired.

D. Geographical

Materials pertaining to all geographical areas are considered for inclusion in the collection. Regions that currently are of highest interest to faculty are North America, Latin America, South Asia, and Africa. Urban areas, especially in the developing world, are also of strong interest. Regions of relatively low priority at this time are East Asia, Oceania, and the polar regions.

E. Treatment of Subject

Scholarly materials, both current and retrospective, are preferred. Upper-undergraduate and graduate level materials are favored. Popular materials are acquired selectively. Textbooks are not normally purchased unless they are at the graduate level or survey geographical areas in which the library has limited coverage.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS AND FORMAT

Materials are collected in various formats, including: monographs, serials, videocassettes and DVDs, and digitized resources, such as electronic books, online article databases, and online statistical databases. Atlases are included as part of the collection.

V. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Map and atlas collections are supported by the Reference Department. (See the Reference Collection collection development policy.)
The Washingtoniana Collection of Special Collections, Gelman Library, holds maps related to the history of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

Videorecordings and DVDs used for geography classes are available in Gelman Media Resources.

VI. DUPLICATION

In general, duplicate copies of a title are not purchased, the operating principle being to purchase more titles rather than extra copies of individual titles. However, if demand warrants, e.g. reserve readings, duplicate copies are bought on a case by case basis. Additional copies of titles may be accepted as gifts.

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. 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

The following sections of the Library of Congress Classification System cover the majority
of the titles used by faculty and students in geography:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Geography (general), atlases, maps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>Mathematical geography, Cartography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GB</td>
<td>Physical geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GF</td>
<td>Human influences on the environment, Urban geography</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of geography, titles may also be found in these areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>History: General (for geographical history by region or country)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>History: America (for U.S. geographical history)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>History: America (for geographical history by region [particularly Latin America] or country)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GE</td>
<td>Environmental sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HD</td>
<td>Land use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HF</td>
<td>Economic geography (especially, globalization)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Transportation geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HT</td>
<td>City planning, Regional planning, Metropolitan areas, Urbanization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC</td>
<td>Political geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JV</td>
<td>Emigration and immigration, International migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QC</td>
<td>Climatology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UA</td>
<td>Military geography</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>