COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY STATEMENT

RELIGION

Date: June 2005
Collection Development Librarian: Deborah Gaspar

I. PURPOSE/PROGRAM SUPPORT

The collection supports teaching and research in the field of Religion, specifically as it relates to the curriculum and research interests of the Religion Department of the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences. The undergraduate degree awarded is a B.A. in Religion. Graduate degrees include an M.A. in Hinduism and Islam as The George Washington University participates in the Washington region’s Consortium of Universities Program. The department of Religion also supports the History Department for the Ph.D. in American Religious History.

The Religion Department is comprised of 6 full-time and 6 part-time faculty. Approximately 25 undergraduates and 3 graduate students declared Religion as their major recently.

II. AREA RESOURCES

A. Washington Research Library Consortium (WRLC)

Students and faculty may take advantage of the resources of the other members of the Washington Research Library Consortium either though direct borrowing or through the Consortium Loan Service. This is particularly relevant for students pursuing their master’s degree through the Consortium Program. Catholic University maintains a fine collection on Catholic religious literature. Likewise, Georgetown University’s Woodstock Theological Center Library houses a special collection of Catholic theological literature. Gelman’s I. Edward Kiev Judaica Collection contains 19th and 20th Century religious literature.

B. Other area resources

Faculty have access and borrowing privileges at the Chesapeake Information and Research Library Alliance (CIRLA) libraries. Resources available at the Library of Congress will also be of interest to faculty and students.
III. GENERAL COLLECTION GUIDELINES

A. Language

English is the primary language for collecting. Collecting in German, Arabic, Hebrew, and other Semitic languages is selective. Collecting in all other languages is very selective.

B. Period of Coverage

All time periods are considered for the collection.

C. Dates of Publication

The emphasis is on current scholarship. Sacred texts for key religions are included in original languages as well as authoritative translations.

D. Geographical

There is no geographical limitation on the collection of materials.

E. Treatment of Subject

Emphasis is on scholarly material. Undergraduate, graduate, and specialist levels are included in the collection. Textbooks are collected very selectively unless they become classic works in the field. Reference material, including dictionaries and encyclopedias, is acquired selectively.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS AND FORMAT

Materials in several formats are collected, including monographs and serials. Electronic journals are accessible through several databases including ATLA, Academic Search Premier, and Proquest Research Library. DVDs and other videos are ordered upon request by faculty.

V. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The library’s collections in support of classical languages and literatures, philosophy and history are relevant to the study of religion as well.

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.
VII. SELECTION METHODS

A. Selection of new materials generally occurs through 4 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.

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

Religion is primarily covered by the Library of Congress classifications BL through BX. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the subject, relevant material can be found across history (DE-DG, E), classical language (PA and PJ), and philosophy (B-BD) classifications as well.