

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT PLAN

THE LIBRARY AT WESLEY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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I. INTRODUCTION

About this Plan

Collection development is the ongoing intentional cultivation and curation of a library's resources aligned with the library's institutional mission. A library's collection development plan is the articulation of those factors which guide the lifecycle (acquisition, maintenance, and deaccession) of library resources and help grow and shape a library's collections. A collection development plan should govern and curate decisions regarding all library resources in any format (print or digital) and whether purchased, leased, or received as gifts.¹

Libraries must be responsive to institutional, professional, technological, educational, economic, and other forces in a changing society, and a library's collection development plan cannot be a static document. As a work in progress, it needs to be reviewed regularly and changed as necessary. The 2018 Collection Development Plan is a thorough revision of the Wesley Theological Seminary Collection Development Policy that was last updated in 2009. The nine years between these two iterations saw dramatic (if not tumultuous) changes in the economy and in theological education (and, more broadly, higher education), and new developments in library systems, services, and technologies. The revised collection development plan reflects new realities in theological librarianship at the seminary and responds to factors such as the disproportionate increase in publishing costs, the rise in prominence of open-access publishing, and the steady proliferation of e-resources (and an increased corresponding demand for access to them).

Wesley Theological Seminary

Wesley Theological Seminary is a graduate theological school of the United Methodist Church, and its primary focus is the education and training of men and women for Christian ministry. Situated in northwest Washington, DC, Wesley was established in 1958 when Westminster Seminary (founded 1881) relocated from Western Maryland College (now McDaniel College) to land next to American University. The seminary is anchored in its Methodist heritage but serves the broader church, as represented by the various denominations represented in the student body and faculty. The seminary seeks to ground learning in the scripture and traditions that provide the church's identity in the gospel, and to

1. Where a library's *holdings* are traditionally considered resources which a library owns, a *collection* or *collections* are the more comprehensive grouping of items owned, curated, accessed, or delivered as Library resources.

prepare students for the practice of ministry. In recognition of this mission, the seminary offers four degrees (the Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, Master of Theological Studies, and Doctor of Ministry) and a dual degree with American University, all tailored to fit varying vocational goals. In addition, the seminary offers programs for lay leadership and for continuing education. These degrees and programs reflect the school's emphasis on preparing those called to leadership in the church.

The Library at Wesley Theological Seminary

The library supports teaching, learning, and critical inquiry at Wesley Theological Seminary in service to the seminary's educational ministry and mission. The library building (constructed in 1959 and renovated in 2011 to feature a learning commons model) is a three-floor structure directly opposite Trott Hall. The great windows of the Reading Room look onto the campus courtyard and face Oxnam Chapel. The physical orientation of the library to the chapel serves as visible witness to the Wesleyan emphasis on unity of "knowledge and vital piety."

The library director and staff work closely with faculty, staff, and students to understand their needs. Library services are delivered in-person, over the telephone, and via email throughout the year. Library services are focused on improving critical inquiry skills and increasing access to theological research and resources in a constantly changing information environment. We take seriously the mandate to teach and form a seminary community that integrates faith and scholarship in theological education.

Library Collections

As a specialized academic collection at a Christian seminary, the library concentrates its efforts on acquiring resources for the study of theology and related domains. Library collections include over 250,000 volumes and hundreds of journals and the library provides access to thousands of journal articles in service to the study of theology and ministry. Library holdings are particularly strong in practical theological disciplines, Biblical studies, Wesleyan theology, and Methodist history, but the library's resources are ecumenical in scope and demonstrate a commitment to the breadth and depth of theological scholarship.

The library's Special Collections focuses on the history of Wesley Theological Seminary and the broader history of Methodism and Wesleyan studies. Special Collections include the faculty research collection, which highlights works by current and former Wesley faculty members; a Rare Book Room with rare bibles, hymnals, and publications of certain historical figures such as John Wesley; and Methodist history materials such as journals, conference proceedings and other Methodist historical records.

The library's collections are supplemented by millions of resources available through the Bender Library at American University, and the libraries of the Washington Theological Consortium, institutions which provide cooperative borrowing privileges for Wesley students,

staff, and faculty. The library also participates in an active interlibrary loan and document delivery service, providing access to materials from libraries all over the country.

PART II: GUIDELINES

A. The Library's Constituents

1. The library's primary users are those individuals at the center of seminary programs. Primary users include the seminary's faculty, students, staff, and administration.
2. The library's secondary users are external constituents engaged in theological research and who have established a formal relationship with the seminary or the library. Secondary users include (a) seminary graduates; (b) students, staff, and faculty of the Washington Theological Consortium; (c) students, staff, and faculty of American University; and (d) Special Researchers. The latter category is for individuals who have been granted both library access and limited borrowing privileges and are either local clergy, faculty or graduate students from seminaries and universities other than American University or the Washington Theological Consortium, and other independent researchers with valid research credentials and a demonstrated need for regular access to library resources
3. Library guests are occasional users of library resources. Library guests include the general public or persons whose requests for information originate in settings such as denominational, governmental, public, or corporate or other special libraries.
4. While secondary users and guests may benefit from library collections and services, the needs of our primary users take priority over other library constituents. Library services and our collection development strategy is ultimately oriented toward the primary users who are the focus of Wesley Theological Seminary's educational mission.

B. General Considerations

1. The collections of the library shall include materials that document the historic depth, the intellectual breadth, and the global expressions of religious thought and practice. Primary attention shall be devoted to identifying and acquiring materials that reflect the mission and ministry of the seminary to "equip persons for Christian ministry and leadership in the church and the world, to advance theological scholarship, and to model a prophetic voice in the public square."
2. General preference will be given to materials that are intended or useful for graduate study and professional ministry rather than works written for undergraduates or popular treatments of religious topics. Doctoral-level research will be selectively acquired as requested or otherwise recommended for inclusion.
3. Collection development at Wesley balances *access* and *ownership*. While ownership of a resource may be considered the gold standard of resource management, it is equally important that a library be able to efficiently and economically provide access to

resources for library patrons. Situations and circumstances may dictate stressing *access* over *ownership*, or vice versa.

4. Special attention shall be made to identify and acquire the works of scholars from traditionally underrepresented ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
5. The latest edition of library standards and/or best practices issued by the following associations should inform the library's Collection Development Plan:
 - a. Atla (formerly, The American Theological Library Association)
 - b. The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS)
 - c. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)
 - d. The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL)
 - e. The American Library Association (ALA)

C. Responsibilities for Collection Development

1. The Director of the Library is the primary selection officer, although specific responsibilities may be assigned to other seminary librarians as appropriate.
2. Seminary librarians are expected to recommend acquisitions based on individual expertise and interest and as they identify gaps in current collections or emerging needs of library patrons, particularly through research assistance and Interlibrary Loan & Document Delivery requests. (See further II.D, "Identifying and Evaluating Potential Acquisitions.")
3. Seminary faculty are considered subject specialists and their recommendations are particularly valuable, especially as faculty conduct new research, develop new classes or programs, or identify highly-regarded resources in their subject areas.

D. Identifying and Assessing Potential Acquisitions

1. The following materials shall be automatically acquired:
 - a. New publications from regular faculty.
 - b. Course textbooks (both required and recommended).
 - c. Materials requested by faculty in support of their research. (Expensive resources or materials that seem unlikely to have continued use may be acquired through Interlibrary Loan & Document Delivery.)
2. The following resources are valuable for identifying potential acquisitions:

- a. Vendor notifications based on collection development profiles.
 - b. Catalogs and announcements from publishers, especially those specializing in academic religious and theological publications.
 - c. Book reviews in professional or academic theology and religion periodicals, library trade publications (e.g., *Library Journal*), and select highly regarded literary reviews (e.g., *Times Literary Review* or *New York Review of Books*).
 - d. Recommendations from seminary faculty, staff, administration, students, and other library users.
 - e. Publications by guest speakers (including visiting instructors and chapel preachers).
 - f. Interlibrary Loan & Document Delivery requests.
 - g. Resources listed on new course proposals.
3. Potential acquisitions are evaluated with regard to their *information quality* or the suitability and fitness of the resource's content. A number of factors help establish an item's information and quality:
- a. *Authority*: What are the credentials of a work's author? (Do they have ecclesiastical standing, pastoral experience, academic expertise?) Is there a history of prior work? What is their publisher's reputation? (Are they a denominational or academic press, are they an imprint of a popular press?)
 - b. *Audience*: Who is the work's intended audience and how does this reflect on the work's content?
 - c. *Currency*: How new (or outdated) is the content?
 - d. *Review*: Is there evidence of peer review or editorial oversight/jurisdiction? Are there reviews from established trade, professional, or academic periodicals, or from authorities in the field?

E. Library Partnerships and Resource Sharing

- 1. Resources available through partnerships should supplement and complement the library's collections, particularly in areas that the library cannot develop, but not act as a substitute for local collection development, even if parts of the library's collections might duplicate resources owned by other partner libraries. Specifically:
 - a. Appropriate consideration shall be given to the existence of materials in the Washington Theological Consortium libraries that reflect the denominational

affiliation of each institution. No attempt will be made at Wesley to collect large amounts of denominational materials that are or should be available at another local library or that represent the unique programs of other institutions.

- b. Materials in subjects outside of religion and theology will be assessed with regard to their relationship to the curriculum and their availability at American University.

F. Languages

1. The primary language for new acquisitions is English. If a recommended resource in another language is not available in English translation, the non-English language original may be considered for acquisition.
2. Academic publications in other languages that relate to Wesleyan and Methodist studies shall be evaluated with regard to the work's perceived scholarly value and/or seminary needs.
3. Academic publications in other languages relevant to seminary demographics (e.g., Spanish or Korean) shall be evaluated in relationship to curricular initiatives and to the makeup of the student body.
4. Materials and resources that facilitate the study of biblical languages (such as lexicons, grammars, and concordances) shall be purchased in English. Select resources available in other languages relevant to seminary demographics (e.g., Spanish or Korean) shall be considered.

G. Formats

1. Both print and electronic resources play important roles in library collection development. Physical materials offer a sense of durability and contribute to a library's role in collecting for posterity. E-resources offer important benefits for library collection development, particularly with regard to enhancing access to the library collection beyond the walls of the library building and growing the collection beyond the physical footprint of the library building. Each type of resource and the decision to acquire electronic and/or print variants of an item requires consideration of different factors with regards to need, cost, accessibility, and user needs.
2. Print materials
 - a. In so far as possible, print materials should be on acid-free paper.
 - b. Paperback books of quality binding are preferred over hardbound, unless specific reasons dictate otherwise.

- c. Spiral and loose-leaf publications are avoided, but if they are purchased, they will be rebound before being made available to users.
- d. Books currently owned only in e-format which are required for Course Reserves shall have a print version added to the collection.

3. Electronic format

- a. E-resource acquisitions are controlled by multiple factors, including technological concerns, licensing agreements and other vendor or publisher restrictions beyond the library's control and have a demonstrable impact on the library's collection development plan.
- b. In addition to other stated collection development guidelines, materials in electronic format shall be evaluated according to expected use (particularly with regard to online education), ongoing maintenance costs (with regard to technology upgrades and/or subscription charges), and technological impact.
- c. Faculty research requests will be purchased as e-books.
- d. Where possible, resources placed on Course Reserves for online or hybrid classes shall be acquired as e-books.

4. Microform

- a. Microform materials may be purchased when the material is not available in any other format and when the item is in keeping with this collection development policy.

H. Journals and Periodicals

1. Periodicals remain an important avenue for keeping current with news and commentary on contemporary events as well as new insights in academic scholarship. At the same time, the academic journal industry has increased costs of subscription at a rate that far outpaces inflation and exceeds the library's budget.
2. While the Library provides access to a wide range of periodicals for the community and library patrons, it does so cautiously, with regard to pricing. Journals that support teaching and learning or are important for faculty research, or are otherwise identified as crucial to a comprehensive theological library are given preference. With regard to ephemera, important periodicals that offer news and social commentary play a role in the collection as well. However, the library will evaluate periodicals on an annual basis, considering relevance and cost. Journal articles are always available via Interlibrary loan and document delivery.

3. When possible and/or financially feasible, electronic access is the preferred means of subscription, as e-journals do not require physical processing or storage and are available to a wider audience. With regard to preservation, ephemera will typically not be collected long-term. Academic journals which are available electronically will not be collected long-term. Individual titles which are considered of enduring theological value may, at the Library's discretion, be bound and maintained in print irrespective of electronic access.

I. Gifts

1. Donations of library resources have played an important and valuable part of collection development at the library, but acceptance of gift books has implications on labor, staff time, and library space. Gifts should conform to the teaching and learning needs of the seminary and are subject to the selection criteria of this collection development policy. Materials that are outside of the scope of the policy will not be accepted.
2. Gifts of books and other materials are accepted upon the discretion of the Director of the Library. The library is not obligated to accept unsolicited gifts.
3. Items that are accepted become the property of the seminary. No guarantee shall be made that any specific gift item shall be added to the collection, nor can restrictions be placed upon gift items. The library has the right to retain, use, sell, donate, or otherwise dispose of gift materials at any point after receipt of the item.
4. The following items are not accepted:
 - a. Periodicals (e.g., journals or magazines)
 - b. Duplicate copies of books in the collection
 - c. Outdated or superseded resources
 - d. General encyclopedias or dictionaries
 - e. Outdated media or technology
 - f. Items in poor condition or extensively marked up
 - g. Vanity press or self-published works
5. The library will send a statement to the donor indicating the number and kinds of items received but will not assign any monetary value to the gift. Internal Revenue Regulations may require that potential donors acquire an independent appraisal of gift materials before giving them to the library.
6. The library will not maintain an itemized list of gifts received.

7. Gift books that are in poor condition or are moldy or dirty will not be retained.

J. Special Collections (Including Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Archives)

1. The library does not seek to acquire rare books, manuscripts or manuscript collections, or archival collections. *Rare books* are so considered primarily by a combination of factors, including intrinsic value, age, scarcity, and/or market availability.) *Manuscripts* are considered hand-written materials, unpublished documents, or draft materials of published works. *Archival collections* include personal or institutional records considered to have enduring value for historical research.
2. The library owns some unique materials dealing with the history of Wesleyan theology or Methodist studies in the United States. Within budgetary and space restraints, the library may acquire materials of demonstrable value that complement and supplement the unique items in its collections. However, there is no active program of adding additional manuscripts, and the library does not seek to own materials that are normally deposited in Methodist Annual Conference archives or in the Archives of the United Methodist Church.
3. While there are other unique materials in the library, such as a small collection of manuscripts, there is no active program of adding additional manuscripts. Because of space and staff limitations, there is at present no formal program of acquiring materials for the seminary archives, currently housed in the library's Seminary History Room.
4. Acquisition of materials for special collections should have a demonstrable significant impact on the library's support of teaching and learning at Wesley, or on the preservation of seminary history.
5. The Faculty Authors Collection contains the major published works of core faculty and administration, reflecting their work at Wesley Theological Seminary.

K. Copies for Programs, Offices, or Individuals

1. The library's acquisitions budget targets items intended to contribute to long-term collection development or for widespread access by the seminary community. The library does not purchase resources that are intended for use in any seminary office or program, including faculty offices.

L. Theses and Dissertations

1. Each candidate for the Doctor of Ministry degree must deposit a final, approved copy of their thesis (Project Paper) at the library.
2. The library will acquire (as possible) print copies of PhD dissertations of Wesley Theological Seminary regular faculty.

3. Unless specific titles are identified and requested by faculty, the library will not acquire Doctor of Ministry theses or PhD dissertations from other institutions.
4. The library does not collect papers written by Wesley Seminary Master's degree students, unless specifically recommended by a faculty member.

M. Multiple Copies

1. Only one copy of each item selected for the library will be purchased or retained, except for those items for which both reference and circulating copies are necessary, for items placed on "permanent" reserve (i.e., used every semester and effectively out of circulation), or for which exceptionally high demand is fairly certain.

N. Replacement Copies

1. Items that are declared lost or damaged will be replaced if the item is still required to meet the needs of the library's primary users.
2. Out-of-print items may be replaced with used copies if the item is still considered important for the collection.
3. The library may send brittle materials to a vendor that provides preservation photocopying and binding services.

O. Denominational Materials

1. The library shall collect materials that document the history, practice, and polity of the worldwide Methodist communion.
2. There shall be no attempt to acquire the works of every Methodist author or to have a comprehensive collection of official publications of the various Methodist churches throughout the world.
3. Selected monographic items that are part of Methodist adult religious education curricula may be added to the permanent collections of the library. The library does not collect curricular materials intended for youth or children.
4. Publications specifically related to the work of other denominations shall be collected in a limited manner, except for those items whose subject matter is especially relevant to the curricular emphases or program areas at Wesley, such as urban ministry, ecumenical dialogue, religion and the arts, etc.
5. The library will generally acquire published histories of Methodist congregations in the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference, in the Virginia Annual Conference, and in other conferences well represented in the student body. The library will acquire

published histories of Methodist congregations in other geographic areas on a selective basis.

P. Discards and Ongoing Maintenance of the Library Collection

1. Curating a collection and effective stewardship of library resources involves not only intentional acquisition of new resources but systematic culling and de-acquisition of unneeded materials, including but not limited to:
 - a. Worn, badly damaged, or defaced items, especially those that can be replaced.
 - b. Multiple copies no longer needed.
 - c. Items no longer needed because of curricular developments at Wesley Theological Seminary.
 - d. Journals for which (a) there is no adequate indexing service; (b) are accessible electronically; and/or (c) which are not essential to meet the needs of the primary users.
 - e. Items with no significant research value for the library's primary constituents.
 - f. Outdated or superseded materials.

III. COLLECTION PRIORITIES & LEVELS

A. Levels of Collecting Intensity

Libraries cannot collect all resources on all subjects, and even a library with a narrowly defined subject area (whether a theology library or a medical library) has must make decisions regarding what kinds of resources will be collected within various subjects or sub-topics. The library relies upon the RLG Conspectus, a system that establishes increasing levels of collection depth for different subjects or fields of study.² The determination of collection levels for various subjects should reflect demand for resources in light of an institution's mission and programming needs. There cannot be absolute delineations between the levels of collecting, and these should be seen as aspirational guidelines.

LEVEL 0: OUT OF SCOPE

This level encompasses in which the library does not actively collect. Wesley Theological Seminary is an institution of higher education that prepares individuals for religious leadership, so the vast majority of the library's resources will be in theology and religious studies.

Electronic resources which provide access to current or classic multidisciplinary resources in the humanities and social sciences that fall outside these scope notes are valuable sources of information. When the library is able to acquire or provide access to such resources, such activity is intended to supplement library holdings, but do not represent a major effort to collect outside the areas articulated by the current Collection Development Plan.

LEVEL 1: MINIMAL LEVEL

Relatively few titles are acquired in these subjects, except for where they clearly intersect with religion or the practice of ministry or are required for course instruction.

LEVEL 2: BASIC INFORMATION

These resources included introductory works (including dictionaries and encyclopedias) in a variety of fields relevant to theological research and/or the practice of ministry, but which do not require extensive or comprehensive resources for teaching and learning. These resources define subjects and provide guidance for continued research but are not sufficient on their own for sustained research. Wesley students and faculties who need resources in these subjects beyond the library's collection depth are encouraged to use the Bender Library at American University or to request materials through Interlibrary Loan & Document Delivery.

² The Research Library Group (founded 1975) established the RLG Conspectus, a common scheme of collecting levels. Although the RLG stopped updating the Conspectus in 1997 formally joined OCLC in 2006, many institutions (including Wesley Theological Seminary and the Library of Congress) continue to use the RLG Conspectus collection levels.

LEVEL 3: INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

Collections at this level are materials deemed necessary to support graduate-level research in theology and religious studies and for the practice of ministry. Resources for a given field include complete critical works by important authors, as well as scholarship (e.g., monographs and reference sources) deemed valuable for writing master's level theses and student papers or for independent study.

LEVEL 4: RESEARCH

Research-level collecting suggests advanced collection needs, particularly for dissertation or post-graduate level research. This level of collection includes a comprehensive selection of reference tools and a robust selection of monographs, journals, databases, and other sources of new and emerging research studies. The library does not collect broadly at this level in any field, but is responsive to requests from faculty for their own research or recommendations for works that could be of value for Wesley students.

LEVEL 5: COMPREHENSIVE

Comprehensive coverage includes all available material on a given subject, in multiple languages, and includes both new/emerging works as well as historic and/or unpublished resources.

Although the library does not have an acquisitions program for the seminary's history room, any resources relevant to the founding of the seminary are welcome additions to the collection.

B. Scope Notes & Indicators

BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

<i>Subject Heading</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
Bible--Modern texts and versions--English	3
Bible--Works about the Bible	3
Bible--New Testament	3
Bible--Hebrew Bible (LC: "Old Testament")	3
Bible--Apocryphal Books (Hebrew Bible)	3
Bible--Apocryphal Books (New Testament)	3
Bible--Archaeology	3
Bible--Language--Greek	3
Bible--Language--Hebrew	3
Bible--Language--Aramaic	3
Judaism--Pre-Talmudic Jewish literature (non-Biblical)	3

CHRISTIAN TEACHING & FORMATION

<i>Subject Heading</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
Christian life--Study and teaching	
Youth ministry	3
Faith development	3
Pastoral theology--Study and teaching	3
Religious education	3
Spiritual direction--Christianity	2
Spirituality--Christianity	3
Theology--Study and teaching	3
Theory and practice in education	2

HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY

<i>Subject Heading</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
America--Church history	3
America--Religion	3
Christianity--Early Christian Literature	3
Christianity--History--Early and medieval	3
Christianity--History--Modern period	3
Civilization--Classical	3
Methodism--America	3
Methodism--World	3
United States--Church history	3

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE & MINISTRY

<i>Subject Heading</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
Church management	3
Church polity	3
Missions [missiology]	3
Theology, practical	3

CHRISTIAN ETHICS/SOCIOLOGY

<i>Subject Heading</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
Ethics	3
Bioethics	3
Church and state--United States	3
Christianity and politics--United States	3

Mission and missiology	3
Religion and politics	3
Religion and sociology	3
Sociology	1
Urban churches	3

PRACTICE IN MINISTRY & MISSION

<i>Subject Heading</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
Christian leadership	3
Clergy--Office of	3
Clergy--Training of	3
Pastoral theology--fieldwork	3
Pastoral theology--case studies	3

PASTORAL CARE & COUNSELING

<i>Subject Heading</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
Christianity--Psychology	3
Counseling psychology	2
Death [dying, and end of life]	2
Family systems therapy	2
Pastoral care	3
Pastoral counseling	3
Psychology	1

PREACHING & WORSHIP

<i>Subject Heading</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
Church year	3
Preaching	3
Liturgics	3
Public worship	3
Sacraments	3

RELIGION & THE ARTS

<i>Subject Heading</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
Aesthetics	1
Liturgy and the Arts	3
Religion and poetry	3
Religion in literature	3

Art--Religious aspects	3
Music--Religious aspects--Christianity	3
Sacred music	3
Hymns	3

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

<i>Subject Heading</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
Christianity and culture	3
Christian philosophy	3
Doctrinal development, Christian	3
Doctrinal theology--specific doctrines (e.g., Ecclesiology, Salvation)	3
Faith and reason--Christianity	3
Philosophy and religion	3
Philosophy, Ancient	2
Philosophy, Medieval	2
Philosophy and religion	3
Religion and science	3
Theology--Study and teaching--Methodist Church	4

WORLD RELIGIONS/ECUMENICS

<i>Subject Heading</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
Christianity and other religions	3
Ecumenical movement	3
Judaism--Sources of Jewish religion	2
Judaism--General	1
Mythology	2
Sacred books	3
World Christianity	3
World religions	2

LIBRARIES & INFORMATION LITERACY

<i>Subject Heading</i>	<i>Indicator</i>
Academic libraries--administration	1
Information literacy--study and teaching	2
Quantitative methods	2
Qualitative methods	2
Theological libraries	3