

Mary and Jeff Bell Library

Electronic Resources Collection Development Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Electronic Resources Collection Development Policy is to direct the addition, maintenance, and removal of electronic resources to the existing library collection through the following:

Acknowledging that differences between versions are created by packaging content in various formats. Acknowledging that there are limits to the Library's ability to provide access to materials in electronic formats.

Guiding the selection of electronic resources by identifying the characteristics of useful and usable resources.

Adding discipline, consistency, and transparency to the process of selecting, acquiring, licensing, organizing, announcing, maintaining, and evaluating electronic resources.

Definitions

These definitions are provided to clarify what is meant by the use of the following terms in this policy.

Announcing - making users aware of the availability of, location of, content of, usefulness of, and how to use an electronic resource (usually recently acquired).

Acquiring - purchasing and/or providing access to materials in the Library's collection, including free resources.

Database - A large, regularly updated file of digitized information (bibliographic records, full-text documents, directory entries, images, statistics, etc.), sometimes related to a specific subject or field, consisting of records of uniform format organized for ease and speed of search and retrieval and managed with the aid of database management system (DBMS) software that includes an internal mechanism (search interface) for searching based on proprietary metadata. Content may be created by the publisher or be an aggregation of material published by other entities. Databases are often accessible online through the Internet.

Electronic Book (e-book, e-library book)- a digital version of a traditional print book, or a book-like electronic publication with no print counterpart, designed to be read on a personal computer or an e-book reader.

Electronic Journal (e-journal, e-magazine, e-zine, e-serial)- a digital version of a print journal, or a journal-like electronic publication with no print counterpart, made available via the Web, e-mail, or other means of Internet access. Includes electronic versions of popular magazines, newsletters, newspapers, and zines.

Electronic Resource - materials that require computer mediation in order to access their content and make it useful.

Evaluating - regularly reviewing the continued usefulness of each electronic resource.

Licensing - controlling the use of a resource by negotiating a formal written contract between a library and a vendor for the lease of one or more proprietary (copyrighted) bibliographic resources, usually for a fixed period of time and usually in exchange for payment of an annual subscription fee or per-search charge.

Maintaining - keeping library electronic resources operable and the information contained within them accessible.

Newsletter - A serial publication consisting of no more than a few pages, devoted to news, announcements, and current information of interest primarily to a specialized group of subscribers or members of an association or organization who receive it as part of their membership available in print and/or online and/or by email. Most periodical indexes and bibliographic databases do not cover newsletter content.

Organizing - the arrangement of resources in order to provide the most effective access to them.

Selecting - Determining which materials should be added to the library collection in order to develop a balanced collection of materials to meet the information needs of university faculty, staff and students in accordance to the library's mission statement and the General Collection Development Policy.

Website - An information resource suitable for the Internet which is accessible through a web browser. The content is formatted with a markup language and often provides navigation to other web pages via (hypertext) links. Websites are differentiated from online databases by their general lack of internal database management system (DBMS) software although they may have a "search this site" box (powered by external software like Google, Yahoo!, Ask.com, etc.) that allows a keyword search of the site.

- Internal websites are sites whose content is created and maintained by library personnel.
- External websites are sites whose content is not created and maintained by library personnel.

Scope

Given the broad definition of an electronic resource above, the purpose of this section is to clarify which types of electronic resources are covered by this policy. Two distinctions will help make this clarification. The first distinction is between the work of library staff and the work of library users. The second distinction is between information resources that are used to find and inform users' academic work, and practical tools with which they do their academic work.

The distinction between library staff and library users is not always clear. It is not necessarily a distinction between individuals but rather a distinction between roles and the tools used to perform those roles. There are instances in which library staff are also students and/or faculty of the University. The role of library staff member requires the use of certain tools and information resources in order to fulfill job duties. The purpose of this policy is not to guide decisions about this type of tool or resource. This policy is meant to guide the addition, maintenance, and removal of electronic resources that are used to find and make accessible information that informs the work of library users.

The second distinction is based on the purpose of an electronic tool or resource. The library provides electronic resources to users the primary purpose of which is to manipulate information. In this category fall software like the Microsoft Office Suite, the Adobe Reader, Adobe Photoshop, Internet Explorer, and WinZip. The purpose of this policy is not to guide decisions about this type of tool or resource. This policy is meant to guide the addition, maintenance, and removal of electronic resources that are used to find and make accessible information that informs the work of library users.

Thus, the scope of this policy extends only to those electronic resources that are used to find and make assessable information that informs the work of library users.

Specifics regarding individual e-materials are listed below the [Selection Criteria](#) section.

Principle access points and provision of access

In order to provide consistent, useful access to electronic resources, the library designates a single, primary principle access point for each type of resource (web page, e-journal, and database).

Principle access points for databases The principle access point for databases is the library databases page (<http://rattler.tamucc.edu/elecres/index.php>) where databases are presented alphabetically by title and in subject groupings and resource type groupings. The library's ability to present subject and resource type groupings will be improved (categories expanded, etc.) with the full implementation and integration of the Metalib federated search tool into the library website.

Principle access points for e-books The principle access points for individual e-books is the library online catalog, Portal.

Principle access points for e-journals The principle access point for e-journals is the Periodical Holdings List. With the establishment of the SFX OpenURL link resolver and the online Periodical Holdings List, providing access to e-journals, particularly online collections of e-journals is no longer necessary.

Principle access points for websites The principle access point for web sites are subject guides (<http://rattler.tamucc.edu/electres/resourceguides/searchguides.html>) and departmental web pages.

Strategic Selection Criteria

The cost of an electronic resource is one point among many to be considered when making selection decisions. The fact that an electronic resource is free from cost to the library is not, by itself, sufficient reason to add it to the library collection.

The reverse is also true; selection of an electronic resource that has a high cost should not necessarily be immediately rejected, particularly if there are unique benefits that would accrue from the purchase such as accreditation of an academic unit or participation in a consortium.

Specific Selection Criteria

CD/DVDs

Sound Recordings

CDs are the Library's preferred format for sound recordings. It is the only format for which the Library maintains the equipment required to access information stored as a sound recording.

Data Recordings

CDs are not the Library's preferred format for data and/or software applications. For data recordings, the preferred format is web based data files. For software applications the preferred format is web based.

Video Recordings

DVDs are the Library's preferred format for video recordings. It is the only format for which the Library maintains the equipment required to access information stored as a video recording.

For content selection criteria for CD and DVD purchases, please refer to the Library's General Collection Development Policy and to individual subject polices.

Databases

Content decisions: The extent to which the resource in question either directly or obliquely supports specific areas of the educational and/or research objectives of the university will be evaluated based on the criteria established in that subject area's collection development policy. If the resource in question fails in some way to align with these criteria, librarians have the discretion to judge whether the resource may possess other qualities that distinguish it and which would add value to our electronic collection.

Cost: Cost is almost always a consideration in the decision to purchase a new database. This is more often the case than with monographic purchases because of the recurring financial commitment that a subscription requires and also because freely available databases (as defined by this policy) are fairly rare.

Access: Access is fundamental consideration that is comprised of several additional criteria.

- *Remote Access* The ability for users to access databases from off campus continues to grow in importance given our status as a commuter campus and the continued growth of distance education. For resources that require authentication, IP recognition is preferred. Resources, especially subscription databases, that do not offer IP recognition are less desirable than those that do.
- *Simultaneous users* The number of users who may access a resource at a given time can have a large impact on access. Does the system have different "numbers of seats" available for on-campus or remote users? In descending order of preference, we prefer unlimited simultaneous users, a large number simultaneous users, or a small number of simultaneous users. The decision about number of simultaneous users will depend on cost but also on expected usage of the database.
- *Access vs. ownership* For fee-based resources, what exactly does the fee pay for? Does the fee include perpetual access to (ownership of) the content or does it only include access to the content for the duration of the subscription? If perpetual access is purchased, where will the content reside, with the publisher or with the library? Perpetual access (ownership) is preferred. The library does not own the content of freely available databases.
- *Interlibrary loan rights* Does the vendor/publisher permit the library's ILL department to distribute copies according to the normal and proper procedures of interlibrary loan?
- *License or contract* Is the library required to sign a license agreement or access contract in order to provide access to the database to users? License review and negotiation is an expensive process in terms of Library and University resources and this should be taken into consideration along with the needs of library users for timely access to databases.

- *Evaluation* Renewal decisions are often based on the ability to assess the value of a database to users. Therefore there is a heavy preference for databases for which the vendor provides statistical data that describe how often the database is being accessed. Vendor compliance with Project COUNTER's standards for reporting usage is also preferred. Since freely available databases typically do not provide usage statistics, these databases will be evaluated on the remaining criteria in this policy.
- *Interoperability* The more ways in which a given resource will integrate with currently existing library resources, the better. Databases that are OpenURL compliant are preferred as are databases for which MARC records are available.

Electronic Books

The library prefers printed formats over electronic formats for individual monographic purchases. For selection criteria for monographic purchases, please refer to the Library's General Collection Development Policy and to individual subject policies.

Electronic Journals

As stated above, for the purposes of this policy, an electronic journal is defined as being a digital version of a print journal, or a journal-like electronic publication with no print counterpart, made available via the Web, e-mail, or other means of Internet access. The distinction is important to selection decisions and should be the one of the first pieces of information a selector considers about an e-journal.

In either case, the following criteria must be considered:

- Content decisions, that is, the decision whether or not the topics covered by a journal support the educational and/or research missions of the library and the university should be made based on the selection criteria outlined in each individual subject collection development policy. Judgments of quality such as whether a journal is considered to be a core title in its discipline may be supported by information contained in Ulrich's or Magazines in Libraries.
- Cost is almost always a consideration in the decision to purchase a new subscription, more so than with monographic purchases because of the recurring financial commitment that a journal subscription requires. At the time that this policy is being written, the Library's serials budget is static. New subscriptions are added rarely and almost always accompanied by an equivalent reduction in some other part of the Library budget (for example the cancelling of an equivalently priced journal subscription or the reduction of library services or student assistant hours). For this reason, freely available, open access e-journals are preferred.
- Whether or not the contents of the journal are covered in indexes to which the library subscribes should be seriously considered. The lack of inclusion in library subscribed indexes significantly reduces the usefulness of the journal to library users.

In cases when a journal is available in more than one format (e.g. print and/or microform as well as electronic), the following additional criteria should be considered:

- Does the library subscribe to the journal in any other format?
- Is the selector suggesting that the Library add a subscription to the e-journal in addition to any current subscriptions to the journal in other formats? Or is the selector recommending that the Library purchase a subscription to the e-journal to replace any current subscriptions in other formats? A case could be made for either possibility and there is currently no preference as long as both possibilities are considered.
- Is the fee to upgrade to the e-journal version reasonable? How expensive would it be to cancel the subscription to the print or microform version in favor of a subscription to the e-journal version?
- Is there a preferred format among users? Several ways that this might be determined is by usage statistics or informal comments from users if the library is currently subscribing to the journal in another format. Does expected usage warrant the selection of a particular format or the addition of an additional format?
- Is content in all versions/formats identical? There may be occasions where subscribing to the e-journal version of a journal may be warranted if the content of the e-journal version contains information that is unavailable in the print or microform version.

In cases when the journal is not available in any other format or once a preference for e-journal version is established, the following additional selection criteria should be considered:

- What is the overall quality of the web site? For example,
 - If images, photographs, or other forms of non-text data are essential parts of articles, are the color and detail presented with acceptable clarity and accuracy?
 - Is the site easy to navigate?
 - Are there any especially desirable features present (e.g. tables of contents or alerting services)?
- Is there a restriction on the number of simultaneous users of the e-journal? Preference will be given to those e-journals with no such restriction.
- How are authorized users identified (what is the method of authentication)? Preference will be given to those e-journals that use IP recognition to identify authorized users over those e-journals that use passwords or referring URLs to do so.
- Does the subscription include access to the e-journal's backfiles? Preference will be given to those e-journals that provide access to backfiles of a journal either through open access or as a benefit of owning a current subscription.
- Does the subscription include a guarantee of permanent access to the volumes and issues purchased or will all access cease if (when) the

subscription is cancelled? Preference will be given to those e-journals that provide a guarantee of permanent access.

- How reliable is the publisher and how stable is the website where the e-journal is published and archived? Preference will be given to stable publishers who make reasonable efforts to maintain access.
 - Do they appear to make reasonable efforts to maintain the information and upgrade to new storage and access technology as warranted?
 - Is access to the e-journal reliable (e.g. does the server crash all the time)?
 - Does the publisher provide advanced notice of maintenance or other down time?
 - Are electronic issues published/made available in a timely manner? Do they appear before or after receipt of the print version if one exists?
 - Does the publisher provide adequate technical support for their website?
- Is any client side software required to view the content of the e-journal? Preference will be given to those e-journals that do not require special handling or software installations on Library workstations.
- Is the website on which the e-journal is published compliant with ADA accessibility requirements? Preference will be given to those e-journals that are accessible to library users with visual, hearing, and other impairments.
- Is the e-journal included in the Library's electronic journal management system? Currently the library subscribes to Ebsco's A-to-Z Service to manage access to journal subscriptions in all formats and make them available to library users. It is particularly important that the Library be able to provide access to the e-journal through an e-journal management system in order to obtain durable URLs to link to the e-journal because the Library currently lacks the resources to conduct link checking on non-durable URLs. A high preference will be given to e-journals that are accessible through the Library's e-journal management system or that provide access via durable URLs.
- Will the library be required to negotiate and agree to a new license agreement in order to access the e-journal? While this requirement does not preclude the purchase of an e-journal that requires a new license agreement, selectors should be aware that this adds quite a bit of processing time and effort for Periodicals / Electronic Resources staff and make their selections accordingly.
 - Does the license allow for fair use of the journal contents including making the contents available via InterLibrary Loan?
 - Does the license exclude, modify or affect any of the Library's rights under copyright law?
- Are usage statistics provided by the publisher? Preference will be given to those e-journals that provide the Library with usage statistics on which to

base decisions about the relative usefulness of the e-journal to Library users.

Government Documents- Electronic resources received through the federal and state depository programs are subject to government mandated requirements, criteria, and conditions unique to those programs. As far as is possible their selection will be based on the criteria described in this policy. In cases of conflict between this policy and government mandated requirements, criteria, and conditions, the government's policies will take precedence.

Electronic Newsletter (e-newsletter) - Because of their ephemeral quality, e-newsletters will be generally not be added to the collection. Decisions concerning individual titles will be made by the serials librarian, subject specific librarian and/or library director.

Web Pages - There are two categories of web pages:

- Internal websites are sites whose content is created and maintained by library personnel.
- External websites are sites whose content is not created and maintained by library personnel.

The purpose of this policy is to guide selection decisions regarding external web pages; internal web pages will not be addressed.

An external web page is deemed valuable when it broadens, enriches, and compliments the Library's collection and supports the academic work and research of the University. Content decisions, that is, the decision whether or not the topics covered by a web page support the educational and/or research missions of the library and the university should be made based on the selection criteria outlined in each individual subject collection development policy. Most web pages and sites are freely available but in instances when access is fee-based, cost should be taken into consideration. In general, freely available pages and sites are preferred. [Note that selection criteria for web pages and sites which form part of the access interface for a database or e-journal are addressed in those sections of this policy.]

It is assumed that librarian liaisons (selectors) are adept at making judgments about the quality of a web page or web site and will select for inclusion only those sites that are of high quality. Factors which will be considered and given preference when evaluating web pages and web sites include:

- Access: consistently available, stability
- Authority: purpose (commercial or educational), author credentials, organizational credentials
- Coverage: depth, uniqueness, omissions
- Currency: regularity of updates in necessary, working links
- Design: well organized, clear instructions, uncluttered appearance

- Objectivity: site intent (to inform, to persuade, to sell), multiple viewpoints

Note that External web pages and sites linked to from the Library's web site are separate and independent from the Library. The Library exercises no control over the content of the information provided by the producers of those sites.

Evaluation and deselection

Databases: Database usage (and cost per search for fee based databases) is reviewed by the Periodicals / Electronic Resources Department monthly. These statistics are currently available to library staff upon request and are occasionally highlighted at reference meetings. Full database reviews using the criteria outlined in this policy currently occur on an irregular basis. Deselection occurs most often based on external conditions such as the exclusion of a particular database from a consortial purchase (like TexShare) or renewal.

E-journals: E-journal usage is reviewed by the Periodicals / Electronic Resources Department monthly. These statistics are currently available to library staff upon request. Full e-journal reviews using the criteria outlined in this policy currently occur on an irregular basis. Deselection occurs most often based on external conditions like a publisher removing their journal from an aggregation (database) or in other ways changing their access model (i.e. requiring that we pay for the online version of a journal that had previously been available for free with the print subscription). E-journal deselection can also occur when a consortial subscription is not renewed.

Websites Websites are reviewed using the criteria outlined in this policy by the librarian liaisons as they update subject guides and department web pages. This usually occurs annually.

Procedures for acquiring and integrating new electronic resources

Databases: Trials are often used to evaluate databases. The Periodicals / Electronic Resources department will attempt to arrange a trial of a database at the request of library staff or library users. Working with the Systems department, the trial database is made available on the library web site. Feedback is collected and price information requested and retained until such time as a purchase decision is made.

Once a database to be added to the collection is identified, any site licenses or access contracts are reviewed by the Serials / Electronic Resources Librarian and then negotiated and executed by the University Purchasing Department. Serials / Electronic Resources staff then work with the database vendor, the librarian liaison to the subject area covered by the database, and the Systems Department to complete a database information sheet on the database. The database information sheet is forwarded to the Systems Department for incorporation into the library databases page. The Serials / Electronic Resources

Librarian activates the database in the SFX link resolver and the Metalib federated search engine.

E-journals: Once an e-journal to be added to the collection is identified, any site licenses or access contracts are reviewed by the Serials / Electronic Resources Librarian and then negotiated and executed by the University Purchasing Department. Serials / Electronic Resources staff then confirm access (on campus and remote), troubleshoot any errors and add the link to the Periodical Holdings List.

Websites: Once a website to be included on a resource guide or departmental web page is identified, it should be brought to the attention of the librarian liaison and/or department head who is responsible for the subject area or departmental web pages to which the site is pertinent. Librarian liaisons and/or department heads are responsible for incorporating the site into the resource guides and departmental web pages that they are responsible for maintaining. Web pages are updated in MS Word using the “track changes” feature. Resource Guides updated using MS Word and then saved as PDF documents then edited by the reference librarian in charge of those guides. The changed document is routed to the Systems Department for publishing on the library web site.

Approved by the Library Director 12/08/06.