



Policy Title: Learning Resource System Development Policy – Library Materials

Policy Number: LIB.101

Policy Owner: VP for Academic Affairs

Responsible Office: Library

Revision Date: 7/15/2017

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy stems from the institution's philosophy that effective student development and learning must be facilitated by supporting materials and services for the University's academic programs and curriculum in accordance with University policies and accreditation standards. This philosophy is necessary to maintain the quality of education and continuing professional development of the University's students and faculty.

This policy provides assistance and guidance to administrators and stakeholders who are responsible for the continuous development of the library's portion of the learning resource system (LRS).

2. Policy

The mission of the NAU Library is to assist students in their search for attaining knowledge by providing information resources and services that encourage learning, support education, and promote intellectual growth. The library's main function is to meet student and faculty information and research needs. This is accomplished by

- providing access to books, databases, audiovisual materials and technology to enable effective instruction, support student success, and inspire community innovation.
- creating an environment that encourages questions, promotes reading, and facilitates group learning and individual study.
- offering instruction to support NAU's programs and curriculum to help foster critical thinking and research skills, preparing individuals for a lifetime of learning and global citizenship.

3. Definitions

Learning Resource System

A Learning Resource System (LRS) is an information network or commons providing information and support services for educational purposes. A typical LRS may include the following:

- Library (including circulation of print and nonprint resources, space for individual/group study, bibliographic instruction services, reference services)
- Computer and network support services
- Audiovisual equipment services
- Distance Education technology support

Student Development

Robert Rodgers defines *student development* as "the ways that a student grows, progresses, or increases [their] developmental capabilities as a result of enrollment in an institution of higher education."¹

¹ Rodgers, R.F. (1990). Recent theories and research underlying student development. In D.G. Creamer (Ed.), *College student development: Theory and practice for the 1990's* (pp. 27-79). Alexandria, VA: American College Personnel Association.

4. Procedures

Development

Development decisions for the library's resources are made by the librarian, in conjunction with faculty and administration, chiefly the Provost; academic coverage, usage, condition, and budget are all taken into consideration. Maintenance of the inventory is the librarian's responsibility, with welcome input from patrons, faculty and administration. The budget is determined by the librarian and the university's administration with collaboration with department chairs and faculty. Budget process begins in early spring semester of each academic year and finalized in the month of May. All units' budgets are reviewed and compiled by the Chief Financial Officer. The compiled financial plan is presented to and reviewed by the President. The final financial plan is taken to the Board of Trustees for final approval.

Assessment Strategies

Assessment of the collections' effectiveness and needs for improvement is achieved through the librarian's analysis of materials usage, library statistics and anecdotal evidence/qualitative surveys.

- **Materials usage:** Weeding is the process used by librarians to maintain collections; when a collection is weeded, each item is considered in terms of currency, subject coverage and usage. Circulation reports give insight to which materials are being used and the frequency of usage; this can be helpful when determining which materials should be either updated or removed from the collection. Weeding is also a critical component of collection development in that when items are removed, a decision is made to replace the removed item with more current materials or something that is more relevant to the current curriculum and/or patron demand. This activity helps the Librarian to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the materials collections.
- **Library statistics:** Statistics are a critical component of librarianship because that information drives decision-making in terms of budget, personnel and services. NAUL gathers hourly statistics about patron behaviors: visits, computer usage, reference assistance, space usage, textbook checkouts, etc. NAUL also collects information from its integrated library system (ILS) about the circulating physical collection (as referenced above), as well as information from its database vendors concerning usage. Analysis of this data helps to assess how the NAUL can best support patron services and activities (for example, facility operating hours).
- **Anecdotal evidence/qualitative surveys:** NAUL is always open to suggestions and feedback for library services; to that end, the Librarian keeps records of communications that pertain to resources and informational services (e.g., reference assistance to professors via email, phone calls, etc.). The library website also contains direct contact information for the librarian in the event that a patron wants to provide feedback about materials or services. The librarian, with assistance and input from administration and assessment specialist, is also responsible for developing survey instruments that can be disseminated after bibliographic instruction sessions, periodic customer-satisfaction self-studies or a general "how are we doing?" type of feedback platform. As of Fall 2016, a survey feedback form has been developed and implemented for use in bibliographic instruction sessions.

Acquisitions

Determination for acquisition of reference works and supportive academic texts is facilitated under three criteria: currency, usage and demand.

- **Currency** is determined by the librarian through the weeding process; regularly and periodically, physical reference works (dictionaries, encyclopedias, glossaries, atlases, handbooks, etc.) are analyzed for publication date. Materials that are outdated (especially encyclopedias and atlases) are weeded from the collection and new materials are acquired. Determining whether materials are available as electronic sources are also part of the decision-making process; whenever possible, electronic resources are added as supplements or outright replacement (which frees up valuable shelf space).

- Usage is analyzed via tracking of counts. Removal of materials from the shelves by patrons or library staff (at patron's request or reference questions for remote users) counts as usage and is tracked. Counts must be done manually as these materials do not circulate outside the library and therefore do not appear in our catalog software reportages. Materials that have low usage are placed under consideration for weeding.
- Demand is determined by materials requests. The library page contains an electronic request form whereby materials can be requested by NAU students, faculty and staff. Requests are also taken by phone, regular email or in person. These requests are tracked and used in the acquisition process.

The librarian also makes use of a myriad of professional resources (American Library Association, Texas Library Association, other professional colleagues) to make acquisition decisions.

Supporting Educational Programs – Planning for Library Materials and Services

The campus provides both physical and online resources necessary to make educational programs effective by the purchase of necessary and relevant materials and/or licenses. Materials are chosen in conjunction with several different considerations: accreditation requirements; curriculum requirements from faculty; and input and recommendations from the librarian (using the Association of College and Research Libraries guidelines for "Standards for Libraries in Higher Education" as a benchmark). The NAUL's physical and online resources are further supported by the following entities:

- NAU Administration: continued funding to purchase new/replacement physical materials and licenses from database vendors, and funding for a professional librarian.
- NAU Facilities and Operations: provision and maintenance of library space (including electricity, climate control, fixtures and furnishings and general maintenance.
- NAU Information Technology: infrastructure and support for all electronic resources and computer equipment (hardware and software).

5. Who Should Read This Policy

- Department Chairs
- Faculty
- Distance Education Coordinator

6. Related Documents and References

- Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL)