Guidelines for Library Holdings Requests

Introduction

The selection of library materials is a shared responsibility between library staff and department faculty. Since library staff are not subject matter experts, faculty influence on the selection of materials is essential for the effective use of funds. Without expert selection by faculty, the library would not be able to accomplish its mission.

Guidelines For Purchase Requests

The following guidelines are in place to ensure that materials purchased for the library are in direct fulfillment of the library's mission and support academic requirements.

Review Library Collection

Although library staff and certain faculty officially evaluate the library collection, it is imperative that all faculty review the library's holdings regularly to ensure that the resources are sufficient to meet students' coursework needs. Although the library goes to great lengths to ensure that items removed from the collection are approved by affected parties, it is possible that items you have used in the past may no longer be held.

Identify Collection Gaps

Based on a review of available holdings, identify collection gaps related to the courses you teach. A collection gap is defined as any of the following:

- Insufficient resources are available for a specific assignment or topic.
- Available resources are out of date or are too damaged to be used effectively.
- A new edition of a specific resource is available that would benefit students.

Since information is constantly changing, there is almost always a collection gap waiting to be identified, and the best way to find it is by browsing the library stacks.

Place Library Order Requests

Library Order Requests may be placed by faculty at any time of the semester; however, it is expected that each faculty member request at least three relevant library resources each Interterm and Post-term. The request form can be found on Faculty Portal or on the library website. Order requests should be placed to fill collection gaps as defined above**.** If you are unsure whether a resource is sufficient for the collection, consider requesting it through Interlibrary Loan and reviewing the material before placing a request.

While the general policy is to avoid the items below, if you believe they would be valuable for your students, please add your justification in the comments section of the request to expedite the ordering process.

- **Textbooks,** except those specifically selected for the Education Textbook Collection (These are not considered valid sources for research.)
- **Consumable resources** such as single-use software, write-in workbooks, and other works intended for use by a single user
- **Outdated formats** such as VHS tapes, floppy disks, and vinyl records

Databases and periodicals should not be requested through the Library Order Request System but rather should be discussed with your Department Chair and requested by email to the Library Periodicals Coordinator.

Consider the following as selections are made:
- Does the resource help to meet a specific course requirement?
- Is the resource research worthy?
- Is the resource written for a college-level audience?
- Is the resource up to date in its field or of historical significance?
- Is the resource a primary source?
- Do we already have a physical or electronic copy of the item that can meet the need?

Assign the appropriate priority levels:
Each requested item should be assigned a priority level according to the categories below. Please carefully select the correct priority level, as the library uses this information for efficient purchasing. **Note:** At any stage in the approval process an approver may change the priority level.

1. Rush (order immediately)—Reserve requests, performance music (impending performance date)
2. Academic Priority—required reading, support for new course/degree or project requirements
3. Support Material—professional development resources, suggested reading
4. Low Priority—personal development resources, general topic coverage
5. Hold Until New Budget—requests over remaining budget

Include any relevant information:
Be sure to provide any additional information which may help the approvers and library staff in making decisions. Checkboxes can be used to indicate some of this information. Information can also be placed in the Comments section at the end of the request. Helpful information includes (but is not limited to) the following:

- Course/semester for items to be placed on Reserve
- Desired "Needed-by" date (Date is considered but not guaranteed)
- Instructions for handling old editions (Remove the old edition, keep both, etc.)
- Intended use for the item