

St. Thomas More College

Collection Development Policy

This policy was approved by STM Faculty Council on June 11, 2024. It will be reviewed every five years and revised as needed.

Introduction

The collections of the Shannon Library have been developed and maintained for almost a century to support the curricular and research needs of the St. Thomas More College community. The library's collection reflects both the diversity and the focus of our community's intellectual conversations. The collection also indicates the ever-changing resources required to support those conversations. The library's strategies to acquire and maintain these resources necessarily continue to evolve.

This document defines the values, criteria, and strategies the Librarian uses to guide the selection of materials for the Shannon Library. In the midst of ongoing change in the academic and publishing environments and in anticipation of questions and concerns about the collection, this document serves as a guide and as policy.

In particular, the library's collection:

- Supports the college's mission;
- Supports the college's curricular needs;
- Supports the specialized research needs of students and faculty conducting independent and advanced research;
- Provides a balanced collection with diverse and differing points of view, cultural contexts, and intellectual heritages.

The Shannon Library adheres to the principles outlined in the Canadian Federation of Library Associations' [*Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries*](#), the Canadian Association of Research Libraries' [*Statement of Freedom of Expression and Inclusive Libraries*](#), and [*Ex Corde Ecclesiae*](#).

The document is revised and updated as required.

Values

The Shannon Library is committed to the values of accessibility, diversity, equity, intellectual freedom, and sustainability. By committing to these values, the library strives to reduce the barriers that so often keep individuals from experiencing each other's ideas. In libraries, those barriers have had many roots: biases in collection practices and in parent academic institutions; gaps in technology or delivery methods; the material nature of items—even those that are digital—that decay; and the economics of academic publishing, to name a few. At the same time, libraries have long defended the right of individuals to hold and to experience a diversity of ideas and points of view. Based on that foundation, the library strives to reduce barriers to the access of materials and ideas by collecting materials that support non-traditional, emerging, and traditional areas of scholarship in formats that it can fully support with space, technology, and methods of delivery. Recognizing that the production and maintenance of both physical and digital materials takes resources, both monetary and physical, the library makes choices that maintain the accessibility of the collections over time, make fiscal sense, and acknowledges and respects the land, watersheds, and human labour on which its collections depend.

In particular, the Shannon Library acknowledges that we must work toward reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in our collection management. Indigenous knowledge may not always be collected. Instead, our commitment is to nurture collections with strong and varied Indigenous content through materials written or created by Indigenous researchers, scholars, elders, and knowledge keepers and to do this through ongoing consultation with Indigenous members of the St. Thomas More community and the larger Indigenous community of Treaty 6 land.

These values inform collection development and maintenance decisions made by the Librarian throughout the whole life cycle of the Shannon Library's resources.

Scope

The Shannon Library encompasses three main collection areas that support the students and faculty of St. Thomas More College, as well as its larger community: the General Collection, the Special Collections, and the Archives. This document applies principally to the General Collection and refers to the other collections as appropriate.

General Collection

The General Collection comprises published materials selected in support of learning, teaching, and research at St. Thomas More College. The General Collection includes both circulating materials and non-circulating, reference materials. The circulating materials are located in the open stacks of the Shannon Library and online. These materials are intended for unmediated use by library patrons. The reference materials are also located in the open stacks and online. Use of these materials is restricted to the Shannon Library. The library keeps them available as a ready source of information.

Special Collections

The Shannon Library holds collections that in format or content are distinctive and have intrinsic value to St. Thomas More College. They reflect the college's mission and cultural history. Because this collection has unique attributes, the library limits access, not to restrict access to the ideas expressed in these materials, but to ensure the long-term preservation of these valuable, rare, or fragile materials.

Archives

The Archives reflect the library's mandate to document the college's history. Unlike the special collections, which consist of published materials, the archives consist of records, either generated by the college itself or by individuals or organizations closely related to the college. As with the special collections, the Shannon Library restricts access to these materials to ensure long-term preservation.

Policies informing the development and maintenance of the Special Collections and Archives can be found in the Shannon Library's Archives & Special Collections Collection Development Policy.

Collections at the University of Saskatchewan Library

The Shannon Library shares its collection with the larger University of Saskatchewan community, reflecting the college's federated status with the university. So too does the University Library share its collection with the college community. The shared collections ensure broad and deep subject coverage and reduce unnecessary duplication of work and resources. Through ongoing communication and consultation, librarians at both institutions nurture the shared collections to be responsive to the diverse needs of our communities.

Responsibilities of the Librarian

The Librarian is responsible for selecting new materials in appropriate formats, managing current materials, and developing new ways of collecting in response to the publishing environment and to college needs.

The Librarian:

- In consultation with the Library Committee, sets and monitors the criteria by which new material is selected and other material is deselected;
- Monitors the collection to ensure alignment with collection criteria;
- Maintains general subject expertise in the disciplines represented by the college's departments;
- Consults relevant publisher catalogues and academic book reviews;
- Consults with all faculty to understand current teaching, research, and curricular needs;
- Periodically seeks user feedback;
- Monitors purchase requests;
- Tracks usage trends;
- Maintains relationship with the University Library in order to understand that library's collection policies and practices;
- Maintains awareness of relevant developments in academic publishing;
- Maintains awareness of developments in academic library collection practices;
- Fosters strategic partnerships, where appropriate, with other academic institutions to build shared collections and expand access to those collections and to use developments to guide local acquisition and maintenance;
- Strategically manages the acquisition budget and the cost to preserve, digitize, and/or otherwise make accessible materials throughout their life cycle.

Faculty and User Group Relationships

The Shannon Library values the close relationship between its community and both the library collections and the Librarian. Faculty and students alike are encouraged to inform collection decisions actively and directly by suggesting new purchases and by voicing questions and concerns. As indicated under the Responsibilities of the Librarian, the Librarian engages in consultation and seeks feedback concerning collection decisions. Consultation and feedback take many forms, including meetings with faculty, presentations to Faculty Council, user surveys, casual conversations, and the library's book request form. All recommendations are considered on a case-by-case basis.

The Library Committee is the faculty group with responsibility for advising the Librarian about new collection policies, major revisions to existing policies, and evaluation of substantial collection management decisions. The Librarian consults with the Library Committee twice a year.

Collections Development Principles and Criteria

The Shannon Library develops collections in support of the learning, teaching, and research of St. Thomas More College. Its collections have been developed over the last century and include a wealth of material. The library does not, however, have sufficient resources to comprehensively acquire all materials published in each area relevant to the college's programs.

The Librarian evaluates materials for acquisition or deselection based on the following principles and criteria. The relative significance of each of these principles and criteria for individual collection

decisions depends on the discipline and the resources available to support the decision. Adhering to these principles and criteria ensures that the library makes collection decisions intentionally and purposefully.

- Value

- The library serves the current and anticipated needs of the college and also acts as a long-term steward of cultural heritage and research potential. The Librarian selects and deselects material first by assessing its value according to these needs. A material's value derives from multiple aspects of its content and form, including:

- Relevance to St. Thomas More College: This is the value that takes priority. All materials acquired by the library should actively support the college's current and potential learning, teaching, and research needs. The Librarian consults with faculty and students, monitors the curriculum, and compares materials to existing collection strengths in order to determine relevance.
- Currency and timeliness: The library acquires materials in areas of current research and interest. The Librarian may also support new curricular areas through retrospective collection development. Timeliness also plays a role in deselection too, but in different ways depending on the discipline and faculty interests. Materials may have other values that supersede timeliness, including their value as primary resources, their perceived canonical role, or their representation of otherwise unrepresented perspectives. The Librarian, in consultation with faculty, will account for these other values in making collection decisions.
- Accuracy, Quality, and Depth: The library selects materials based on a range of indicators of accuracy, quality, and depth. These indicators include the authoritativeness or reputation of the author, editor, publishers, producer, etc.; disciplinary standards like canon; and suggestions of quality in scholarly reviews. Recognizing that these markers reflect the historical and evolving priorities of academic fields and the scholarly communication system, the Librarian remains alert to biases in the indicators and actively seeks out alternative indicators, such as the relative proximity of small presses to the communities with which they work or tags used by communities to share information about materials.
- Scope: The library selects materials not just for their individual value, but in consideration of the value they bring to the library's collections as a whole. The library commits to ensuring that the collection represents diverse perspectives within the college's disciplinary focuses. In particular, the library emphasizes acquisitions of Indigenous-related materials, in line with the college's values and in recognition of historic inequities in the college's collection practices. The collection should embody a certain tension between disciplinary standards/canons and underrepresented perspectives. Within and between the standard and alternative perspectives, the collection should include a variety of perspectives on controversial subjects. The library also ensures a coverage of materials appropriate to the levels of study present in the college, including

undergraduate and advanced study level for students and research level when requested by faculty.

- Languages: The library acquires materials in all languages that are taught in the curriculum. The Librarian makes decisions about materials in languages other than English in consultation with faculty.
- Accessibility: It is necessary that the library ensure that all its materials are accessible to and usable by all members of the college community. Though this is a concern that extends beyond collection development, the Librarian takes accessibility into account in making collection decisions, especially for electronic formats. The Librarian systematically evaluates, selects, supports, and promotes the use of open resources, either as alternatives or in addition to traditional resources that are part of the library's collections.
- Distinctiveness: The library will, on occasion, acquire unique materials that are rarely held by other libraries or cultural organizations in order to make those materials accessible for learning, teaching, and research. The distinctive value of a material may be its artifactual interest when its original published format or marks of former use/ownership it carries allow for unique opportunities for scholarship or teaching.
- Physical Condition: When a physical copy is disintegrating or is otherwise no longer serviceable, the library will either make a preservation photocopy, create or obtain a digital surrogate, and/or evaluate the item for replacement.

- Shared Collections

- The University Library is a member of the Council of Prairie and Pacific University Libraries (COPPUL). Because St. Thomas More College is federated with the university, the Shannon Library participates in COPPUL's Shared Print Archive Network (SPAN), which is a distributed shared print program. The library's commitment to participation in SPAN means that the library maintains access to materials based on their availability, rarity, and relevance to the Western Canadian region even when those materials no longer meet other criteria in this document. In most cases, however, such materials will also reflect the value of relevance to St. Thomas More College. The college also benefits from participation in SPAN by ensuring access to broad and deep coverage of subjects, regions, and languages across member institutions while reducing unnecessary duplication of work and resources.

- Ownership vs. Access

- The library has a dual responsibility to use the college's financial resources wisely and to serve the college community over time. With this in mind, the library prioritizes acquisition of collections that result in perpetual ownership. When materials are deemed necessary for the collection according to the other criteria and principles in this

document, but perpetual ownership is not available or is cost-prohibitive, the library will consider available leasing options. In these cases, the Librarian will weigh the conditions of access (e.g. read only, ability to make copies of sections, or download of full content) in the context of the college's needs.

- Format

- The library recognizes that individual disciplines and communities of practice have their own unique preferences for specific formats. Print publications remain the primary format for some areas of scholarship. Other areas are gradually but steadily adopting electronic formats. In still other areas, electronic formats are already well established as the preference. The Librarian monitors these evolving preferences and needs and adjusts collection decisions accordingly.
- Electronic access depends on sustainable, affordable, and persistently accessible platforms. At St. Thomas More College, purchase of electronic formats must also follow the guidelines of the Library Agreement with the University Library. The library will continue to acquire the print format in most circumstances, including situations where there are substantive and demonstrable differences in content when compared to the equivalent electronic format, when cancelling the print format would negatively impact the current scholarly activity of the college and/or the library's stewardship of its collections, or when faculty provide significant reasons for the library to continue to acquire and/or retain physical formats. The library also takes into account spatial/storage and fiscal constraints in making decisions about format.

- Textbooks

- The library will acquire one print copy or e-book version of textbooks adopted as required texts for the current curriculum whenever possible. This material will automatically be placed on reserve at the beginning of each semester. Faculty are encouraged to place personal copies of textbooks—including complimentary copies of textbooks provided by publishers, but not examination, evaluation, review, or desk copies—on reserve for their courses. Access to textbooks minimizes the financial barriers faced by many students and encourages students' academic success.

- Faculty & Alumni Publications

The library collects two copies of faculty publications written during their employment at the college. One copy goes into the General Collection; the other goes into the Archives. Alumni publications may be purchased for the General Collection provided that they fall within the scope of the curriculum.

- Duplication

- The library will acquire duplicate copies of materials already owned by either the Shannon Library or the University Library only upon the request of faculty to support

curricular needs and in balance with factors such as the cost of acquisition, the availability of copies at other libraries, and spatial/storage constraints. As curricular needs change, the Librarian will reevaluate duplicate copies in consultation with faculty. Acquisition of additional editions or translations of works already in the collection will be made on a case-by-case basis.

- Binding
 - The library purchases most books in paperback. If the book's condition warrants it, these books may be bound on a case-by-case basis. Cloth-bound (hard cover) books are purchased when the Librarian or faculty anticipate high use or when that is the only binding format available.
- Replacements
 - The library reviews missing, lost, or damaged books for replacement. The Librarian makes the decision to replace based on a variety of considerations, including the nature of the work, the cost to replace it, the current curriculum, and the availability of copies at other libraries.
- Environmental Effects
 - The creation, production, transportation, maintenance, and disposal of all materials, regardless of format, has environmental impacts. The library monitors the evolving scholarship and provision of information on the impact of collection decisions on libraries' carbon footprint. The library takes into account any clear information concerning a material's carbon footprint that is available. The library also follows a de-selection process that emphasizes, first, the reuse of materials and, second, the recycling of materials.
- Data-Informed Collection Decisions
 - The library evaluates its collections against its circulation data.