

Collections Philosophy

Philosophy

Purpose

This Collections Philosophy guides Galter Health Sciences Library & Learning Center staff in our current acquisitions practices for building the best collection for the Feinberg School of Medicine community. This philosophy reflects and enhances other relevant [library policies](#).

Scope of the Collection

Galter Health Sciences Library strives to offer its users a current, top-quality, relevant, balanced, diverse, equitable, and inclusive collection in line with the library's mission and strategic priorities. We use our expertise to assess and acquire resources in a variety of formats and seek out electronic collections whenever feasible that meet users' needs for access. We add to the collection year-round to support emerging research, clinical, and educational needs in the Feinberg School of Medicine's missions, programs, departments, and initiatives.

We manage the collection with the following guiding principles in mind:

Environmental Scans:

- We use various means to measure the use of our collection and consider expertise from key constituents to provide resources for research, clinical, and educational needs. Collection assessment strategies include consulting usage statistics, interlibrary loan reports, and reviews.
- We assess the needs of our users on a regular basis, utilizing liaison contacts, outreach to FSM affinity groups, regularly consulting FSM strategic plans and Northwestern Medicine documents, and by conducting formal assessments such as surveying our users about proposed key acquisitions or cancellations.
- We follow scholarly publishing trends that may impact or influence our collection strategies, including tools to better manage and assess collections, and new models for resource licensing and access.

Collection Management Principles:

- We maintain a collection wish list year-round to help us prioritize future acquisitions and incorporate faculty recommendations through reference and liaison activities and communications. This allows us to be more responsive to requests and newly available resources.
- To maintain a current and relevant electronic collection, we regularly assess the collection and deselect or cancel little-used resources to ensure our collections budget is used efficiently and ensure we have opportunities to focus our collection development efforts on new resources or to meet new demands.
- We actively add to our electronic collections, pursuing journal subscriptions in electronic editions only, considering electronic journal backfiles, if appropriate, and acquiring eBooks to respond to users' preference for ubiquitous access to our collections.
- Budget permitting, we license other electronic resources, such as databases and streaming video in support of curricular needs.
- We select key titles for our print book collection for curricular reserves, authored by FSM faculty, or recommended by Galter's primary user community.
- We review print materials and deselect or relocate to optimize library space for use by students, faculty, and staff.
- We periodically assess the collections, both print and electronic, to ensure that collections are balanced and inclusive.
- We collaborate with other Northwestern University libraries and participate in consortial collections and licensing arrangements as needed.

Business Principles:

We seek out business arrangements with publishers and vendors who understand the unique research and education relationships within all Northwestern University libraries, allowing us to provide access to the entire NU community. We seek joint-purchasing and shared licensing opportunities with other Northwestern University libraries, departments, and consortia to conserve funds and avoid cumbersome technical arrangements. We consult with Northwestern University's legal services as appropriate. Whenever possible, we negotiate for the following data or benefits where we have a contract:

- IP-authenticated access, including by proxy.
- COUNTER compliant usage statistics.
- Electronic fulfillment of ILL requests and allowances for eReserves.
- Multi-year subscriptions to maximize our collections budget.
- Post-cancellations rights to subscribed content. We pay particular attention to publishers' and vendors' participation in long-term electronic access solutions such as Portico, LOCKSS and CLOCKSS and try to influence such sustainable behaviors.

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