Oberlin College Library
Collection Management Plan

[approved by the General Faculty Library Committee, 5/13/13; rev 8/16]

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Oberlin College Library
Collection Management Plan

Statement of Stewardship

Oberlin College Library is committed to the careful and responsible stewardship of its existing collections in order to assure access to these valuable resources for current and future generations of Oberlin College Library users.

I. Collection Management Plan - Purpose & Goals

Purpose of the CMP
The purpose of the Collection Management Plan (CMP) is to guide and facilitate collection management at Oberlin College Library (OCL) through the articulation of a statement of responsible stewardship of OCL collections, and the definition of overarching collection management principles. Achieving OCL's stewardship goals requires on-going attention to the changing needs of library users and the changing ways in which scholarship is produced, stored, and disseminated. The CMP is designed to help assure the continued strength and excellence of the Library's collections for future generations of Oberlin's students, faculty, and researchers.

Change and evolution are the norms for 21st century libraries. Issues of format, access, space, relevance, and archiving are just several of the ever shifting pieces of the picture that must be considered in collection management. Because the pressures on - and questions about - existing collections are both myriad and perpetually changing, developing a Collection Management Plan is of critical importance. The CMP is intended as a working document; while the principles of the CMP will, it is hoped, remain steady, other aspects will require regular revision and updating to reflect evolving Library issues and practice.

Goals of the CMP
The CMP articulates specific collection management principles and outlines strategies in support of those principles. Strategies regarding the following areas are outlined: tangible* & digital formats, Special Collections, consortial considerations, location, preservation, de-selection, disposition, Archives, and future direction.

Over the last twenty years many highly focused collection management procedures have been developed. These procedural documents are linked from within the CMP, thus pulling into a single working document OCL's important collection management tools and procedures.

Space considerations
Space considerations are integral to all components of the CMP; the CMP will provide a context and framework within which to carry out consistent and responsible decision-making in regard to space considerations.

tangible for the purposes of this document refers to any non-digital format [print, microform, CD's, DVD's, etc.]

II. **History and Purpose of Collections at Oberlin College Library**

History of Collections
Oberlin College Library collections have a rich and deep history. Oberlin's strong legacy print collections stem to a great degree from the vision and efforts of early Library leaders such as Azariah Smith Root (1887-1927), who pulled disparate campus collections into a single cohesive Library collection, and began acquiring in earnest new materials by purchase, gift, and exchange, to supplement and expand the Library's holdings. As Oberlin College moved beyond its beginnings as a theological institution, so too did the Library collections grow broadly in support of Oberlin's expanding curriculum. By the mid-20th century Oberlin College Library had amassed an extremely rich collection across music and the arts, humanities, social science, and science disciplines.

Robust collecting in support of the broadening curriculum continued into the latter half of the 20th century, and continues today across a myriad of formats and an ever evolving range of disciplines and interdisciplinary areas of study, making Oberlin's library holdings among the very strongest across liberal arts institutions nationally.

Space Management History
Collection management projects are often integrally connected with space management issues – for example when large amounts of lesser-used (or easily electronically accessed) print materials are moved from any of the staffed libraries to storage in order to maximize collection growth space. Space use more broadly can be directly impacted by collection needs as well, as in summer 2008 when study areas were removed in order to add more shelving to the 2nd and 3rd floors of Main.

Purpose of Collections
The primary purpose and function of Oberlin College Library's collections is to support the current and future teaching and research of Oberlin College faculty and students. Concern with developing and maintaining broad and balanced collections, coupled with responsiveness to curricular change and growth at Oberlin has been key in shaping collections that well represent the broad tenets of liberal learning and education. Support of the wider Oberlin community, and the statewide community through OhioLINK lending, are also of importance.

Related:
CD philosophy statement

III. **Tangible and Digital: the Collection in Transition**

OCL will consider long-term as well as short-term implications regarding format decisions.

Major issues
In the early 21st century the balance between tangible and digital resources is probably the single largest, and the most complex, collection management issue facing libraries.   For OCL the attendant concerns around large scale acquisition of and/or conversion to digital content involves costs associated with staff time for processing and digitization; complexity in making resources "seamlessly" accessible to users; and archiving for long term stability. Also of concern is the loss of local control of content that accompanies the move to more reliance on leased digital resources (for example leased ebook collections where titles slip in and out of packages based on publisher/vendor whim). Enhanced accessibility and highly granular search capability are among the clear advantages provided by digital resources.   Digitization also affords the opportunity to extend the life and use of legacy collections, and while greatly expanding collection scope and access, puts no pressure on physical library space.

Format decision-making
Protecting and preserving OCL's tangible resources is of paramount concern to OCL, and the option to digitize resources is a constant. Currently decisions to digitize tangible collections are driven by curricular demands, a commitment to preserving materials uniquely important to Oberlin, and the need to preserve documents in deteriorating condition, in union with technological advancements and copyright best practices.

OCL may withdraw print monographs based on owned or openly accessible digital content when that content satisfies the purpose and functions of our collections. The digital content must be of high quality, stable into the foreseeable future, and in a format that is appealing to our users (commonly downloadable pdfs). We are sensitive to use restrictions imposed by some publishers that don't allow us to share content with the broader community.

The current uses of sound recordings show a distinct need for both streaming audio and full length tangible recordings, even when this results in duplication.

User preferences regarding format – which is understood to be fairly fluid, and also appears to vary significantly by discipline -- will be considered in format-related collection management decisions.

User preference
OCL has not conducted systematic studies to gauge user attitudes toward and preferences for variant material formats, but surveying OCL users regarding format preference is an ongoing goal. While usage statistics indicate heavy reliance on digital journal content, and anecdotal evidence indicates that OCL users are quite comfortable with electronic access to this literature, the response to and comfort level with ebook content is less evident, and is clearly still evolving.

IV. Special Collections

OCL will responsibly maintain tangible Special Collections resources that allow both guided class instruction, and individual research opportunity.

History and Definition
Collecting rare books and creating "special collections" at Oberlin College is as old as the Library itself; the call to build the anti-slavery collection went out in 1884, and rare materials have been accumulating through gifts and acquisitions ever since. A formal Special Collections Department within the Main Library was created in 1974 taking advantage of the limited access storage vault in the new Mudd Center that allowed locked-up collections to be consolidated for the first time. The Art and Conservatory libraries hold rare and valuable special collections which are housed in secure units in those libraries.

Materials housed in Main Special Collections are not housed there solely on the basis of age, and can in fact be quite current. "Special Collections" are *themed* collections, generally stored as a unit, and can be organized around a subject, author, press, format, genre, time period, etc. Collections of materials that are not going to receive full cataloging (such as pamphlets, manuscripts, ephemera, maps, Mail Art, comics, etc.) may also be kept as collections with brief inventories, either permanently or as a temporary measure until such time as full subject cataloging is done.

Guidelines for Special Collections Inclusion/Exclusion Consideration

- Item meets the definition of a "rare book" or Special Collection interest (as pre-1800 for European texts; pre-1820 for American texts; and pre-1850 for the U.S. West of the Mississippi River).
- Special Collections interest (as locally defined).
- Item is the only copy in Ohio, or shows holdings of less than 10 copies in WorldCat; regardless of age.
- Item has become collectible and thus is now a theft target; very small editions or items with a high retail value.
- Items with loose or fragile parts, multiple pieces or other non-traditional formats
- Item is an "association" copy with signatures/dedications from important people, has some marginal annotations, design binding, or is an otherwise "teachable" object.
- Item deemed worthy of inclusion in Special Collections by Librarians; recommendations from other library staff, faculty, or experienced researchers are welcome.

- Collection is contractually designated at the point of acquisition to be a part of the Library's special collections.
- Items which do not meet these criteria may, at the discretion of Librarians, be transferred out of Special Collections.

Current practice for identifying and moving items or whole collections of library materials into or out of the Special Collections units of the Main, Conservatory, and Art Libraries is ad hoc, using available tools and discretion of staff for determining the value of an item or subject to the institution. The possibility of digital reformatting has added a new level of information for consideration. Faculty, booksellers, professional appraisers, outside linguists and historians, and conservators are conferred with as appropriate. Moves can be made at any time for small amount of materials.

Related:
About Special Collections

V. Consortial Considerations

Where possible OCL will make collection management decisions with its consortial partnerships in mind.

Oberlin College Library is a member of several consortia: OhioLINK (85 Ohio libraries), The Oberlin Group (80 U.S. liberal arts college libraries), and The Five Colleges of Ohio (5 Northeast Ohio liberal arts colleges). The Oberlin Group and OH5 serve as informal "buying groups" for the purposes of collection development, but do not have significant impact in a broader collection management context. While Oberlin Group libraries share no-fee interlibrary loans, there is no direct patron borrowing, and no active sense of a "consortial collection" among the geographically wide-flung member libraries.

The libraries of OhioLINK, OCL's key consortial partnership, pool resources to create a repository for users from all consortia members. Responsibility to other consortia members to retain OCL's existing digital and tangible collections is not dictated, yet "good citizenship" relies in part upon maintaining healthy and useful collections to support the entire consortium. To this end, OhioLINK is committed to retaining two complete runs of all print periodicals, regardless of their availability in digital format, for preservation and circulation to the entire OhioLINK community. In terms of OCL's contribution to the consortium, Oberlin's extremely rich music collection is heavily accessed by users across OhioLINK institutions, as is the art collection, and historical materials broadly. As individual OhioLINK libraries increasingly purchase ebooks – which by contract cannot be shared with other consortia members – rather than tangible books, the impact on the consortium is being felt in the availability of fewer borrowable copies across the consortium.

One of the primary collection management benefits of being a part of OhioLINK is the collective buying power of consortial bargaining which results in access to large amounts of digital material that OCL would not otherwise have access to. To the extent that this material duplicates OCL's holdings, it provides the opportunity to consider options for housing and storage of the tangible counterpart.

Oberlin, through an OhioLINK mediated agreement, is also a member of the Center for Research Libraries (CRL). One of CRL's projects, the JSTOR Print Archive Project, seeks to archive print copies of all periodical titles included in JSTOR. These volumes are available via ILL to OCL users who find the digitized version of a periodical inadequate for their needs.

Related:
Center for Research Libraries
OhioLINK's Last Copy Policy

VI. **Location**

> *Decisions about housing and placement of tangible materials are made to maximize accessibility to these materials for Oberlin College students, faculty, and staff.*

Main, Art, Science, Conservatory
Location of materials among Oberlin College's 4 staffed libraries – Main, Art, Science, and Conservatory – has largely been determined by subject/LC classification (M's in Conservatory, N-NK in Art, Q, QB-QR, S in Science, social science and literature classes in Main, etc.). Oberlin's 4-library system ensures that tangible library materials are housed in proximity to the greatest number of Oberlin users with a need for those materials.

Storage
Oberlin has long used storage as a way of easing space pressures in the open stacks. Since 1974, the Carnegie stacks have been the primary closed stacks storage. While reasons for shelving materials in storage have varied over the years, there has been an emphasis on identifying and sending to Carnegie lesser used materials (as defined by circulation data). In addition, materials are more likely to be sent to storage when the bibliographic descriptions available in the catalog or other bibliographic tools, such as research databases, make it easy for users to identify the materials they need without browsing the open stacks. Storage is also used as a "safety net" location for some tangible items duplicated in digitized format, while global and national policy and practice for permanent print archives evolve.

Location Change Considerations
Decisions to send material to Carnegie storage are constrained by a lack of adequate easily allocatable space in the Carnegie stacks. In addition, staff resources are taken into account when location changes involve reclassification.

See Section IV. Special Collections for an overview of placement of materials in Special Collections.

VII. Preservation and Replacement

OCL makes every effort to return damaged and worn books to a safe-to-handle, "circulatable" form in a cost effective and archivally sound manner.

Scope and History

OCL's active print preservation program was formally established in 1981. The program includes monitoring temperature and humidity in library buildings; repairing, encapsulating or boxing non-rare materials post-circulation; disaster preparedness and response; deacidification; microfilming; and digitization. Selective rare book/object Conservation is also performed as funds allow.

Current Practice

While the goal of preservation efforts is to return books to a safe-to-handle, "circulatable" form, OCL can not preserve or repair everything in the collection that might merit treatment.   As an undergraduate college library OCL attempts to intervene on behalf of candidate materials that support the curriculum, and materials that support research that can best be performed locally. Therefore, selection of items for treatment has historically been primarily patron driven, based on borrowing or in-library use by students, staff and faculty of Oberlin College and its partner libraries. Other legacy collections, works of art, Special Collections, and Asian collections also receive attention on an ad hoc basis, including selective use of outside Conservation services for complex, highly skilled work.

Criteria for Treatment

Prior to treating materials, their availability in a high quality, stable, and downloadable digital format will be determined.   The tangible items may be de-accessioned if they meet our criteria for withdrawal.

Priority for preservation treatment will be given based on immediate need, or the perceived centrality of materials to the mission of the library and/or the history of the College. That need can be expressed by library staff, faculty, or students. Consideration will also be given to materials identified as reinforcing existing legacy collections; uniqueness or extreme rarity; areas of growing curricular interest; or collections at extremely high risk of deterioration. Usually, selections qualify under *all* of these criteria, and could potentially originate from any library location.

Replacement

Materials that don't meet the criteria for preservation treatment may instead be replaced. The decision to purchase replacements is based on factors including current curricular needs and circulation. Additionally replacement decisions are regularly made for materials missing from the collections.

VIII. <u>Withdrawl</u>

OCL may withdraw materials based on criteria that has been vetted and approved by Library as well as OC faculty and administrative constituencies.

While maintaining and preserving collections are key components of responsible stewardship, a carefully considered approach to withdrawl is also central to the long term health and vitality of OCL collections. Continuing to house or provide access to materials that no longer meet current or anticipated future needs for OCL users, as can best be predicted, can be costly. In addition, removing outdated materials helps ensure the vibrancy and relevance of the collections. When considering withdrawl, the following standards are followed:

- the item is not deemed to be useful for current teaching and research
- the item is not deemed to be useful for projected future teaching and research
- the item is not deemed to be relevant to existing legacy collections or areas of known strength
- the item does not have significant associations with Oberlin College
- the item is not deemed to be of particular importance to the community or region
- the age, rarity, or composition of the item is not remarkable
- availability of the item within OhioLINK is deemed adequate
- the item is missing from OCL collections; after extensive searching the item's record is deleted
- the item is not the last tangible copy in OhioLINK

Withdrawl may be triggered by the condition of the item, duplication of the item, or an assessment that it is no longer relevant to the collection. Outside interest in purchasing individual items or entire sets from within OCL's collections is only considered if the materials in question meet the standards for withdrawl as described above.

Staff costs associated with withdrawing materials are given consideration, particularly for projects involving large quantities of material.

<u>Condition</u>
Materials are regularly removed from the collection when they are no longer useable. Traditionally, this has been when their physical condition is so worn or damaged as to make the materials hard to handle. It may also occur when the technology/equipment to use the materials is no longer available to OCL users. When freely available, high quality digital copies of these materials exist, we catalog them.

On occasion, the content of the material is so critical to the collection and so difficult to replace that the choice is made to retain materials in poor condition. These materials may be digitized or repaired and/or preserved using current standards, and may be shifted to Special Collections or placed under restrictive loan policies to prevent further deterioration.

Duplication
The need for multiple copies and editions of works varies among disciplines and over time. Regular evaluation of multiple copies is conducted and holdings are reduced to the number justified by demonstrated demand for the title. Regular withdrawl of earlier editions of non-literary works also occurs, unless demand justifies the retention.

When digitized materials or collections are acquired, created, or discovered, the withdrawal of the duplicated tangible materials is considered. If the tangible material is retained, the digital copy is cataloged as well.

> Tangible journals and periodicals are routinely de-selected if:
> - they are accessible to OCL users in stable digital archives [JSTOR, EJC, pubmed, from individual publishers]
> - the quality of the digitized content is acceptable for OCL users (e.g., image-heavy works are usually retained in tangible format)
> - tangible copies are being retained as a circulating backup for the national library community

> Monographs and books may be de-selected if
> - use of the materials in electronic format is as convenient and appealing to OCL users and the broader library community as using the tangible item

> Sound recordings and other media may be de-selected if
> - they are inaccessible to OCL users due to format or machine obsolescence

Relevance and Obsolescence
Outdated editions of textbooks, directories, manuals, and other time-bound tangible materials are routinely de-selected. Likewise, digital resources may be replaced when they become available with improved interfaces.

The relevance of specific collections and collection strengths are weighed against the current and anticipated future curricular needs. It is understood that even the most out-dated and inaccurate material can be of scholarly interest and consideration is given to whether these materials are best housed at Oberlin or elsewhere. OCL is open to the notion of de-selecting collections and items that are no longer relevant to the Oberlin College community, with the goal of offering the materials to another institution where it will be used and/or reaping some financial benefit.

IX. Disposition of Withdrawn Material

OCL will handle the disposition of de-selected materials in the most appropriate and responsible manner possible.

When OCL material has been de-selected a variety of options for disposition will be considered based on the perceived value, volume, and condition of the material.

Donation to another institution/collection.
If material is in good physical condition and is considered to be of likely interest to another institution/ collection/archive, efforts may be made to make such donation. OhioLINK's "Discards List" may be used to identify OhioLINK member libraries interested in OCL withdrawls. De-selected JSTOR titles are routinely donated to CRL to complete their JSTOR Print Archive Project.

Donation for digitization
OCL has the option of depositing works for digitization and circulation in the Open Library, a project of the Internet Archive. As a member of the Open Library, Oberlin College users may borrow digitized copies of print materials held in the Open Library's collection. Further discussion is needed on how de-selected items are assessed for donation to Open Library.

Sale or exchange
Materials may be flagged for the biennial OCL community book sale.   Following the sale any unsold materials are taken by a local used book dealer, for either resale or recycling.

In the rare event that de-selected materials are determined to be of significant monetary value, and the staff time involved is deemed worthwhile, OCL may seek to discretely sell to or arrange exchanges with private book dealers/collectors.

Recycling
Materials that cannot be donated or sold as above will be recycled. Out of date periodicals are an example of material type that typically cannot be donated or sold, and are thus recycled. The library currently has an agreement with Libriloop, a local recycler that picks up print recycling at no cost to OCL.

Disposal
Disposal via trash bins will be resorted to only in cases where no other disposition method is feasible.

Government Documents
Procedures provided by the U.S. government are followed when seeking to withdraw U.S. government documents.

X. <u>Archives</u>

The College Archives will collect, preserve, and make available for teaching, research, and general interest primary materials that document the history of Oberlin College.

<u>History and Overview</u>
Founded in 1966, the Oberlin College Archives (OCA) was established to preserve the institution's "memory" and support the teaching mission of the College. The OCA systematically collects, preserves, maintains, promotes, and makes available official records of the College and personal papers of enduring value from individuals, families, and organizations affiliated with Oberlin College and/or the town of Oberlin. Beginning in 2008 the OCA became a department in the Oberlin College Library.

<u>Management of Archives' Materials</u>
OCA has well established policies and procedures for handling materials, as outlined in Records Management (link below). Donor input is important in determining the disposition of archival materials. In accepting papers of individuals associated with Oberlin College, Deeds of Gift are drawn up which delineate, among other things, the right of OCA to dispose of materials that have no significant historical value.

<u>Preservation and Digitization of Archival Collections</u>
OCA has an active preservation program, supported by the endowed Hunt Fund for Preservation and Digital Access. Materials are selected for preservation treatment based on the condition of materials and immediate need.

OCA's digitization program is of increasing importance in the effort to make available Oberlin's unique historical materials.   Materials are selected for digitization based upon their perceived importance both to the Oberlin community, and the wider universe of scholars. OCA utilizes ARCHIVE-IT to archive electronic content generated by Oberlin College.

<u>OCA Related Documents</u>
<u>OCA Mission Statement</u>
<u>Records Management</u>
<u>ARCHIVE-IT</u>

XI. **Future Direction**

Digitization
Identifying and evaluating discrete collections that would be good candidates for digitization is an increasingly important part of the Library's work; consulting with faculty to identify collections that would be of particular use in the curriculum is critical. Criteria for what constitutes "good digitization candidates" can be developed from any number of angles, for example working with faculty, other community members, donors, or vendors.

The development and maturation of large global and national digital libraries – such as HathiTrust, and the DPLA (Digital Public Library of America) – are expected to greatly widen accessibility to large amounts of content, and could have significant impacts on collection management policy and practice moving forward.

Storage
A thorough examination of current space use in Carnegie is needed. Possible changes to the organization of materials in Carnegie in order to maximize space efficiency should be considered, and potential advantages of reorganization weighed carefully against expenditures involved in planning and staff time. OCL will be advocating for access to the OhioLINK shared depositories (off-site, high-density storage facilities from which private colleges are now excluded). Access to these, or other state-of-the-art storage facilities, will be necessary to address the expected pressures on the capacity of Carnegie to meet OCL's storage needs.

Space
Projections of tangible collection growth and withdrawl rates will be important to consider with respect to future physical facilities needs of OCL. This will impact planning not only for storage space needs in the future, but for Library space use discussions more broadly.

Special Collections
Large projects such as narrowly defined, targeted, systematic endeavors to identify, describe, preserve, and make accessible a subject collection will likely require the use of grant or gift funding to pay for students, interns, trained clerical or professional staff on a temporary basis. Such projects could involve scattered materials already housed in Special Collections, or materials housed elsewhere in the OCL system, which would then be transferred to Special Collections.

Long term caretaking of tangible collections
Continued attention must be given to the long term physical integrity of OCL's tangible format materials. Efforts to stabilize or slow the degradation of these aging materials must be explored. Enhanced and/or targeted preservation initiatives should be considered. Also of great importance is evaluating the impact of environmental conditions - particularly fluctuations in temperature and humidity- on OCL's tangible format collections in both storage and staffed

libraries. These concerns make more urgent decision making with regard to digitization and storage.

Long term caretaking of digital collections
Stable and assured access to digital resources for future OCL users is of continuing concern. Much electronic journal content is currently considered to be "stable" for OCL's purposes. Trends and developments in the industry, however, indicate that true long term stability will be via "dark archives". Ebook content is starting to be included in these archives, and will be an important consideration as these resources develop.

Consortial Developments
Progress on the development of coordinated statewide policy for the management of tangible collections is expected within OhioLINK. It is anticipated this will include both access to the existing statewide storage facilities, and protocol for print copy retention in the state. OhioLINK is also expected to make significant progress in advocating for restriction-free ebook content for all consortia member libraries.

Metrics
Consideration of usage, cost, and ROI metrics will have an increasing impact on collection management. Availability of metrics, and our ability to interpret them, is particularly rich in relation to electronic resources.

Related:
DPLA (Digital Public Library of America)
HathiTrust Digital Library
CLOCKSS (dark archive- Oberlin currently a member)
Portico (dark archive)