

**AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY
LIBRARY COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

Aims:

- To clarify the selection criteria by which potential acquisitions will be assessed
- To set quality standards for the acquisition, retention and discarding of resources
- To enable continuity in selection of resources in the event of staff changes and to guide staff in handling possible complaints
- To ensure that resources are selected across all areas of the collection and minimise single sector or personal bias and enable development of a balanced collection, particularly if the collection is currently not in balance.
- To enable an equitable distribution of funding across teaching departments
- To facilitate discussion between libraries regarding possible cooperative ventures
- To provide a public relations document which informs the wider community about the library and its collection development policy
- To inform those with funding responsibilities of the needs of the library in order to develop realistic and acceptable levels of ongoing support for the library

The Policy is to be approved by the Library Management Committee.

College Library

The library plays a vital role in the academic and community life of the member colleges. It aims to provide facilities, resources and informational, research and reference needs of library users. The library is managed by the librarian, who reports to a Library Management Committee.

The library aims to:

Resources

- Acquire, organise and maintain high quality resources in both print and electronic formats in the fields of biblical studies, theology, church history, ethics, pastoral ministry, preaching and related areas and to promote their most effective use by faculty, students and members of the wider college community;
- Support the teaching programs of the Australian College of Theology, providing for the information needs of students doing theological studies at an undergraduate and post-graduate level of study;
- Provide library resources to support the teaching and research needs of the faculty;
- Provide resources to support the ministerial development (preaching, teaching, and pastoral) of staff and students as well as pastors and lay people.

Facilities

- Provide physical facilities and accommodation that will make possible the most effective display and storage of library resources;
- Create an environment conducive to study;
- Provide Internet access, word processing and photocopying facilities for the use of library patrons.

Staffing

- Appoint, maintain and professionally develop a library staff who will be responsible for managing the library's resources, facilities and services;
- Maintain an active Library Committee to assist with library policy and decision making.

Services

- Instruct members of the faculty and students in both formal and informal settings, in the effective and efficient use of library systems and resources. This will include an orientation lecture and booklet for new students;
- Assist and cooperate with members of the faculty in their teaching and research /and or research programs;

- Inform library users of developments in library resources and encourage their wider use of the collection.

Clientele served

All members of the public are welcome to read, study and photocopy in the library during office hours. However, the primary concern is the provision of information services to students and staff within the member colleges. Borrowing privileges are extended to the faculty and students of the member college, who have free borrowing rights. In certain circumstances, borrowing privileges may be extended to others at the discretion of the member college and a fee may be charged for that service.

Access to the Collection

Physical access

Libraries should have regular opening hours and be staffed by a qualified person during business hours.

Some libraries may open on Saturdays for students of the member college. This may be dependent on the availability of students to open up and close the library.

Electronic access – Not all libraries subscribe to all of these online databases, and some do not subscribe to any, so I this paragraph needs to be re-worded.

ACTh member colleges subscribe to several online databases, for example: ATLA Religion Index Database, ATLA Serials (ATLAS) The Religion and Philosophy Collection (RPC), and ProQuest Religion. Where the member college does subscribe to one of these databases, library patrons may access these databases in the library, and registered library members may access these databases remotely by ID and Password.

Interlibrary loans

The member college library provides an interlibrary loan service to faculty and students for items that are not in their own collection. An interlibrary loan form must be completed, and requests must conform to Sections 49 and 50 of the Copyright Act, 1968. A fee may be charged for requests.

Selection principles and procedures

Responsibility for selection

Ultimate responsibility for selection of all library materials lies with the college librarian and the Library Committee. The Library Committee must approve new journal subscriptions and the cancellation of current subscriptions. The Committee will also review journal subscriptions periodically. The librarian may use his/her discretion in making some purchases, for example, to replace missing items.

Selection criteria

Evaluative criteria for all new materials include:

- Value of the content to staff and students (Is the content appropriate to the unit area and the needs of users? Who will find it useful?)
- Currency
- Authoritativeness (Is the author a recognized authority? Does the publisher have a reputation for publishing items of a high standard?)
- Content (Is the information accurate?)
- Relationship to the existing collection (Does the item fill a gap in the collection and/or complement already existing stock?)
- Availability of material in other publications (Is it the best item available on the subject?)
- Availability of material in nearby libraries
- Cost

Priorities

It is recognised that it is not possible for libraries to collect at a comprehensive level in all unit areas or to purchase all items which faculty and students request. The main priority for the library is to maintain a quality theological collection, that is, to cover a wide range of units in some depth. In the unit areas that are judged to have a greater relevance to the college's courses, the aim is to provide coverage of greater depth.

A priority, as funds allow, is to fill gaps in the journal collection and to improve areas of the collection that are currently under resourced. If budgetary constraints occur priority should be given to current items that are likely to have long-term value.

Monographs

Selection of monographs is undertaken in consultation with the Librarian and members of Faculty. Faculty may request particular items or additions to develop and balance the collection in their subject area.

Duplicate copies of some high demand items may be purchased. For items on Closed reserve, it is often useful to have a second copy which can be in circulation.

The main priority of the Library is to cover a wide range of materials in the areas of biblical studies, theology, church history, ethics, preaching and ministry and pastoral care. However, in subject areas judged to have greater relevance to the courses provided by the college, e.g. commentaries on the specific books of the Bible which are covered in a course unit, it is desirable that a more in depth coverage be provided.

All available items on the ACTh's unit bibliographies and on lecturer's reading lists should be purchased. A cross-check should also be made against "Recommended Theological texts" a compilation of all the texts listed in the bibliographies of Australian Theological institutions, compiled by Open Book. New books should be covered with protective covering. Out of print books should be rebound when they start falling apart.

Foreign language material

Most books and journals are purchased in English. The exception is in the area of biblical language material, where items in biblical Hebrew and Greek are purchased. Other foreign language material may be purchased if the subject matter is not adequately covered in English titles, or where it is thought that the material will receive adequate use to justify its purchase, or it is required for research purposes. Consideration could also be given to collecting the works of major theologians in the original language of publication. Those member colleges who teach ACTh courses in a foreign language should ensure that the relevant foreign language material equates to that provided for the equivalent English language course.

Journals

Most of the journals should relate to the areas of biblical studies, theology, church history, ethics, preaching and ministry and pastoral care. However, others such as *The Bulletin* may be included. A list of all journal titles, which includes holdings and missing issues, is kept by the library. Journals should be bound annually. Local distributors should be used to obtain overseas journals when this makes payment easier and mistakes are easier to correct. As more journals become available via online databases it may be appropriate to consider cancelling some hard copy subscriptions for journals available on online full-text databases that the library subscribes to.

Reference

The Reference collection contains encyclopaedias, dictionaries, directories, abstracts, atlases, handbooks etc. to be used solely within the library.

Study Helps

Within this section are also housed ACT handbooks, copies of past exam papers and samples of student essays.

Theses

Theses are collected as donated to the library. There is also a link on the ACTh website to the abstracts of all theses of research awards graduates of ACTh awards.

Closed Reserve

This is a small collection of monographs that may only be used in the library, or borrowed overnight. It consists of material in high demand for courses, and material on reading lists, and reflects the units taught during each semester. There is also a collection of unit handbooks and notes for each unit taught at the college housed in this section.

Vertical File Collection

This is a collection of pamphlets, journal articles and other items too small to be shelved in the general collection. Items may be used in the library, or photocopied, but may not be borrowed. Items are added on a regular basis. – too specific – this may be the practice in some libraries, but not all

Databases and Indexes

Databases and indexes currently available may include:

Online

- ATLA Religion Index
- ATLA Serials
- Religion and Philosophy Collection
- ProQuest Religion

CD ROM

- ATLA Religion Index
- Religion and Theology Abstracts

Print

- New Testament Abstracts
- Old Testament Abstracts

Audio Visual material

This includes audios of lecture series, sermons and conferences, sermons and teaching material in visual formats. Other forms of material may also include DVDs, CDs, MP3, etc. Preference should be given to materials that are not available in book or journal format (e.g. lecture series, sermons, conference talks) or for which there is a benefit in having the material in an audio or visual format.

Special collections

These include collections of rare monographs, local church history collections, etc. These would normally not be available for loan, and be housed in the Librarian's office or another secure location, accessible only by special permission.

Archives

These normally consist of material that is relevant to the history and development of the member college. It includes material such as minutes of meetings, photographs, year books, etc.

Faculty publications

Colleges should have a policy of collecting all faculty publications, and publications by ex-students where they meet the general selection criteria.

Internet and computing facilities

All college libraries should have internet access and word processing facilities. There should also be a photocopier available for library patron use.

Seating and study facilities

Libraries should have sufficient seating for both student and public usage. Study tables and reading areas should also be provided. The larger colleges should also give consideration to providing study rooms where space will permit.

Budget

The ACTh has set the following budgets for all its member colleges:

Library budgets for institutions offering the degrees of the ACTh:

100+ full-time students—\$60,000 for acquisitions (including journals), information services and internet access, and (not included in this figure) one full-time librarian.

50–99 full-time students—\$40,000 for acquisitions (including journals), information services and internet access, and (not included in this figure) a librarian employed at 0.6.

Smaller degree colleges should spend \$10,000 p.a. and an additional \$500 per EFTSU on acquisitions.

Donations

Gifts of books and materials should be subject to the same selection criteria as potential new items for purchase. The librarian reserves the right to add the items to the collection, offer them to other libraries, place the items up for sale, or discard them. Proceeds of sale are directed back to the Library fund. Donations are not normally accepted if there are restrictions placed on the items use or location. The college librarian should ensure that potential donors understand the conditions under which material is accepted. Where appropriate gifts will be acknowledged in writing and a bookplate inserted in volumes that are added to the collection.

Cooperative relationships with other libraries

Because of the escalating cost of books and journal subscriptions, rationalisation of purchases and consultation with other libraries is becoming increasingly important.

Most member colleges of the ACTh are member libraries of ANZTLA (Australian and New Zealand Theological Libraries Association.). It is desirable for the librarian to attend all annual ANZTLA Conferences, held for five days every July. Informal cooperative relationships exist within ANZTLA. Some ACTh member colleges have formal cooperative relationships with other, nearby theological colleges.

Collection Evaluation

A major assessment of the collection on a subject-by-subject basis may be conducted to determine the current level of the collection in each subject area. Methods of doing this include checking the collection against various lists/bibliographies of theological materials and physically examining the material on the shelves. Evaluations may also be performed to determine whether the library is satisfying the information needs of users. It may be useful to conduct a systematic survey of present holdings of books and journals in order to determine the areas of greatest need. It would also be useful to look at the subject spread of current periodicals subscriptions and the relative importance of the subject areas. This may lead to recommendations for cancellations or new titles. Some form of detailed collection evaluation would help to more clearly specify the nature of the collection being developed. Standard collection level codes could be used to indicate both the current and recommended collection levels.

Preservation activity

Regular pest control measures should be maintained.

All books needing repair are dealt with as soon as they are identified as requiring mending. If costs are similar, then replacement of the title is preferred.

An ongoing binding program should be undertaken for scholarly journals which are considered to be in danger of becoming damaged.

Weeding of the collection

A weeding policy is necessary in order for the library to make room for other material as the library develops but also and most importantly, to maintain a useful and up-to-date collection for the fulfilment of the library's aims and objectives.

Weeding of rarely or never used duplicates should take place regularly. Items that may be targeted for weeding include superseded editions, items receiving little or no use, and those in poor physical condition. Weeding should be done at the discretion of the college librarian in consultation with faculty members as appropriate.

Any items weeded will be stamped as withdrawn, initialled and dated and withdrawn from the stock item record. On a subject of significance to the library collection, the last copy of any title should not be discarded. Any items discarded may be made available to students, or other libraries.

Complaints

Any library user may make a complaint about material in the library's collection or material excluded from it. In the first instance the matter will be dealt with informally by the college librarian, who will explain the selection criteria and may refer the complainant to the ACTh's Collection Development Policy. If they wish to take the matter further then the complaint must be put in writing. It will then be taken up at the next Library Committee meeting at the complainant's enrolled college. After a decision is reached the complainant will be notified in writing as to what action, if any, will be taken.

Review of Collection Development Policy

The policy should be flexible and subject to revision, in order to meet the changing needs of member colleges and their library users. It should be responsive to developments and changes in teaching and research programs and in library professional standards and technology.

The librarian, in consultation with the Library Committee, will review the Collection Development policy periodically. Necessary amendments will be made and a revised policy will be produced.

Responsibility for the implementation of the Collection Development Policy rests with the Librarian, under the oversight of the Library Committee.

Note: This policy has drawn strongly upon existing policies supplied to the Australian College of Theology by other institutions, but mainly from Ridley College Melbourne and Trinity Theological College Western Australia.
