

Introduction

The guidelines described below apply to gifts made for the general collections of Howard-Tilton Memorial Library. They focus on workflow and selection considerations, and are largely intended for internal purposes. Their main points are reflected in more condensed public-focused statements for potential donors. The general collections support the pedagogical, research, and creative needs of Tulane University. They are distinct from the collections provided by Tulane's separate libraries supporting its professional schools of law, business, and the health sciences. The general collections include a variety of physical resources housed at the main library and its off-site storage facility. They include resources in non-print formats such as sound and video recordings, microfilm and newspapers housed in the library's Media Services department. Most items in the general collections circulate, i.e., they are available to authorized borrowers for check out.

Separate considerations apply to gifts for Tulane University Special Collections (TUSC) and The Latin American Library (LAL). For examples, see this [TUSC giving statement](#) and this [LAL giving statement](#).

Acceptance of Gifts

The library accepts only gifts of physical materials that have evident academic or research value to students and faculty at Tulane University. Of particular interest are materials created by or representative of marginalized and underrepresented groups, as well as content relevant to the study of New Orleans and its surrounding region. The library seeks to build diverse collections as described by the American Library Association's [Diverse Collections: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights](#).

To allocate its financial and human resources in a way that provides the greatest overall benefit to its users, the library can no longer accept gifts of popular literature or academic materials likely to be duplicated by materials already represented in its collections. Unmediated drop-off donations are not accepted.

Interested parties are encouraged to contact an appropriate [subject liaison librarian](#) directly when they believe they may have individual items of special research value. Otherwise, those with general gifts are asked to look for alternatives. The American Library Association maintains a useful [guide to book donation programs](#).

Accepted gifts are placed on gifts shelves where they are reviewed individually before being added to the collections.

Inquiries about gifts are forwarded to appropriate subject liaison librarians or, with offers of special collections material, to the appropriate contact.

The library staff is prevented by Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations from appraising the value or potential value of gifts.

Materials Accepted Under the Conditions Above

- Hardback books in good condition in topical areas that support the curriculum

- Quality paperbacks in good condition in topical areas that support the curriculum
- Music scores
- Music compact discs
- Films in DVD format

Materials Not Accepted

- Books of little use in an academic library such as "how to" books, vanity press publications, and condensed books (e.g. Reader's Digest)
- Books in poor condition such as damaged, dirty, moldy, missing pages, or heavily marked or underlined
- Incomplete or broken sets (unless needed to complete gaps in the collection)
- Popular magazines (unless currently collected and needed to complete gaps in the collection)
- Commonly collected, incomplete, or short runs of academic journals
- Current newspapers
- Encyclopedias (e.g. World Book)
- Inspirational literature
- Directories or telephone books
- Old textbooks (particularly in the sciences)
- Custom course materials
- Laboratory and repair manuals
- Most artifacts (objects)
- Workbooks and activity books
- Off prints such as a separately printed articles from a magazine or photocopies
- Materials in obsolete formats
- Pirated copies of CDs, DVDs, or other recordings

Selection

The criteria for selection of gift items are the same as for materials that are to be purchased and based largely on the potential value of the items to Tulane's academic programs. Adding volumes that duplicate existing collection holdings occurs only when demand for them clearly warrants the action.

Processing of Gifts

Processing of items selected from the gift shelves is part of the library's normal workflow, but the library makes no special commitment as to the time taken to process gifts.

Disposal of Unneeded Gift Material

Donors should be made aware that the library reserves the right to dispose of gift material not selected for addition to its collections. Disposition may be accomplished through sale to used book vendors or other means.

Acknowledging Gifts

Once accepted, the library will acknowledge, in writing, each gift in a timely fashion. The requirement to acknowledge gifts does not apply when gifts arrive without information about who donated the material or materials distributed by authors, organizations, or publishers. The process of ensuring these acknowledgements begins for each donation with a Request for Letter of Acknowledgement for Gifts form filled out by the Technical Services staff member assigned to

handle gifts. This form identifies the donor, describes the donation, and is forwarded the library's administrative office where an acknowledgement letter is prepared and signed by the Dean of Libraries and Academic Information Resources. Then it is forwarded to the donor through Tulane's Development Office, which is responsible for communicating official gift acknowledgement to the donor.

Large Gifts Guidelines

These guidelines establish parameters for the selection, acquisition, review, processing and disposition of large gifts. Presently, the shelf space available for the general collections can accommodate only minimal growth from new selections. Therefore, large gifts would be acceptable only under very special circumstances.

Assumptions

- Subject liaison librarians may not commit the library to acquire or accept a large gift without approval
- Large donations require a written record of the donor's and the library's agreed understanding regarding ownership of the gift. For this, see these examples of Deed of Gift forms provided by the Office of Advancement:
 - [Deed of Gift Form for Common Donations Without Copyright](#)
 - [Deed of of Gift Form for Donations in Which the Donor Holds Copyright](#)
- A copy of this record, when completed, should be kept by library administrative office with another provided to the Office of Advancement

Actions

- Determining initially whether a large gift would be suitable for the collection is the responsibility of the appropriate subject liaison librarian. The determination should be based primarily on the contents of the collection and its potential value to Tulane's academic programs. Other factors such as condition, costs of processing, and staff are also considered. Generally, it is the donor's responsibility to arrange for the packing and shipping of a collection to the library. The subject liaison librarian should ask the donor for a list of the contents of the collection and assess the intellectual value of its contents, preferably by means of a physical inspection. Samples of titles should be checked against the library's holdings to determine if a reasonable percentage of the titles are not yet held. How and where the donated materials would be stored or shelved is solely the library's decision. Requests to shelve donated collections separately generally cannot be accommodated due to space limitations and considerations for long-term maintenance.
- Large gifts require provisions for packing, transport, staging in an area where individual items can be reviewed, and a plan for processing. The reviewing space should be secure, environmentally appropriate, and conveniently accessible to staff for processing.
- If a large gift is deemed sufficiently valuable to consider for acceptance, the subject liaison librarian will make a recommendation to the Associate Dean. After consultation with the Director of Technical Services, and others as appropriate, the Associate Dean will inform the subject liaison librarian whether they can proceed with the acceptance of the donated gift.
- Physical items given to the library as part of a valuable gift generally are provided with a bookplate indicating the source of the gift.

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