

Collection Development Policy

It is part of the Library's mission to provide the strongest collections for the support of University programs that available resources will permit. This Collection Development Policy has been prepared in response to the need for rationalization of the allocation of Library resources. It seeks to identify long- and short-range needs of library users and to establish priorities and goals in collection building. The policy is a primary tool for planning the orderly and fiscally responsible development of the Library collections. In the present era of restricted budgets, periodic revision of this document will assist the Library in furnishing maximum possible support to priority programs while maintaining adequate support in other areas. This policy will also serve as a vehicle for planning Library support for programs to be introduced or expanded.

General Collecting Principles

For most academic disciplines, the emphasis in collecting will be on currently published materials. There are, however, legitimate and compelling reasons to emphasize retrospective collection building in some areas.

Purchases of duplicate materials will be avoided except where special need is demonstrated.

It is the Library's policy not to acquire books simply because they are required for student purchase in specific courses. This does not preclude adding such material whenever appropriate to the collection through the normal selection process.

Material of general popular interest (how-to books, repair manuals, genealogy, best sellers, etc.) will receive very low priority for acquisition unless it relates directly to University programs. Patrons may be referred to the Public Library for such material.

Academic Freedom Statement

The Library supports fully Article 9.1 of the NIU Constitution, which reads, "Freedom of thought, inquiry, and scholarly and artistic expression is fundamental and essential to the maintenance of the academic community. In all of its actions, the University shall act to uphold this principle and to create an environment totally conducive to the unfettered exploration of ideas, pursuit of knowledge, and scholarly and artistic expression." The Library also ascribes to the American Library Association Bill of Rights and the ALA Interpretation of the Bill of Rights (Appendix A, B, and C of this Document). Persons who feel that they have a concern about material resources and activities of the Library are directed to the office of the Associate Dean for Collections and Technical Services for a form (see Appendix D) detailing their concerns. This form will be taken to the Management Group, consisting of the Dean of the Libraries, the Associate Dean for Public Services, the Associate Dean for Collections and Technical Services, and the Assistant Dean for Automated Systems. A reply to each query will be returned promptly.

Respect for Cultural Diversity

The Library supports fully Article II of the Library Bill of Rights (see Appendix A), "Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval." It also supports the Interpretation of the above (see Appendix B), "A balanced collection reflects a

diversity of materials, not an equality of numbers. Collection development responsibilities include selecting materials in the languages in common use in the community which the library serves. Collection development and the selection of materials should be done according to professional standards and established selection and review procedures."

Selection Responsibility

Selection of library material for purchase requires the effective cooperation of library and other teaching/research faculties. The Library encourages departmental faculty participation in the process and relies on the faculty's subject expertise to assist in the building of strong subject collections. The final responsibility for the adequacy and quality of the collections rests with the Library administration in general and the individual library faculty members within their areas of responsibility.

Gifts

The Library recognizes the importance of donors in building strong collections and wishes to increase their participation in this process. Individuals are invited to create library endowment funds to enhance the general library collection, a specific collection, or a subject area. The minimum requirement for such a fund is \$10,000. This sum may be paid in installments over a period of three years. All funds shall be considered permanent endowments and shall be invested in accordance with the policies set forth by the NIU Foundation Board. Only the net income generated from such funds shall be used for the purpose designated by the donor(s). Donors may reserve the right to increase the principal of the fund they establish through additional gifts and will permit others to contribute to the fund. Donations of smaller amounts to the general library endowment or to specific areas are also very welcome.

It is preferred that gifts of money and materials to the Library be made without conditions. The Collection Development Policy will assist librarians in making retention decisions regarding donated material. It is understood that the Library does not perform gift appraisals for estate or tax purposes but will assist donors in obtaining them.

Weeding and Storage

The NIU Libraries, as a research library, takes a subject-oriented and conservative approach to weeding. Every effort is made to replace materials that are lost or worn beyond repair. Criteria for deselection of materials are listed in the Libraries' administrative handbook, policy number 063. Weeding decisions at the broad level are made by subject specialist in consultation with faculty from other departments. Each subject collection development policy indicates the level of weeding and storage appropriate for that subject area, with reference to the guidelines listed in the Collection Depth Indicators (Appendix E).

Storage of materials on-site and off-site is governed by the need for rapid access to the materials and their level of use. Storage decisions at the broad level are made by subject specialists in consultation with faculty from other departments.

Procedure

In preparing this and the subject level collection development policies, an attempt has been made to follow standard practices of collection development. In this light, the Library has accepted the

use of the Collection Level Indicators (Appendix E), revised in 1996 and 1997 under the auspices of the Research Libraries Group, the Association of Research Libraries and WLN/OCLC (Western Library Network/ OCLC). These levels are used when evaluating collections for program review and when determining the appropriate level of collecting within individual subject disciplines.

Appendix A

LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; amended June 28, 1967; amended January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 24, 1996

Appendix B

CHALLENGED MATERIALS

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The American Library Association declares as a matter of firm principle that it is the responsibility of every library to have a clearly defined materials selection policy in written form which reflects the Library Bill of Rights, and which is approved by the appropriate governing authority.

Challenged materials which meet the criteria for selection in the materials selection policy of the library should not be removed under any legal or extra-legal pressure. The Library Bill of Rights states in Article I that "Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation," and in Article II, that "Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval." Freedom of expression is protected by the Constitution of the United States, but constitutionally protected expression is often separated from unprotected expression only by a dim and uncertain line. The Constitution requires a procedure designed to focus searchingly on challenged expression before it can be suppressed. An adversary hearing is a part of this procedure. Therefore, any attempt, be it legal or extra-legal, to regulate or suppress materials in libraries must be closely scrutinized to the end that protected expression is not abridged.

Adopted June 25, 1971; amended July 1, 1981; amended January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council.

[ISBN 8389-6083-9]

Appendix C

DIVERSITY IN COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

An Interpretation of the LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

Throughout history, the focus of censorship has fluctuated from generation to generation. Books and other materials have not been selected or have been removed from library collections for many reasons, among which are prejudicial language and ideas, political content, economic theory, social philosophies, religious beliefs, sexual forms of expression, and other topics of a potentially controversial nature.

Some examples of censorship may include removing or not selecting materials because they are considered by some as racist or sexist; not purchasing conservative religious materials; not selecting materials about or by minorities because it is thought these groups or interests are not represented in a community; or not providing information on or materials from non-mainstream political entities.

Librarians may seek to increase user awareness of materials on various social concerns by many means, including, but not limited to, issuing bibliographies and presenting exhibits and programs.

Librarians have a professional responsibility to be inclusive, not exclusive, in collection development and in the provision of interlibrary loan. Access to all materials legally obtainable should be assured to the user, and policies should not unjustly exclude materials even if they are offensive to the librarian or the user. Collection development should reflect the philosophy inherent in Article II of the Library Bill of Rights: "Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval." A balanced collection reflects a diversity of materials, not an equality of numbers. Collection development responsibilities include selecting materials in the languages in common use in the community which the library serves. Collection development and the selection of materials should be done according to professional standards and established selection and review procedures.

There are many complex facets to any issue, and variations of context in which issues may be expressed, discussed, or interpreted. Librarians have a professional responsibility to be fair, just, and equitable and to give all library users equal protection in guarding against violation of the library patron's right to read, view, or listen to materials and resources protected by the First Amendment, no matter what the viewpoint of the author, creator, or selector. Librarians have an obligation to protect library collections from removal of materials based on personal bias or prejudice, and to select and support the access to materials on all subjects that meet, as closely as possible, the needs and interests of all persons in the community which the library serves. This includes materials that reflect political, economic, religious, social, minority, and sexual issues.

Intellectual freedom, the essence of equitable library services, provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause, or movement may be explored. Toleration is meaningless without tolerance for what some may consider detestable. Librarians cannot justly permit their own preferences to limit their degree of tolerance in collection development, because freedom is indivisible.

Adopted July 14, 1982; amended January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council. [ISBN 8389-6552-0]

Appendix D

Request for Reconsideration of Library Resources

Return this form to Associate Dean, Collections and Technical Services, Founders Memorial Library, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL 60115.

The University Libraries have delegated the responsibility for selection and evaluation of library material resources to library faculty responsible for the particular subject area, and have established reconsideration procedures to address concerns about those resources. Completion of this form is the first step in those procedures. If you wish to request reconsideration of library resources, please return the completed form to the Associate Dean for Collections and Technical Services. The process for reconsideration of the placement of library resources is detailed in the University Libraries Overall Collection Development Policy.

Name _____

Date _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip code _____

E-mail Address: _____ Phone _____

Do you represent self? Organization?

Association with the University: Faculty Staff Student Alumni

Other (Please specify) _____

1. Resource on which you are commenting: Book Textbook Video Display
Magazine Library Program Audio Recording Newspaper Electronic
information/network (please specify) _____ Other _____

Title _____

Author/Producer _____

2. What brought this resource to your attention?

3. Have you examined the entire resource?

4. What concerns you about the resource? (use other side or additional pages if necessary)

5. Are there resource(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

Revised by the American Library Association Intellectual Freedom Committee

June 27, 1995

Appendix E

COLLECTION DEPTH INDICATORS

Introduction

The collection depth indicators are numerical values that are used to describe a library's collecting activity levels and goals. They are used to characterize three different aspects of collection management at the division, category and subject levels:

- current collection level (CL)
- acquisition commitment (AC)
- collection goal (GL)

The definitions of these codes or collection depth indicators were revised in 1996 and 1997 under the auspices of the Research Libraries Group, the Association of Research Libraries and WLN. More than 30 active conspectus users from the United States and other countries worked together to update the original language in a way that would improve the use of the definitions while neither diminishing nor changing the sense of codes applied during previous assessments.

The revised definitions are intended to apply uniformly to all subjects. They reflect the changing nature of collections in an electronic environment with access in addition to ownership as a viable option. Additionally, these collection depth indicators address nonprint formats. Development of supplemental guidelines is also appropriate to communicate meanings within particular subjects, for example, fiction, architecture, or chemistry.

Nonprint Inclusion

Some topics require information in visual, aural and other nonprint formats, whether at the basic level or beyond. Such topics include, but are not limited to, dance, music, and the other performing arts. To determine the appropriate collection depth indicator to use for topics in which nonprint resources are essential, add the phrase *appropriate nonprint media* to the line detailing the collecting of monographs and reference works. For example, the Basic Information Level (1) for a music collection would include "a limited collection of monographs, reference works and appropriate nonprint media materials."

Electronic Resources

Electronic resources are equivalent to print materials at any level as long as the policies and procedures for their use permit at least an equivalent information-gathering experience. Electronic journals, whether remotely or locally stored, are at least equivalent to print journals if:

- access to the electronic resource is at least equal to access to the print product (including graphics, charts and other features);
- there is access to a sufficient number of terminals and lines; and
- the information comes at no additional cost to the patron.

Similarly, a full text electronic archive of monographs, periodicals, images, etc., whether loaded locally or accessed over the Internet, is also equal to the original format if patron access and cost are equal or superior to the print format for the same information or item.

The term *defined access* is used within the collection depth indicators to mean more than simply providing patrons with access to the Internet and one or more Internet browsers. Defined access

refers to menu options on the library's or institution's web interface which link the user to owned or remotely accessed electronic resources selected by the library with the needs of its patrons in mind. The level of defined access changes according to the level of the collection, that is, from limited to extensive to very extensive access to collections of electronic information.

Document delivery

Document delivery services that are not instantaneous are not the same as those providing immediate availability on site or electronically. The conspectus methodology measures resources owned by a library and those resources that are immediately accessible to the customer. The conspectus does not attempt to measure what may be obtained on a delayed basis from another collection, library, or vendor, whether the delay is 10 hours or 10 days. Conspectus users should feel free to provide details in the comments field about library user services which supplement but do not replace the library's owned resources.

Structure of the collection depth indicators

The collection depth indicators represent a continuum from the Basic Information level through the Research level. These are not equal incremental steps, however, since the difference from one level to the next may be measured both in terms of quantity and quality and the amount of materials necessary to move from one level to the next greatly increases as one moves up the scale. In most instances, each successive level includes the elements, formats and characteristics of the previous levels. This means that a Research level collection contains not only those elements in the *Research level (4)* definition but also those elements in each of the previous levels --*Basic Information (1)*, *Study (2)*, and *Instruction Support (3)*.

The RLG Conspectus definitions include 5 collection depth indicators for collection description. The WLN Conspectus definitions include subdivisions to provide a total of 10 collection depth indicators to provide further distinction and clarity for small and medium-size libraries. The basic collection depth indicators provide the general umbrella definitions and the WLN subdivisions make further distinctions that fit into the larger structure. Libraries wishing to use conspectus information in a cooperative project must determine ahead of time whether to use the 5 point scale or the expanded 10 point scale.

Collection Depth Indicator Definitions

OUT OF SCOPE

The library does not intentionally collect materials in any format for this subject.

MINIMAL INFORMATION LEVEL

Collections that support minimal inquiries about this subject and include a very limited collection of general resources, including monographs and reference works. Periodicals directly dealing with this topic and in-depth electronic information resources are not collected.

The collection should be frequently and systematically reviewed for currency of information. Superseded editions and titles containing outdated information should be withdrawn. Classic or standard retrospective materials may be retained.

MINIMAL INFORMATION LEVEL, UNEVEN COVERAGE

- Few selections and an unsystematic representation of the subject

- Supports limited, specific service needs
- Consistently maintained even though coverage is limited

MINIMAL INFORMATION LEVEL, FOCUSED COVERAGE

- Few selections, but a systematic representation of the subject
- Includes basic authors, some core works and a spectrum of points of view
- Consistently maintained

BASIC INFORMATION LEVEL

Collections that introduce and define a subject, indicate the varieties of information available elsewhere, and support the needs of general library users through the first two years of college instruction include:

- A limited collection of general monographs and reference tools
- A limited collection of representative general periodicals
- Defined access to a limited collection of owned or remotely-accessed electronic bibliographic tools, texts, data sets, journals, etc.
- The collection should be frequently and systematically reviewed for currency of information. Superseded editions and titles containing outdated information should be withdrawn. Classic or standard retrospective materials may be retained.

BASIC INFORMATION LEVEL, INTRODUCTORY

Limited collections of introductory monographs and reference tools that include:

- Basic explanatory works
- Histories of the development of the topic
- General works about the field and its important personages
- General encyclopedias, periodical indexes and statistical sources
- This collection is sufficient to support the inquiries of patrons and students through high school attempting to locate general information about a subject.

BASIC INFORMATION LEVEL, ADVANCED

Collections of general periodicals and a broader and more in-depth array of introductory monographs and reference tools that include:

- Basic explanatory works
- Histories of the development of the topic
- General works about the field and its important personages
- A broader array of general encyclopedias, periodical indexes, and statistical sources
- A limited collection of representative general periodicals
- Defined access to a limited collection of owned or remotely accessed electronic bibliographic tools, texts, data sets, journals, etc.
- This collection is sufficient to support the basic informational and recreational reading needs of an educated general public or students through the first two years of college.

STUDY OR INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT LEVEL

Collections that provide information about a subject in a systematic way, but at a level of less than research intensity and support the needs of general library users through college and beginning graduate instruction include:

- An extensive collection of general monographs and reference works and selected specialized monographs and reference works
- An extensive collection of general periodicals and a representative collection of specialized periodicals
- Limited collections of appropriate materials in languages other than the primary language of the collection and the country, for example, materials to aid in learning a language for non-native speakers or literature in the original language, such as German poetry in German or Spanish history in Spanish
- Extensive collections of the works of well-known authors and selections from the works of lesser-known authors
- Defined access to a broad collection of owned or remotely-accessed electronic resources, including bibliographic tools, texts, data sets, journals, etc.
- The collection should be systematically reviewed for currency of information and for assurance that essential and important information is retained, including significant numbers of retrospective materials.

BASIC STUDY OR INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT LEVEL

Resources adequate for imparting and maintaining knowledge about the primary topics of a subject area that include:

- A high percentage of the most important literature or core works in the field
- An extensive collection of general monographs and reference works
- An extensive collection of general periodicals and indexes/abstracts
- Other than those in the primary collection language, materials are limited to learning materials for non-native speakers and representative well-known authors in the original language, primarily for language education
- Defined access to appropriate electronic resources
- This collection supports undergraduate courses, as well as the independent study needs of the lifelong learner.

INTERMEDIATE STUDY OR INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT LEVEL

Resources adequate for imparting and maintaining knowledge about more specialized subject areas which provide more comprehensive coverage of the subject with broader and more in-depth materials that include:

- A high percentage of the most important literature or core works in the field, including retrospective resources
- An extensive collection of general monographs and reference works and selected specialized monographs and reference works
- An extensive collection of general periodicals and a representative collection of specialized periodicals and indexes/abstracts
- A selection of resources in other languages, including well-known authors in the original language

- Defined access to a broad range of specialized electronic resources
- This collection supports upper division undergraduate courses.

ADVANCED STUDY OR INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT LEVEL

Resources adequate for imparting and maintaining knowledge about all aspects of the topic which are more extensive than the intermediate level but less than those needed for doctoral and independent research that include:

- An almost complete collection of core works including significant numbers of retrospective materials and resources
- A broader collection of specialized works by lesser-known, as well as well-known authors
- An extensive collection of general and specialized monographs and reference works
- An extensive collection of general and specialized periodicals and indexes/abstracts
- A selection of resources in other languages, including well-known authors in the original language and a selection of subject-specific materials in appropriate languages.
- Defined access to a broad range of specialized electronic resources
- This collection supports master's degree level programs as well as other specialized inquiries.

RESEARCH LEVEL

Collections that contain the major published source materials required for doctoral study and independent research include:

- A very extensive collection of general and specialized monographs and reference works
- A very extensive collection of general and specialized periodicals
- Extensive collections of appropriate materials in languages other than the primary language of the country and collection
- Extensive collections of the works of both well-known and lesser-known authors
- Defined access to a very extensive collection of owned or remotely accessed electronic resources, including bibliographic tools, texts, data sets, journals, etc.
- Older material is retained and systematically preserved to serve the needs of historical research.

COMPREHENSIVE LEVEL

Collections in a specifically defined field of knowledge that strive to be exhaustive as far as is reasonably possible (i.e., "special collections"), in all applicable languages include:

- Exhaustive collections of published materials
- Very extensive manuscript collections
- Very extensive collections in all other pertinent formats
- Older material is retained and systematically preserved to serve the needs of historical research. A comprehensive level collection may serve as a national or international resource.

Language Coverage Indicators

The language coverage indicators defined below are a major change from those originally developed for the RLG Conspectus. The language indicators have been revised so they can be used in many countries and cultures.

Language coverage is closely linked to collection indicator levels. The extent of the collection in the primary language of the country and library, as well as the extent of other languages within the collection helps to determine the collection level indicator for each segment. Language coverage qualifies and amplifies collection levels. In addition to the primary or predominant language, other language coverage is essential for collections at the 3, 4, or 5 level. Generally, the higher the assessment level, the broader or more extensive the additional language coverage expected.

Language indicators may be added to the collection depth indicators for collection level, acquisition commitment and collection goals when appropriate.

- **P--** Primary language of the country predominates—little or no other-language material
- **S--** Selected other-language material included in addition to the primary language
- **W--** Wide selection of languages represented
- **X--** Material is mainly in one language other than the primary language of the library and country

While the above language indicators may be adapted to fit most circumstances, there are instances when further adaptation of the conspectus tool is necessary. Countries such as Canada and New Zealand have dual official national or regional languages. Other countries may also have two languages that predominate, either officially or unofficially. The following additional code is suggested for use in such circumstances. The collection management policy will serve to explain any unique circumstances for language as for other collection characteristics.

- **D--** Dual languages or two primary languages predominate with little or no other-language material

The Canadian Association of Research Libraries has used a special language code since 1986 to accommodate their unique language issues. The WLN Conspectus software supports use of these special

The comments field should be utilized to indicate which language(s) is represented in addition to the primary or dual languages for a subject, category, or division. The use of the comments field for this purpose provides specific information to explain the use of a language code beyond "P" (primary) or "D" (dual) and allows for the report function to generate a list of all subjects supported by any language of interest.

Preservation Indicators

Preservation indicators state intended action toward care of the physical condition of materials and the maintenance or archiving of the intellectual content of information in print, electronic, or other nonprint formats. For levels 1 through 5 protection of the collection from undue exposure to water, dirt, or abusive handling is assumed as the fundamental handling standard. Developing a preservation policy as part of the collection management policy provides a basis for collection housing, retention, replacement, or binding decisions.

OUT OF SCOPE

No preservation treatment/planned deterioration.

NORMAL WEAR

Material is retained for its useful life.

PHYSICAL PRESERVATION LEVEL

Some cleaning and mending may be used to repair damage from normal use. Material is retained for its useful life. Environmental conditions are maintained for the average conditions acceptable for most formats in the collection.

CONTENT PRESERVATION LEVEL/PLANNED REPLACEMENT

The intellectual content is preserved. The material may be kept in the original format or may be transferred to a more stable or usable format. The original material may be discarded. Environmental conditions are maintained for the average conditions acceptable for most formats in the collection.

RESEARCH CONSERVATION LEVEL

Resources are preserved or archived in their original formats using restoration and repair methods. Intellectual content is archived in the original format and additional formats. Environmental conditions are maintained for optimal housing of varied formats.

COMPREHENSIVE ARCHIVING AND CONSERVATION LEVEL

Material in this category includes items with high informational, artifactual, or monetary values. Restoration and damage prevention are practiced. Controlled environmental conditions are maintained to preserve the material in its original format and in optimal physical condition. Necessary technology is maintained for using materials in their original formats. Environmental conditions are maintained for optimal, archival housing.

Criteria considered in selecting preservation options include:

- Mission and objectives of the library
- Collection management policy
- Importance of the material to the collection
- Policies regarding housing and handling of the material
- Cooperative collection management agreements
- Points to consider when assigning preservation indicators during shelf observation:
 - Physical condition
 - Past and potential use
 - Significance of individual items, last copy, uniqueness
 - Artifactual value of the item, uniqueness
 - Availability of the material in other libraries
 - Cost effectiveness of the preservation or conservation treatment
 - Availability of staff and treatment facilities
 - Suitability and availability of alternative formats (Davis, 1994a; Jakimow, 1996).

Alternate Collection Depth Indicators – Fiction and Children's

Because of the special nature of some collections, notably fiction collections in public libraries that often are not classified and children's materials, the following alternate methods have been designed by librarians to handle the assignment of depth indicators to these resources. However, careful consideration should be given to how these alternate indicators fit with the main collection depth indicators. Using the capabilities of the conspectus software, these alternate indicators could be used in the comments field to create an interdisciplinary division or searchable comments report that would separately report on children's or fiction resources.

Fiction Indicators

Fiction materials may be assessed within the existing LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND LINGUISTICS line numbers; or these materials may be assessed as a fiction division. Categories and subjects may be genres, formats, or reading levels. Sometimes the division name indicates the reading level, e.g., JUVENILE FICTION. Many libraries organize and arrange fiction materials differently from nonfiction materials and may prefer to use the following collection depth indicators which were developed particularly for fiction materials (Baker & Boze, 1992).

It is appropriate to use the language indicators with the fiction indicators. The addition of nonprint and electronic formats enrich fiction collections and should be included in the assessment. Nonprint and electronic materials may be assessed within appropriate genres or may be treated as subdivisions of genres. Consistency of approach in method for all divisions of the assessment is desirable. Inclusion of award winning fiction titles in a collection indicates a collection which meets a more in-depth reading level. The comments field may be utilized to retrieve information about formats or other significant characteristics in reports.

In general, Level 1 and 2 collections meet local needs; Level 3 collections meet regional needs; and Level 4 and 5 collections support scholarly inquiry. A library's goals will determine how extensively it should collect on this scale. Most public libraries will collect at a Level 1 or 2. A handful of larger libraries may collect at Level 3, and a very few libraries may aspire to collect at Levels 4 or 5.

OUT OF SCOPE

The library does not collect fiction of this type.

MINIMAL LEVEL, UNEVEN COVERAGE

The collection includes some fictional works of this type, but development is uneven.

MINIMAL LEVEL, FOCUSED COVERAGE

The collection includes a small collection of fictional works of this type with the most well-known authors represented.

BASIC LEVEL, INTRODUCTORY

The collection includes the most important authors and core titles. However, the collection is not sufficiently intensive to support the wide-ranging recreational reading demands of a highly-educated general public.

BASIC LEVEL, ADVANCED

The collection includes the most important authors and core titles and there is some duplication of popular titles (whether they be classic, standard, or current best-selling materials) in order to more fully

RESOURCE, STUDY, OR INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT LEVEL

The collection includes most well-known authors and standard titles in quantities sufficient to meet the fiction needs of a highly-educated general public. The collection is comprehensive enough that the library can serve as a resource library at a regional level.

RESEARCH LEVEL

The collection of fiction is extensive, including a very wide range of current and classic materials in quantities sufficient to meet the demand of patrons at the local and regional levels. The library retains older materials (especially last copies of unique items) for purposes of historical research.

COMPREHENSIVE LEVEL

The collection serves as a research resource for scholars using fiction materials in their studies. The collection includes, so far as is reasonably possible, all significant works of fiction, in all applicable languages and in a variety of formats.

Children's Collection Depth Indicators

Children's nonfiction and fiction materials may be assessed with the collection depth indicators 0-5, using a perspective that interprets the indicators in relation to children's program objectives, authors, and reading levels. A variety of criteria may be used to evaluate materials and assign collection depth indicators. These measures will include the selection standards for children's material in the library's collection management statement. Some examples of these criteria include:

- Inclusion of appropriate graphics
- Special awareness of format variety
- Inclusion of suitable formats for the intended use of the material and for the subject matter
- Incorporation of recognized children's authors
- Award winning titles
- Popularity
- Curriculum support
- Support for the children's programming roles in carrying out the library's mission.

Interpreting the collection depth indicators from the perspective of children's or young adult materials can be thought of as a sliding scale moving from 0-5;

- **0**-- library does not collect children's materials
- **1**-- a general collection of popular titles
- **2**-- broader general collection of standard titles, meeting needs for elementary, middle and high school homework assignments, general multimedia tools and periodicals
- **3**-- a wide range of materials including older materials, classics, a variety of languages, formats and indexes, meeting the needs for studies in children's literature
- **4**-- a very extensive collection including older materials, classics, a variety of languages, formats and indexes, meeting the needs of scholastic researchers in children's literature
- **5**-- an exhaustive collection in all languages and formats, with historical depth

This scale is similar to the range that pertains to other materials within the collection, and is applicable both for collections where children's materials are intershelved with the adult collection and for those where children's materials are shelved separately (Anderson, 1996; Doll & Ban-on, 1991).

GOAL AND ACTIVITY LEVELS

The following goal and activity levels are the four aspects that are used in the conspectus to create the collection profile. For each WLN Conspectus line that is assessed, a numerical value is assigned to each of these four levels. The overview of a collection is recorded and reported through the use of the collection depth indicators in the goal and activity level fields. These indicators, which were defined in the previous pages, reflect a judgment concerning the depth and breadth of specific subject areas. The indicators express the status of a library's collection goal and activity levels. The four goal and activity levels are:

- Current Collection (CL)
- Acquisition Commitment (AC)
- Collection Goal (GL)
- Preservation Commitment (PC)

Current Collection (CL) reflects the strength of the *existing collection*. The CL compares the collection to what is available worldwide and identifies its ability to meet the mission of the library.

Acquisition Commitment (AC), or growth rate, is *the current level of activity at which the collection is being developed*. It is normally based on recent acquisition information including new titles purchased and gift additions to the collection.

Collection Goal (GL) represents a *target level* to which a library plans to build its collection in order to meet user needs.

Preservation Commitment (PC) reflects the level of commitment *to preserving the intellectual content of the material or conserving the physical materials* in a particular subject area.

The numeric ratings used for reporting the current collection level, acquisition rate and collection goals are the collection depth indicators ranging from 0 -*Out of Scope* to 5 *Comprehensive*. The indicators are meant to describe the current collection or acquisition level, and are not intended to rate that collection as good or bad. Collection goals are based on the library's mission and its client needs. Evaluation and decisions about collection management enter the process when comparison of the current collection level (CL) and acquisition commitment (AC) is made to the collection goal (GL) and preservation commitment (PC).

Determining goal levels is primarily a process of judgment based on experience, knowledge and collected data. Librarians' confidence in their own abilities to make informed judgments is important. Assignment of goal levels is not quantitatively precise, like measuring temperature, but it communicates useful and relative distinctions within a range on a continuum. The continuum used in collection assessment is the range of collection depth indicators from *Out of Scope* 0 to *Comprehensive* 5.

The decision of how to treat special groups of material in the collection such as fiction, children's and young adult collections should be based on the collection management needs of the local library. Interdisciplinary divisions and notes in the comments field are conspectus software features that may be used effectively to create reports relevant to important materials groupings in the library's collection. If the library is involved in a consortium or cooperative collection management

project, assessment results will be most useful if all libraries use the same guidelines for reporting assessment results.

In reviewing goal and activity levels, all forms of material and methods of acquisition should be considered. For example, audiovisual materials, realia, newspapers, manuscripts, microforms, maps, government documents, CD-ROMs, and computer software should be considered, as well as books and journals. Purchases, gifts, and exchanges should all be considered. All materials, cataloged and uncataloged, housed in special collections, and non-circulating as well as circulating materials are included. An assessment provides a description of the library's total resources.

AN ASSESSMENT PROVIDES A DESCRIPTION OF THE LIBRARY'S TOTAL RESOURCES

Current Collection (CL)

The Current Collection (CL) describes the strength of the library's entire collection relative to the available literature in a particular subject area.

Acquisition Commitment (AC)

Acquisition Commitment (AC) describes the growth rate for the collection. It reflects the current level of activity at which the collection is actually being developed during the time period in which collecting activity is being examined, usually within the last year or two. Activity means any activity in which materials are added to or removed from the collection. The Acquisition Commitment is useful for comparison with the Collection Goal, with budget requirements, with publishing output and with the Current Collection level.

Collection Goal (GL)

The Collection Goal (GL) designates the current and anticipated need of the collection based on the library's mission, programs and clientele. It is the level recommended by the library's Collection Management Policy.

Preservation Commitment (PC)

Any library, regardless of size, is involved in some way with decisions about conservation and preservation. The physical condition of the collection is related to the library's goals for service, level of use and collection management policies. The best decisions will result if conservation and preservation are planned activities governed by guides or policies. The best approach is systematic rather than random. Decisions about replacing lost or damaged materials are conservation and preservation issues that have a cost impact.

The conspectus methodology provides the means of recording decisions relating to preservation and conservation through the assigning of preservation indicators and the inclusion of specific preservation notes in the Assessment File record. These reflect a library's level of commitment to preserving the intellectual content of the material, including any commitment to the conservation of the physical materials in a particular subject area (Jakimow, 1996; Anderson, 1996; Reed-Scott, 1988; Wilson, 1990).

Preservation Assessment

Preservation assessment is a separate process that reviews collections and library facilities to accomplish the following results:

- Identify potential physical hazards to the collection during a building survey;
- Prioritize areas of the collections for preservation action;
- Identify preservation actions required to insure the long-term preservation of collections.

A preservation assessment should be conducted following guidelines such as those developed by the Northeast Documents Preservation Council. The information gathered about the collection's preservation status will enable librarians to develop preservation priorities. These results should be used to develop a preservation plan with goals which address binding, replacement, purchasing priorities, environmental control, cleaning and maintenance, handling methods, repair and content preservation. This preservation plan should then be incorporated into the collection management plan. The preservation assessment may be conducted before or after the collection assessment.