Hege Library Collection Revitalization Statement
September 2017

Objective and overview

As the Library strives to fulfill its commitment to building print collections that are intellectually and culturally responsive to Guilford’s experiential learning environment and multiculturalism, librarians are committed to leading the process of carefully analyzing Hege’s physical collections for their revitalization. Related critical aspects of collections management are to consistently develop Guilford’s intellectual resources while continually reviewing existing collections for deaccessioning of materials that are outdated, misleading, biased, inaccurate, and/or harmful.

The practice of collection revitalization involves making evidence-based decisions to remove selected materials from the collection as acquisition of new resources supporting the academic program and Guilford values and academic principles further the vitality and relevance of collections. Moreover, increasingly, as digital resources become more prevalent and accessible, decisions to remove print materials will be motivated by consideration of the advisability of replacing them in digital formats. Particular emphasis is placed upon building the collection of digital reference resources.

Why revitalize?

**Responsible stewardship.** Essentially, it is about being good stewards for the advancement of the College’s educational mission. The Library has no history of ongoing collection analysis. Print collections peaking at nearly 250,000 volumes by 2010, on the whole were never methodically weeded. Further, collection development principles and practices historically have been inconsistently applied and have not necessarily been grounded by academic programmatic priorities. Hege Library’s emphasis over many decades has been in “building” or “growing” collections with regional accreditation standards as a primary (while unfortunately, negative) motivating factor. Today, “access” vs “ownership” is a viable and acceptable option for libraries, and in fact is a necessary and advantageous strategy.

**The “serendipity of discovery.”** A library’s integrity and relevancy historically was judged by the size of its book collection - i.e. by the sheer number of volumes - for the fulfillment of its primary function as a “knowledge repository.” In challenging times of budget constraint, ensuring collection growth might require a library, for example, to accept any and all gifts; and/or to maintain multiple copies and successive editions of titles. That is not collection development. Shelves cluttered with unused, outdated materials of questionable relevance present daunting discovery challenges. Further, the collection takes on a tired appearance, discouraging exploration. The vital experience of the “serendipity of discovery, ” therefore, is compromised.

**Quality and substance:** Responsive and responsible collection development will ensure the Guilford community’s access to quality print resources of appropriate intellectual substance in support of research, scholarship, and pedagogy. Keeping information on our shelves that is misleading, outdated, biased - if not outright inaccurate - is irresponsible and a disservice to the learning experience.

**Learning space design:** Central to Hege Library’s vision as the College’s “Academic Commons” is advancing its transformation from functioning primarily as a “knowledge repository” to that of a collaborative
learning environment supporting “knowledge creation.” This necessary physical transformation of the Library to an active and collaborative learning environment must be carefully balanced with a firm commitment to the continuing development of physical collections in ways that continue to vitally support the research and discovery experience. While the necessity for this kind of balanced perspective was not anticipated when the 1989 Hege addition was envisioned primarily for housing books, the good news is that ample space exists to achieve the balance required to accommodate engaging learning spaces where book shelving predominated. Moreover, Hege Library benefits significantly from its auxiliary basement storage area (roughly equivalent to the full footprint of the addition), where books that more infrequently circulate may be housed for retrieval upon demand.

**Collection revitalization goals**

**Collections analysis.** Analysis of print collections will be multi-faceted, supported primarily through the utilization of GreenGlass, a customized web application developed by Sustainable Collection Services (SCS) and available through OCLC. The goal is to utilize this tool to develop a rational basis for making strategic and responsible decisions on collections retention.

**Deaccessioning and collections relocation.** No specific numerical targets or goals are aligned with the deaccessioning of materials. Rather, the goal in identifying materials to remove from the collection is to make the best informed decisions possible, supported by methodical collection analysis, faculty librarian liaison, and best practices as outlined in the Library’s collection development and management policies referenced below. A secondary goal aligned with the deaccessioning of materials is ensuring the most appropriate disposition of those materials, especially as this enables the repurposing of books for the continued benefit of others. The goal in relocating materials to the basement remote storage location will be to arrive at shelving arrangements that will best support discovery, access, and further analysis.

**Collection development.** The goal is to ensure continuous, methodical, and responsive development of print collections. This will be accomplished through the faculty librarian liaison program, supported by a library approval plan customized in partnership with GOBI Library Services.

**A final note: This is not easy for Librarians!**

Librarians love books! This is a difficult endeavor, particularly at this juncture, when the most substantial deaccessioning will occur. Please understand that every concern and emotional attachment you feel about Hege Library’s print collection is shared by librarians. Their decisions will not be cavalier, but will be thoughtfully and thoroughly considered, guided by the principles stated above and further detailed in the Hege Library Collection Development and Management Policy. Moreover, we encourage and will seek faculty advisement in this process. It is vital to ensuring responsible stewardship of our limited institutional resources, and to fulfilling our responsibilities for supporting the kind of engaged experiences that 21st century learners expect and that the Library as Academic Commons must provide.