

RBMS
Collection Development Discussion Group
Minutes of the January 21, 2017, Meeting
Westin Hotel, Atlanta, Georgia

The Collection Development Discussion Group met at the Westin Hotel on Saturday, January 21, from 1:00 to 2:30. Eleven people participated in a discussion of collection development policies, including key questions such as what is their purpose, how restrictive or flexible should they be, and for whom are they written. Only one institution represented in the room had collection development policies articulated and posted online: U Chicago (<https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/scrc/about/donate-materials/>); Columbia RBML has revised policies but they are not yet posted.

Audiences for policies include potential donors, central university and library development offices; alumni relations offices; and colleagues in other library units: at some institution they are able to buy material that is then housed in special collections; at some institutions the liaison librarians who best understand faculty teaching and research areas are in other units; policies may also be vital when transferring material during/after a weeding project in the general stacks.

Granularity: policies should have wiggle room but be specific enough that they can facilitate a conversation about collecting areas with internal (selectors for general collection, development) and external (donor, dealers) audiences; some discussion was had about whether the policies should be interpreted as rules or guidelines

We discussed donor expectations, particularly those involving requests to digitize donated materials, not to mention requests for honorary degrees. We talked about the challenges of collaborating on collection development with departmental colleagues, library colleagues, and our fundraising/development officers.

Possible topics suggested for future meetings:

- diversity, inclusion, defining/supporting new collecting areas
- ethics of collecting
- digital assets

Respectfully submitted,

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