

Collection Development Policy Statement for American Studies

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Purpose

The American Studies collection of the University of Maryland (UMD) Libraries supports the educational mission of the Department of American Studies. The collections supplement the department's curriculum as well as serves the research needs of undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty.

The Department of American Studies was founded in 1945, as a cooperative undertaking combining Sociology, Government, U.S. History, and American Literature. The American Studies program continues to embrace an interdisciplinary approach to research, focusing on two central themes: the cultures of everyday life and cultural constructions of identity and difference. The Department offers BA, MA, and PhD degrees, as well as a minor in U.S. Latina/o Studies. The Department of American Studies also hosts the Native American Studies Program and the Asian American Studies Program. The department currently has ten faculty members at the rank of assistant professor or above. In addition to the core faculty, there are some 61 affiliate faculty from 20 other departments. In the fall of 2017, the department had 69 undergraduate majors and 45 graduate students.

Coordination and Cooperative Information:

No single library could hope to fulfill all the research needs of students and faculty engaged in advanced research in American Studies. The UMD Libraries aim to have a solid core collection in most areas of American Studies, but graduate students and faculty perforce rely on their access to resources available in other libraries and repositories. Through its participation in the University System of Maryland and Affiliated Institutions, the Chesapeake Information and Research Library Alliance, the Center for Research Libraries, and the Big Ten Academic Alliance, the UMD Libraries provide access to many scholarly materials not on hand. In many cases, however, advanced scholars will have to consult rare or unique materials owned by other libraries or repositories that are not available through loan arrangements and have to be consulted onsite. The UMD Libraries themselves possess rich special collections that might interest American Studies scholars, including the holdings of the Broadcasting Archives and archival and manuscript collections.

Diversity

Recognizing that the UMD community includes individuals of all ages who represent a multiplicity of racial and ethnic backgrounds, economic and educational levels and physical and mental abilities, the American Studies subject specialist builds collections that mirror and support this diversity. The American Studies collections include materials and resources that reflect a variety of political, economic, religious, social, minority and sexual issues and support

intellectual freedom by providing free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored. (Text adapted from: <https://www.carnegielibrary.org/about/policies/collection-development-and-management/>)

Summary of Collection Scope at Current Collecting Levels

Collecting in the area of American Studies has unique features. The call number range for American Studies is both extremely narrow and extremely broad. “American Studies” has a single call number, E169, but since the subjects studied by American Studies students and scholars are endlessly diverse, relevant materials can be found on almost every floor of McKeldin Library and in most of the other libraries on campus. (Current American Studies faculty research subjects as diverse as suburbia, cyberculture, food, clothing, sport, and gender. American Studies majors range perhaps even more widely in the subjects of their required senior theses.) In recent years, the American Studies subject specialist has paid particular attention to strengthening holdings in Asian American studies, Native American Studies, and Latino Studies.

Developing the American Studies Collection

Language(s)

Most of the materials acquired for the American Studies collection will be in English, but since other languages besides English have been or are currently spoken and written in what is now the United States, and since foreign scholars produce American-Studies scholarship in other languages, non-English materials can also be important to acquire.

Geographical areas

The focus of the collection is the United States, though other parts of the world as affected by American culture might be included.

Chronological periods/Imprint dates

Selection will emphasize current publications, but out-of-print materials are added by faculty or student request or to replace losses.

Materials selected

1. Included materials

Books, scholarly and otherwise, and scholarly journals, both in print and electronic form, are the major collecting formats, but American Studies students and faculty will use materials in many other formats as well, ranging from films to sound recordings to print collections on microform—and no doubt many others as well.

2. Excluded materials:

No class of materials is excluded categorically, but textbooks are rarely acquired and self-published books are considered for inclusion only in exceptional circumstances.

3. Levels of Collection Intensity

There is not much of a “core collection” in American Studies. The American Studies subject specialist tries to collect to Conspectus level 4 in Asian-American Studies and level 3 in Native American Studies. If there is anything that could count as a core American Studies collection, it would be American history, which is collected to level 4 or even above. Other relevant areas (American art, literature, and music, for example) fall into other specialists’ areas.

Additional Collection Information

Duplication

Only single copies of printed books published after 1900 will be retained (unless the book is exceedingly rare or the copies have unique or especially interesting features). However, a print copy of a book will be retained even if there is access to an electronic version of the book.

Gifts

Gift items and other materials are added to the American Studies collection in accordance with the *University of Maryland Libraries Gifts-In-Kind Policy*, which states that they are to “supplement existing collections in support of the University's teaching and research programs as well as to provide the University Libraries with special materials in which there is a scholarly interest” (<http://www.lib.umd.edu/collections/gifts/for-donors>). The subject specialist for American Studies is ultimately responsible for deciding whether or not a gift is added to the collection.

Deselection/Withdrawal

Since primary source materials rarely become obsolete, and secondary sources in American Studies tend to have some value no matter how old, withdrawals from the collection will be exceptional.

Preservation

The subject specialist will work with the Preservation unit at the University of Maryland Libraries when individual titles are brought to their attention that need rebinding, repair or replacement.

Implementation and Revision Schedule:

This policy has been reviewed by the Collection Development Council (lib-cdc@umd.edu) and is considered effective on the date indicated below. It will be reexamined regularly by the subject specialist and will be revised as needed to reflect new collection needs and identify new areas of study, as well as those areas that may be excluded.

Date: February 23, 2015 (ENL); Revised 5/19/15; 8/11/16; 8/21/18

CDC 9/25/18