

Collection Development Policy Statement for Religion

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Purpose

The Religion collections of the University of Maryland (UMD) Libraries serve the research needs of undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty engaged in the study of religion. There is no Religion department *per se* at UMD, and it is not possible to major in religion. However, religion is widely studied at UMD, in a wide variety of departments, and an 18-credit interdisciplinary Religious Studies minor has recently been instituted. Twenty-four UMD faculty members teach religious-studies courses in a range of departments. The UMD Undergraduate Catalog states, "Religious Studies is an interdisciplinary field that enables students to study the texts, culture, history, beliefs, and practices of the religions of the world, present and past. The minor in Religious Studies draws from a wide range of departments and programs (including Anthropology, Art History, Classics, English, History, Jewish Studies, and Philosophy) and offers the opportunity for both in-depth and wide-ranging study. A required core course introduces students to religions of the world and to the academic study of religion." "Completion of coursework includes fulfillment of a breadth requirement, which demonstrates that students have been exposed to a variety of religious traditions, periods, and geographic regions." Seventeen students were enrolled as Religious Studies minors in the spring of 2016, the last year for which data was readily available.

Coordination and Cooperative Information

No single library could hope to fulfill the research needs of scholars engaged in the advanced study of religion. The UMD Libraries aim to provide a solid core collection to support its study in many parts of the world, including both a range of primary sources and important monographs, but graduate students and faculty perforce rely on 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. Almost inevitably, 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.

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 Religion subject specialist builds collections that mirror and support this diversity. The Religion collection 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

Since all cultures evince beliefs and practices that can be described as religious, the study of religion is expansive and complex. The core Library of Congress call number range for religion is BL-BX. The UMD Libraries' BL-BX books fill some 23 ranges on the third floor of McKeldin Library. However, just as religious studies are taught in many UMD departments, materials of interest to students and scholars studying religion will be found throughout the UMD Libraries. Books and other materials about religious music will be found in the Performing Arts Library, materials about religious art will be found in the Art Library, and so forth. Many other subject specialists besides the religion specialist select materials of interest to religion scholars. Relevant materials will be found in most of the libraries on campus, and some of this will be offsite.

Developing the Religion Collection

Language(s)

Since the study of religion can encompass all the cultures of the world, materials appropriate for the UMD Libraries' Religion collection can be in any language. In practice, English-language materials predominate.

Geographical areas

The study of religion involves all the cultures of the world, and the UMD Libraries collect materials documenting a wide range of these. In practice, certain parts of the world are most extensively represented than others, notably the Americas and Europe.

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

Reading and scholarly editions of significant religious texts and scholarly monographs are the core materials acquired for the Religion collection. These can take either electronic or print form though for the present print is preferred. The UMD Libraries also subscribe to many scholarly journals devoted to Religion and

related subjects. The contents of many of these journals are available in databases such as *ATLA Religion Database* and *Index Islamicus*.

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

BL-BX materials are collected to Conspectus level 3.

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 since scholars still tend to prefer print.

Gifts

Gift items and other materials are added to the Religion 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 Religion 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 religion tend to have some value no matter how old, withdrawals of single copies from the collection will be exceptional. (Duplicates, however, may be withdrawn.)

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