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1. Introductory material

1) The Union Theological College Mission and Vision Statements

Union Theological College “welcomes students from all backgrounds to study Christian Theology in a community of faith and research-led scholarship to prepare them for life, work and service in both local and global contexts.” The College’s vision is to equip students with a “theological literacy that will enable them to flourish as individuals, and contribute positively to society and culture.” The College aims to “train effective ministers to lead Christ’s church in fulfilling its calling in the world” and to “resource all in the Church by providing a hub for learning and research.”

2) The Gamble Library Mission Statement

The Gamble Library exists to support the work of the Union Theological College as outlined above. “This is achieved by supplying Union College staff, students, alumni, Presbyterian ministers, church workers, and if appropriate, the wider community, with the relevant academic, practical and historical resources, containing the timely, accurate and quality-assured information, they require. The Library facilitates the teaching, learning, research, personal and professional development of its members through the organisation, management and development of suitable collections, in any appropriate media, access to worldwide information sources and information literacy instruction.”

3) Purpose of the Collection Management Policy

The Policy has been created to guide Library staff in the selection of information resources, which will support the achievement of Union Theological College’s vision and mission. The Policy is the Library’s plan for building and maintaining its collection. The Policy informs the Union Theological College community of the criteria used in making collection development decisions. It was developed in consultation with, and has approval from, Faculty.

4) Users served

The Gamble Library’s collection primarily exists to meet the information needs of Union Theological College’s staff and students, followed by its alumni, especially Presbyterian ministers, Deaconesses, Auxiliary Ministers, Accredited Preachers, and other church workers. The Library also serves the wider church and community through its annual and research membership offer and by permitting access to the general public during its staffed opening hours. Students and staff of other institutions also use the Library’s resources via reciprocal interlibrary loan arrangements.

5) Background to the Collection

The Gamble Library was established in 1873 by Caroline Gamble in memory of her late husband, Rev Henry Gamble. The initial stock of 2,500 books grew thanks to several notable donations, from, among others, Rev Dr W. Fleming Stevenson, President W. D. Killen, and Principal F. J. Paul. The Library of Magee Theological College was associated with the Library of the Assembly’s College, Belfast in 1971. A mezzanine floor and rolling stacks were installed to house the collection of rare books in 2002. A computer suite was also created

off the main reading room. Today the Library holds over 63,000 books, 20,000 pamphlets and receives over 50 journals and periodicals annually. Staff and Student members also have access to a range of electronic resources such as ATLA databases and EBSCO eBooks. The Library's special collections include the Magee and Assembly's Colleges pamphlet collections, the Rare Books Collection, Presbyterian Mission Archive, Irish and Scottish Collection. A review of the Gamble Library's collection strengths can be found in the full version of this policy in appendix 1 (circulating stock only).

6) Responsibility for Collection Development

The Librarian is responsible for the acquisition of Library resources within the designated budget. Purchase recommendations are welcomed, and especially valued from Faculty and lecturing staff, as well as students and members, if they comply with the selection criteria. Recommendations giving clear bibliographical details should be emailed or given to the Librarian. The Librarian will regularly liaise with Faculty to understand their information needs and those of their students. The Librarian will consult a wide range of publisher's websites and catalogues, including University and Academic Press catalogues as well as book reviews to stay informed about new publications and their quality or suitability for purchase. Email alerts from these sources will assist in this process. The Librarian will seek clarification from Faculty if she is uncertain about a resource purchase.

2. Selection criteria

The Gamble Library will acquire resources which:

- Are relevant to the postgraduate and the new undergraduate (commencing September 2022) degree programmes and other courses, delivered in the College and online, by Faculty and Adjunct Faculty. Syllabi and related reading lists will direct purchases.
- Support the research interests of Faculty and students.
- Assist in training for the ordained ministry and other practical pastoral roles, e.g. Deaconesses.
- Maintain the observed strengths of the current collection or correspond to subjects which are acquisition priorities. (See full policy appendix 1). The distinct Presbyterian and Reformed identity of Union Theological College within the Irish church context should be reflected in the collection.
- Are academically valuable works, written by respected authors and published by reputable publishers.
- Are within budget.
- Collected materials will primarily be in English, but resources in ancient, and occasionally, some modern languages supporting courses and research will be obtained.

Certain selection criteria are directly related to the format of resources.

1) Print Books

Books will remain an essential component of academic library collections for the foreseeable future, hence the collection strategy for the Gamble Library will remain committed to this format. Library staff purchase the majority of books online. Having checked a range of UK-based sellers and/or publishers, the most competitive price is paid. New copies are purchased rather than used. However, if the book is out of print, or unnecessarily expensive, the Librarian will aim to find a copy in 'like new' or 'very good' condition at a reasonable price.

The Librarian will purchase books which are newly or recently published. Exceptions are made if an older title seems necessary or relevant to the collection, or a faculty member requests an older title. An older title may also be purchased to replace a missing item or one which is in poor condition.

Generally, one copy of a title will be purchased, unless the title is expected to be in high demand since it is on a course reading list. In this case the number of copies purchased will be determined in consultation with Faculty and/or Adjunct Faculty depending on expected student user numbers.

New editions of titles will be purchased where substantial content has been added or updated. Newer editions will usually replace older editions except where it is important to trace the development of a subject, or the thought of a scholarly author.

Softbound editions will be purchased instead of hardbound whenever possible to reduce costs.

Several book series are of special interest and should be regularly reviewed and acquired, if relevant and within budget.

The non-circulating reference collection contains atlases, Bibles, bibliographies, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, citation style guides and Hebrew and Greek grammars. New reference books will be purchased as and when required. A second copy of a reference book which may have been acquired through a donation to the library should be moved to the circulating collection.

Items which relate to the Province's and Ireland's Churches, their history and key individuals from them, will be added to the Irish collection as the budget allows. Books which relate to Ireland's political history will also be considered. An effort will be made to add to the congregational histories of the Presbyterian Church.

Similarly, books which focus on the history of the Scottish Church and key characters from it should be added to the Scottish collection as the budget permits.

2) eBooks

The eBook collection supplements and expands the print collection. Additionally, it offers 24/7 access to library members based at a distance from, as well as those in, the College. Also, eBook text can be easily searched and offers many additional features. Depending on the purchase model, some eBooks permit multiple users to read the text simultaneously.

The Gamble Library currently pays for access to over 790 EBSCO eBooks. Virtually all of these are titles which feature on course reading lists, usually duplicating our hardcopy holdings. Occasionally an eBook is purchased instead of a print book as it is more competitively priced.

When Library staff identify eBook titles which are on reading lists, they in the first instance, should seek to purchase a one user copy of the eBook, if it is reasonably priced, i.e. below \$140. If a large number of students are taking the same course and are likely to need access to an eBook a three user or unlimited user copy should be purchased if possible. When several users try to access a one user eBook simultaneously the Librarian will receive turnaway notifications. Usually an upgrade to a three user or unlimited user copy will then be purchased. If these are not available, another one user copy will be purchased.

A small number of titles are on the Library's DDA list and have not been triggered for outright purchase yet after at least three years.

Faculty should inform Library staff of titles which they would ideally like to be available as eBooks. Since EBSCO are our only eBooks provider, it may not be possible to fulfil all requests.

Links to copyright free eBooks available at archive.org and other websites are also catalogued so members can find these when searching the Library's online catalogue.

3) Electronic Resources

The Gamble Library subscribes to ATLA Religion Database with ATLA Serials which provides on and off campus access to a wide range of peer-reviewed journal articles, book reviews, records for books, recordings and other resources. The subscription rate is reduced through the Gamble Library's membership of ABTAPL (The Association of British Theological and Philosophical Libraries). ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials has been selected primarily to support those staff delivering, and students participating in, Union College's courses of study. At present this database is accessed via a shared URL and User ID.

The Library subscribes to Early English Books Online, a database of over 146,000 titles, from the first book published in English through to the end of the seventeenth century. This can be accessed through the VLE.

The Gamble Library subscribes to seven Sage journals which can also be accessed via their electronic platform, if students, staff and alumni register to do so. Electronic access comes at no extra cost: subscription to the print journals also entitles students, staff and alumni to electronic access to these journals from the year 1999 or 2002 onwards. These can be searched.

The archive of seven journals can be searched while in the College. Further details are available on the Gamble Guides section of the Union College website and Library's blog.

Continued subscription to any electronic resource, including EBSCO eBooks, will be subject to ongoing evaluation through analysis of content, license terms, usage statistics and affordability. Library staff will seek to identify additional and/or alternative sources of electronic resources, including eBooks, in consultation with Faculty, to meet the evolving needs of staff and students.

4) Periodicals

The Gamble Library regularly receives fifty-six hardcopy journals and periodicals, including several denominational publications. Scholarly journals, in particular, are an important component in academic library collections since they report on current research in various disciplines. Since release of journal issues on electronic databases is often behind the hardcopy publication, subscribing to the print version means Library members can access up-to-date research. Periodicals are reference only and back runs of hundreds of journals and periodicals are located in the Library's periodicals room and store. Unlike the Library's book purchases, subscriptions to periodicals represent an ongoing budgetary commitment, with renewals usually involving price increases. Thus, continued subscription to periodicals should be reviewed annually in consultation with Faculty.

5) Pamphlets

The Gamble Library pays for a selection of Grove pamphlets on standing order. (For example, *Grove pastoral series*, *Grove youth series*). It also pays to receive the *Cambridge Papers* published by the Jubilee Centre. The Library collects pamphlets and ephemera which relate to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland or the other main denominations in Ireland; they relate to events of historical significance locally; are authored by individuals from the Province who write about theological topics; or are from the Reformed perspective.

6) Other Formats

The Gamble Library has a limited number of cassette tapes, videos, CDs, CDROMs, DVDs and MP3s in its circulating collection. Since audiovisual technology is constantly changing, active efforts are not being made to add to these, the exception being Hebrew and Greek language materials or materials produced by the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

The Library has a number of hymnbooks which include musical scores to assist ministry students and those engaged in Church-based ministry in preparation for worship. Donations of hymnbooks are sometimes added to the collection, but the Library does not purchase hymnbooks.

3. Interlibrary Loans

Interlibrary loans provide Union Theological College staff and students, and life, annual and research Library members with access to material beyond the Gamble Library. Life, annual and research Library members pay a fee for this service. To source books, chapters from books, dissertations and journal articles (including scanned PDF documents) the Librarian participates in a number of online discussion groups. Through these networks, items from Libraries across the UK, Europe and the United States are sourced. The Gamble Library has also supplied, and will supply, items to other libraries which participate in these networks.

All interlibrary loan requests should be emailed or given to the Librarian with detailed bibliographical information for the item required listed. Requests are dealt with on a case by case basis, thus it may not always be possible to find a supplier. All requested and supplied items are recorded and these records are used to determine if a book should be acquired by the Library.

4. Donations

The Gamble Library accepts book, dissertation, periodical or pamphlet donations from its members or the general public. However, only those items which meet the selection criteria described above will be added to the collection. By agreeing to donate materials to the Gamble Library, donors accept the Library's right to do whatever is deemed appropriate with the materials. For those materials which fall outside the selection criteria the Gamble Library may: add these to the free distribution shelves for Library members to take; arrange for unwanted resources to be collected by Anybook.biz or Book Aid charity, or organise the disposal of unwanted materials. Anybook.biz sell suitable resources and reimburse the Gamble Library for any items they sell. Book Aid may send them to Christians in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, or sell them in their Templepatrick bookshop.

Donors will receive an email or letter from the Librarian acknowledging their donation whenever possible. A donation book plate bearing the name of the donor will be attached to donated items and/or a non-public note will be added to donated items' accession record on the library management system. Donors may remain anonymous if they wish.

5. Deselection

Deselecting or 'weeding' is the process of clearing the collections of print or digital materials which have outlived their usefulness. This is an important process as it: creates space; saves readers' time by lessening the number of items they need to go through to find relevant resources; ensures the collection is current and accessible and it guarantees the constant evaluation of library materials and their continued freshness and appeal. Regular weeding activities will be built into the Gamble Library's annual work calendar, especially outside of term time. Annually a minimum of 10% of the total hardcopy collection will be scrutinised for retention and deselection.

The Librarian is ultimately responsible for weeding though Faculty will be encouraged to participate in this process. This is because:

- They have specialist subject knowledge and expertise
- They have in-depth knowledge of present and likely future teaching and research-related use of the collection.

1) Circulating and reference collection

Since the Gamble Library is the main theological library in Northern Ireland it will seek to retain one copy of each theological work it acquires. Materials which no longer fit with the selection criteria outlined above will be considered for deselection. The 'MUSTIE' acronym will be used as a basic guide for assessing items:

M – Misleading. The resource contains factually inaccurate information.

U – Ugly. The item is worn, damaged, dirty, stained or torn. When a well-used, worn item should be retained, attempts will be made to find a replacement copy or to repair out-of-print copies. Unnecessary duplicates will be deselected with the copy in the best condition retained. (A duplicate to be deselected will have 'duplicate' written in pencil near the item's barcode).

S – Superseded. A new edition or a more up-to-date book on the subject renders the older edition obsolete. (An older edition of a book to be deselected will have 'superseded' written in pencil near the item's barcode). However, in some cases one copy of an older edition will be retained to trace changes in scholarly thinking over time.

T – Trivial. The material in the item was at one stage popular following a fad, but interest has now largely waned.

I – Irrelevant. The item's content is now irrelevant to the needs and interests of the Library's community.

E – Elsewhere. The material is easily obtained online or from another library via interlibrary loan arrangements.

Usage and age statistics will be compiled for those sections being weeded. For new classification items in reading room 1, those which have not been issued or had any usage logged in the past 8 years and show MUSTIE characteristics will be considered for weeding. (Relocation to the store, or withdrawal). For those items in the corps room, those which have not been issued or had any usage logged in the past 10 years and show MUSTIE characteristics will be considered for weeding. For those items in the store, those which have not been issued or had any usage logged in the past 12 years and show MUSTIE characteristics will be considered for weeding.

Those items in the rare books room will not be reviewed for retention or deselection including the Presbyterian Mission Archive, Rare Books Collection, Theses Collection and Magee and Assembly's Colleges Pamphlet Collections.

Those hardcopy items identified for deselection will be set out in the bookcases in classroom 4 for Faculty to review. Faculty will be informed by email that these books are available for them to look at and select any which they deem necessary for retention. During designated times which Faculty will be made aware of, the Librarian will be in classroom 4 to meet with Faculty and explain withdrawal decisions. Faculty will have a minimum of a month to review these items before they are removed from the collection. If Faculty cannot meet with the Librarian while she is in classroom 4, they should contact her in person, or by email concerning books they believe should be retained in the collection.

Hardcopy deselected items will be withdrawn from the Library's collection and stamped accordingly. Appropriate books will be collected by Anybook.biz for resale in order to maximise financial returns on withdrawn items. Other books will be collected by Book Aid, available on the free distribution shelves for a limited period, or discarded for recycling.

2) eBooks

The small number of eBooks added to the Library's DDA list in the past will be considered for removal from the DDA, budget depending. Items on the DDA will be evaluated on a bi-annual basis.

3) Electronic resources

Continued subscription to ATLA Religion Database with ATLA Serials and Early English Books Online will be subject to annual review in July through analysis of available content, license terms, usage statistics and affordability. Continued subscription to the seven Sage and the archive of other electronic journals will be reviewed at the same time, or when renewal is due, and using the same criteria.

4) Periodicals

Subscriptions to periodicals will be reviewed annually. Faculty will be surveyed concerning their opinions and use of the journals currently subscribed to. Based on the results of this Library staff will select periodicals for weeding and share this with Faculty to seek their approval. Availability for download of the periodical through the electronic databases Library members have access to (i.e. ATLA Serials and Sage electronic journal platform) will be considered as part of this process.

Those hardcopy periodicals currently stored in the periodicals room and store will be considered for deselection if they no longer meet the selection criteria outlined above and:

- Are incomplete, short runs
- Are seldom or never used
- Are newsletters which contain information which quickly dates.

A list of hardcopy periodicals identified for deselection will be shared with Faculty. They should contact the Librarian within a month of the list being emailed out if they wish any periodical to be retained.

Deselected periodicals will be shared on the ABTAPL discussion list should any other theological library and/or list participant wish to add these to their collection and are willing to pay for the associated postage

costs. If no one responds to this discussion post within two weeks, Book Aid will be emailed to ask if they will receive the issues. If they do not want them they will be recycled.

5) Pamphlets

Pamphlets which have not been issued or consulted in the last 12 years and show several MUSTIE characteristics will be considered for deselection. The standing order to Grove pamphlets will be reviewed annually during the summer, based on borrowing statistics.

6) Other formats

Cassette tapes and videos, technology which are no longer popular and in general use will be deselected if not directly related to the history of the College. Those which are directly related to the history of the College will be stored in the Library Office.

CDs, CDROMs and DVDs which were added to the collection more than 15 years ago and have not been borrowed will be considered for deselection, if not directly related to the history of the College or Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Those which no longer work will be deselected.

Hymnbooks which have not been borrowed or consulted within the last 10 years which also show MUSTIE characteristics will be considered for deselection.

6. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Librarian in consultation with Faculty.

The Gamble Library vision - Every member equipped with the resources and information literacy they need to support teaching, learning, research or personal and professional development, within the context of the Union Theological College's vision, mission and ethos.