



SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Dr. W. Douglas and Jane G. Skelton Medical Libraries

Collection Management Policy

The Skelton Medical Libraries support the mission of Mercer School of Medicine (MUSM) *to educate physicians and health professionals to meet the primary care and healthcare needs of rural and medically underserved areas of Georgia*. Moreover, the Libraries are dedicated to the education, research, and clinical success of all MUSM affiliates. As such, the Libraries serve the students, faculty, and staff of the MUSM academic programs and partnering regional healthcare institutions.

The collection and services of the Libraries are a major source of health sciences information for graduate education, faculty research, patient care, and community outreach. This document is intended to outline the guiding principles and practices that inform the management of those resources.

Selection & Acquisition

The Skelton Medical Libraries dutifully align all collections with the MUSM curriculum and uphold equitable access of physical and online resources across all campuses. Additionally, online resources/databases are licensed for all Mercer University faculty, students, and staff, not just those affiliated with MUSM. Thus, decisions impacting collection development are not made in isolation but rather under the guidance and advisement of the Library & Learning Resources Committee (CLLR), which comprises representatives for each MUSM faculty department and medical student population in addition to library leadership.

Selection criteria for physical items, with the exception of anatomical models*, as well as the purchase or renewal of online resources/databases include but are not limited to the following:

1. **Quality.** Content is critically evaluated in terms of timeliness, relevance, authority, accuracy, and purpose in accordance with the professional standards and subject expertise of the campus librarians. Online resources are also assessed for intuitive design and ease of use, to include database discovery tools and search functions.
2. **Usage.** Utility to the entire MUSM community or to the academic or research areas prioritized by MUSM is required. Additionally, circulation statistics of previous editions or related materials already in the collection as well as interlibrary loan frequency and permissions are considered.
3. **Cost Effectiveness.** Responsible and competitive execution of university as well as donor funds is paramount. Associated costs, to include licensing incentives, are weighed against the valuation of product quality and services efficiency.
4. **Access.** To provide full, immediate access to all MUSM affiliates as feasible, online resources are prioritized. Licenses that allow for multiple simultaneous users both on and off campus through IP authentication and include mobile applications or mobile site access are preferred. Purchase of perpetual access vs. renewable subscription to a resource is determined on a case-by-case basis that takes into consideration cost, length of time needed, availability of both options, and whether additional content will be added to a title in the future.

5. **Format.** Electronic is preferred over print or hard copy versions of the same resource unless the latter fulfills a necessary function.
 - a. 2 print copies of texts required by MUSM syllabuses are purchased for the Reserve collection (along with online access if available) per campus utilizing that curriculum.
 - b. No more than 4 print copies of any title are purchased for collections per campus.

*Anatomical models are selected by the anatomy faculty. If a model is broken and cannot be repaired, a new model will be purchased, unless the anatomy faculty states the item is no longer being used.

Purchase Requests

The Skelton Medical Libraries welcome suggestions and give priority to faculty, staff, and student requests for purchase of new learning or professional development resources, taking all under advisement with a strict understanding of the primary goal to support the needs of the MUSM curriculum. Purchase requests are vetted and approved by the Libraries, with recommendations by the CLLR, per availability of budgeted funds and adherence to collection guidelines. The Libraries receive requests via the [Suggestion for Purchase eform](#) and notify the requester by email of the approval status and upon fulfillment/arrival of that approved for acquisition.

Online resources/databases are subject to CLLR advisement. As part of that process, trials or vendor demos are arranged for requested databases of strong interest, feedback is reviewed by the CLLR, and recommendations are made to the Libraries for purchase or dismissal.

Interlibrary Loans

Interlibrary Loan (ILL) expands accessibility to education and research materials not owned by the Skelton Medical Libraries. This service is limited to MUSM affiliates and requests directly supporting the MUSM mission. Requests should be submitted via [Clio](#) after initial account registration or emailed as a list to illmedlibrary@mercer.edu containing publication information, recipient contact information, and desired delivery route. Fulfillment is at the discretion of the Libraries and dependent on lending library availability. Furthermore, the Libraries abide by all provisions of the copyright law of the United States and reserve the right to refuse any request believed to be in violation of that law.

Donations

The Skelton Medical Libraries accept material donations apart from journals if appropriate in scope and currency. Authority to approve donations resides with the campus librarian, who reserves the right to refuse. If approved, it is the responsibility of the owner to arrange for delivery of the donation. Upon physical acceptance, donations are considered library property and will be assessed by the same selection standards as acquisitions. The Libraries retain the right to dispose of unwanted materials, to include being given away, sold, or discarded.

Gifts

The Skelton Medical Libraries are grateful for the generosity of its donors and recognize the many benefits their support has lent to providing information seekers with high quality, current, and relevant information and cultivating health care providers who are expert consumers of information, searchers, problem solvers, and agents of change.

Monetary gifts should be submitted to the [University Library Book Fund for Medical Library](#) with remarks indicating the specific way in which they should be used if applicable. If not otherwise specified, monetary gifts will be used to purchase collection resources or other library equipment. Unless anonymous, all gifts are acknowledged by letter. Questions about gifts should be directed to the [Mercer University Office of University Advancement](#).

Deselection & Weeding/Transfer

The Skelton Medical Libraries continuously prioritize collection maintenance to ensure the health and usability of library resources and spaces. The Libraries define and practice *deselection* as the routine assessment of library resources and *weeding* as the subsequent removal/withdrawal from inventory of those resources deemed obsolete; *transfer* is the relocation of items from one internal collection to another to better promote circulation. These processes are ongoing responsibilities of the Libraries cataloging staff.

Weeded items are usually offered for sale in the Library's Old Book Sale. Items that remain may be sold to a used book vendor, donated to in-need libraries around the world, or discarded.

The objectives of deselection/transfer are to—

- Maintain a balanced and current collection meeting MUSM curricular and research needs.
- Utilize acquisitions funds in the most effective and responsible manner to maximize budget.
- Exercise quality control over collection and records to ensure manageability and ease of access.
- Curate facility space to promote peak functionality, equity, accessibility, and sustainability.
- Ensure preservation of historically significant resources in medicine and health sciences.

Deselection criteria include the following but are subject to the exceptions listed immediately after:

1. **Scope & Content.** Resources shift in tandem with the requirements of the MUSM curriculum and reflect the editions in current use by syllabuses:
 - a. The most recent edition of primary texts required by MUSM syllabuses are shelved in the Reserve collection and up to 2 previous editions in the Stacks collection.
 - b. Any editions of board review texts published within the last 5 years are shelved in the National Boards collection.
2. **Usage.** Prior to October 1997, circulation statistics were derived from item due date slips. External and in-house checkouts are now tracked by the integrated library system. Given the curricular requirements governing the Reserve and National Boards collections, usage criteria applies only to the Stacks collection:
 - a. Titles not checked out within the last 5 years are withdrawn.
 - b. Superseded titles checked out less than 3 times within the last 5 years are withdrawn.
 - c. Titles checked out at least once within the past 5 years may be retained even if superseded.
3. **Currency.** The timeliness of information and/or frequency of updating are assessed within the context of the subject area and requirements of the overarching collection:
 - a. Superseded titles in the Reserve collection are withdrawn upon the incorporation of the newest apart from a single copy of the previous edition, which is retained unless published over 10 years earlier.
 - b. Titles in the National Boards collection published over 10 years ago are withdrawn.

- c. Titles in the Stacks collection published more than 15 years ago lacking historical value and not written by faculty are withdrawn.
4. **Availability.** Duplicate copies are withdrawn, apart from Reserve or National Board titles, unless usage justifies retention.
5. **Physical Condition.** Items with damage or advanced wear that cannot be repaired in-house are withdrawn, and a replacement copy or newer edition is ordered if qualifying for acquisition.

The Libraries may retain materials in the following categories indefinitely regardless of usage, which are transferred to the Sealy Library or MUSM Archives as determined by the MUSM Archivist:

- Subjects that do not become seriously dated and retain value for a longer time
- Key subject areas for MUSM and its mission
- MUSM faculty and student publications
- Historical references identified as important for research to document scholarly and clinical practice developments in medicine and health sciences

Approved by the Committee on Library & Learning Resources on 5-18-2022