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10-2019

## University Archives and Special Collections Collection Development Policy

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Ducey, Mary Ellen; Hoeve, Casey D.; and Walter, Katherine L., "University Archives and Special Collections Collection Development Policy" (2019). *UNL Libraries: Collection Development Policies*. 70.

<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/librarycolldev/70>

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**University Archives & Special Collections**  
**Collection Development Policy**  
**Rev. October 2019**

**History:** A. Special Collections: While rare books and manuscripts have been acquired since the University of Nebraska Libraries were first established, it was some time before a separate Rare Books and Special Collections unit was created. During the 1970s, librarians identified rare books or special collections within the existing general collections, identified new space for these materials, cataloged them, created collection development criteria, and began providing services through the assignment of the first full-time special collections librarian. One role for the special collections librarian was to seek funding through donations for continued development of the special collections. B. The Archives: the Archives were formed officially by the Board of Regents in 1968 with the appointment of the first University Archivist. C. Merger: In 1978, the Archives were merged with the Rare Books and Special Collections unit and became the Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries. Collection development policies and criteria for the Archives & Special Collections have evolved through the years as the mission and collecting scope have evolved.

**Mission:** The mission of the Archives & Special Collections is to select, preserve, arrange, describe, provide reference assistance and instruction for, and promote the use of rare and unique research materials and to collect permanent records of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Central Administration, and the Board of Regents. The unit maintains these research materials because they are best managed separately from the general collections due to their rare or unique qualities, source, physical form, or subject area.

**Collecting scope:** The Archives & Special Collections' subject area concentrations spring from major research/education areas at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) or are related to the mandated archival responsibility to collect permanent records of the University. The special collections are composed primarily of rare and unique documentary materials created and accumulated by UNL and its members as well as from individuals and organizations external to the University. Influencing all areas of collecting is an effort to be forward-thinking in collecting diverse voices, individuals, and organizations, and to consider social justice, gender identity, diversity and inclusion, and new cultural heritage collections relating especially to Nebraska. The collecting interests and the extent of collecting activity in them increases and evolve over time as academic research programs develop and change. The purpose of this approach is also to support the land-grant mission of the university and to provide the UNL research community, along with Nebraska citizens and the general public, with access to the rare and unique research materials these users require. Collecting decisions will, to the extent possible, maintain collective cultural history and anticipate future research needs of the University community. The majority of collecting is done at a research level.

**A wide range of materials are collected, including documents, records, manuscripts, rare books, ephemeral print materials, photographic collections, digital materials, and selected artifacts.**

**Areas of strength include the following:**

Agriculture—actively collected.

Selected examples:

Agricultural Experiment Station, Correspondence Records

Clifford Hardin, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Papers (Nixon Administration, 1969-1971)

Clayton Keith Yeutter, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Papers (George H.W. Bush Administration, 1989-1991. Previously, U.S. Trade Representative, Reagan Administration, 1985-1989.)  
Cooperative Extension Service, Records  
Mary and Elsie Rokahr, Cooperative Extension Papers  
Rosalind Morris, Agronomy Papers  
Tractor Test Lab, Records  
Women Involved in Farm Economics (WIFE), Records

American Art and Artists' Books—actively collected.

Selected examples:

The Stuart Embury, M.D., Library of American Art (Includes 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century art books and art exhibition catalogues.)  
Blue Heron Press Collection of Artists Books  
Josephine "Jo" Morris, Papers (20<sup>th</sup> century artist letters)  
Nebraska Art Association, Records (precursor of the Sheldon Museum Art Association)  
Sheldon Museum of Art, Records

Cather—actively collected.

**Note:** Willa Cather, later Pulitzer Prize winner, attended the University of Nebraska from 1891-1895 after one year at its preparatory high school. She served as the managing editor of the *Hesperian* newspaper, editor of the 1895 *Sombrero* student annual, and the secretary of the Union Literary Society. See also Student Life. Potential overlap with the National Willa Cather Center in Red Cloud, Nebraska.

Selected examples:

Charles E. Cather Collection  
Roscoe and Meta Cather Collection  
George Cather Ray Collection  
Susan J. and James R. Rosowski Cather Collection  
Philip L. and Helen Cather Southwick Collection

Congressional Records—selective collected, and only if there is a connection with the University of Nebraska through academic degrees or career. Potential overlap with History Nebraska.

**Notes:** "H. Con. Res. 307 (2008) expresses the sense of Congress regarding the importance of preserving members' collections. While it does not define the contents--that is left to archivists--it does state the members' common belief in their value and in the importance of preserving them. Over time, it will grow in stature as it is used over and over again in remarks, in written guidance, and as a constant reminder. Service in Congress is a high public trust and the records of that service are invaluable." From the U.S. House Archives report on HR 307.

**Access:** Archives & Special Collections follows the restriction guidelines found in *Managing Congressional Collections* by Cynthia Pease Miller (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2008.) Restrictions include materials that infringe on the privacy of living persons including casework, constituent correspondence, service academy application files, staff personnel files and files relating to patronage positions and nominations to judicial and other high government appointments. Under rules of the House of Representatives, unpublished Congressional committee records are closed for at least thirty years; under the rules of the Senate, unpublished committee records are closed for at least twenty years. Both bodies close all records concerning national security, investigations and privacy of living

persons are closed for at least fifty years. Records remain closed until declared open by the committee that has jurisdiction over those records. Inquiries should be directed to the chief clerk of the committee.

Examples:

U.S. Representative Tom Osborne, 3rd District, 2001-2007. (UNL Football coach, athletics administrator)

U.S. Representative Virginia Smith, 3rd District, 1975-1991. (UN B.A., 1936)

U.S. Senator, Bob Kerry, 1989-2001. (UNL B.A., pharmacy, 1966) Includes papers relating to The New School, NYC, which he directed. Note: Governor papers at HN.

U.S. Senator, E. Benjamin Nelson, 2001-2013. (UNL BA, 1963; UNL M.A., 1965; UNL J.D., 1970)  
Note: Governor papers at HN

Cultural Heritage Collections—actively collected.

**Note:** This includes collections concerning cultural heritage of African Americans, Hispanic/LatinX, Native American and refugee resettlement communities in Lincoln.

Some examples of existing legacy collections:

Czech Heritage Collections (Includes works of Czech journalists and literary figures & some Czech American collections (At one time, 1 in 5 Czech immigrants called Nebraska home. There is a strong connection with the Czech language program in the Modern Languages & Literatures Department.)

Japanese American/Asian Collections (In WWII, UNL opened its doors to Nisei students and the collections especially draw on the experiences of Nisei.)

Kārl Ulmanis, Latvian and Baltic History Collection (There is a strong Latvian descendant community in Lincoln, NE.)

Mark Awakuni-Swetland, Research Papers (Omaha Dictionary)

Folklore—selectively collected.

Primary Examples:

Benjamin A. Botkin Collection of Applied American Folklore (Former director of the Archive of American Folk Song (now the American Folklife Center) at the Library of Congress, and a cousin of Ira and George Gershwin.)

Harold W. Felton Folklore Papers

Louise Pound Collected Materials

French Revolutionary War materials—not actively collected.

Fred Morrow Fling, Papers. (Includes manuscripts of the Comte de Mirabeau)

Great Plains History—actively collected.

**Note:** Potential for overlap and collaboration with History Nebraska (HN).

Selected Examples:

UNL History professors' papers: Charles Kuhlman, Fred Luebke, James Rawley (Civil War), John Wunder

John McConihe, Correspondence (Letters relating to Nebraska Territory)

Willam Payne, Correspondence (Steamboating and freighting in Nebraska City area)

Great Plains Literature—actively collected.

**Note:** Potential for overlap with the Jane Pope Geske Heritage Room of Nebraska Authors.

Selected Examples:

Warren Fine, Papers

Weldon Kees, Collected Materials  
Ted Kooser Collection (Library of Congress Poet Laureate Consultant and Pulitzer Prize winner)  
Ervin Krause, Papers (O Henry short story winner)  
Wright Morris, Papers (National Book Award for Field of Dreams.)  
Hilda Raz, Papers  
Mari Sandoz Collection (Atlantic Prize 1935 for *Old Jules*. Prolific author of the West.)  
Lowry Wimberly, Papers

Natural History & Sciences—selectively collected.

**Note:** Potential collaboration with the University of Nebraska State Museum or other UNL entities.

Selected Examples:

Charles Bessey, Papers (botanist)  
Lawrence Bruner, Papers (entomologist)  
Frank Shoemaker, Photographs (naturalist, glass plate negatives)  
Sigma Delta Epsilon Iota Chapter, Records (women scientists at UNL)  
Raymond J. Pool, Papers (botanist)  
Paul A. Johnsgard, Papers (ornithologist)

Quilts, Quiltmakers, Quilt History and Textiles—actively collected.

Selected Examples:

American Quilt Study Group, Quilt Research Files  
Sally Garoutte, Papers  
Jonathan Holstein, Papers  
Penny Mc Morris, Papers

Railroad (U.S.) --selectively collected.

**Note:** History Nebraska has significant railroad collections. Much potential for collaborative grants, especially relating to railroad maps.

Examples:

Charles Kennedy Collection  
Benjamin A. Botkin Collection of Applied American Folklore  
John F. Stover Collection

Russian History—The Mazour fund supports building the Anatole G. Mazour, Papers and collections in both general stacks and special collections; however, no materials are being added to the Special Collections at this time.

Social Sciences—selectively collected.

Examples:

Edith and Grace Abbott, Papers (Grace served as director of the child labor division of the U.S. Children's Bureau. Nominated for a Cabinet post. Edith was an American economist, social worker, educator and author. Also, Dean at the University of Chicago.)  
Alvin Saunders Johnson, Papers (Co-founder of the New School for Social Research and its first director. An American economist, in WWII he worked to bring Jews from Europe to the U.S. Involved in Nuremberg Trials.)

Student Life—actively collected, including registered student organizations (RSO), student publications, professional and honorary societies’ records, and resident halls

*The Arrowhead*, Student Publication  
*Cornhusker*, Student Annual  
*Daily Nebraskan*, Student Newspaper  
Komensky Club, Student Newsletter  
*Sombrero*, Student Annual  
The Innocent’s Society, Student Life Records (used each year for inductees)

United States Military & Wartime History—actively collected.

**Note:** collecting for all branches of service relating to Nebraska soldiers, war correspondents and families during war time. Potential overlap with the Strategic Air Command & Aerospace Museum and History Nebraska.

Selected Examples:  
Beverly Deepe Keever, Papers (Early Vietnam War journalist and photographer)  
J. Patras, WWI Photographs  
Rainbow Division Veterans Association Records  
Helen Sagl, WWII WAC Military Records  
WWI Poster Collection

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Archives—permanent records collected.

**Note:** Collection of permanent records created by an entity of the university, not individual faculty or staff, fall within records management policies and schedules found at URL:

<https://bf.unl.edu/policies/bf/RecordsRetention.shtml>. Retention schedules that inform decisions related to record retention are managed through the Business & Finance Office and also submitted to the Nebraska Secretary of State. The UNL Archives include administrative papers and permanent records of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, its departments and other units, and the University of Nebraska System’s Office of the President, its units, and Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska. The University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO), the University of Nebraska-Kearney (UNK), and the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) operate their own archival repositories and are responsible for retention of permanent records for their campus.

Examples:  
Board of Regents, Records  
Chancellor, Records  
Office of the President, Records  
Central Administration, Records  
College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR), Records  
College of Arts & Sciences, Records

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Alumni and Faculty Records—selectively collected.

Beverly Deepe Keever, Papers  
Marianne Means, Papers  
Paul Olson, Papers

## General Guidelines for Collecting Rare Books or materials at UNL

- I. Material of typographical and/or historical interest. Decisions are determined by date of printing and country of publication. Among this category are:
  1. Materials printed in Western Europe prior to 1801
  2. Materials printed in the United States prior to 1865
  3. Nebraskana printed prior to 1970
  4. Materials printed in Canada, Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Australia prior to 1850

If a serial began publication within the date guidelines given above and continued after the terminal date, only those volumes which fall within the guidelines are appropriate for Special Collections.

- II. Unique material or material existing in a limited number of copies.
  1. One of an edition of 50 copies or less. Artists Books, 30 copies or less with preference for one-of-a-kind pieces.
  2. Autographed or association copies. The latter includes items belonging to an author, annotated by an author, belonging to someone famous or interesting in their own right, or belonging to someone particularly associated with the book's contents.
  3. Books with significant manuscript notations or other material laid or fastened in.
  4. Editions of textual and/or bibliographic significance or books of literary or historical importance.
  5. Manuscripts, typed materials, and archival materials including photographs (See also p. 1 for types of materials collected. Of interest to scholars, especially if related to existing collection strengths.
  6. Materials published by non-commercial or small Nebraska presses.
- III. Books and other materials of importance as works of art in themselves. Examples: exceptionally fine binding, printing, or illustration (especially hand-colored plated) or of importance in the history of printing. Among these are books published by outstanding early or private presses such as these:

Ashendene, Cuala, Doves, Golden Cockerel, Gregynog, Kelmscott, Shakespeare Head, and Strawberry Hill.

Also the work of fine binders, works illustrative of styles of binding and type design, such as Bruce Rogers, Frederick Goudy, Cobden-Sanderson, or Zaehnsdorf.

Other examples are books with fore-edge paintings, and artists' books.

- IV. Materials liable to loss or damage because of their physical format or condition, such as miniature books (under 10 cm or 4" tall), fragile books—especially early works in original paper wrappers or boards, books with loose or tipped in plates. Note: this does not include books simply in bad condition.
- V. Monetary value may be a consideration depending upon the uniqueness of the material.

- VI. Manuscripts, documents, archival records. (See also p. 1 for types of materials collected.) Of interest to scholars, especially if related to existing collection strengths. Ephemeral materials such as broadsides, leaflets, pamphlets, zines and posters.
- VII. Photographs, including negatives, slides, and digital files.
- VIII. Born digital materials are represented in all collection categories. These materials require special treatment and may require deposit in the permanent archive or the UNL Data Repository. With respect to University archival records, the University's records retention policy, <https://bf.unl.edu/policies/bf/RecordsRetention.shtml>, states: "Records created through official university activities are the property of the University of Nebraska. These include, but are not limited to: papers, correspondence, official printed material, minutes, committee files, financial and associated records **in any form or format.**"
- IX. Artifacts and Realia. Generally, realia (three-dimensional objects) is not actively collected or retained, however, may be for purposes of exhibition. Examples: Johnny Carson costumes, Band Uniforms, Medals, some awards or trophies, etc.
- X. Duplicates. Ordinarily duplicates within Archives & Special Collections are not retained unless there is an association reason or another reason, such as relating to Nebraska connection or value.

### **Procedures Affecting the Collecting Policy**

- A. Transfer of Records Procedure: The Archives & Special Collections will accept the transfer of University records that are scheduled for permanent retention only. It will not accept records that are scheduled for destruction. University records considered for transfer to the Archives for permanent retention must be reviewed and approved by the University Archivist, following university or state records management schedules.
- B. Deeds of Gift. Gifts that reflect the collecting scope of this policy may be accepted at the discretion of the Archives & Special Collections; however, the Archives & Special Collections will not accept materials from a donor without a legal transfer of title through a deed of gift. All gift forms are signed by the University Archivist/Special Collections Librarian or designee and by the donor of the materials. Archives & Special Collections' transfer forms document the transfer of records from a university office, program, or administrative unit.
- C. Loans and Deposits are not accepted.
- D. Partnerships. The Archives & Special Collections reserves the right to enter into partnerships for acquisition of materials as necessary.
- E. Closed Collections. The Archives & Special Collections will not accept materials that are closed to the public in perpetuity. Selected restrictions may be considered. All restricted material will be designated with an opening date prior to the donation acceptance. In addition restrictions include certain Congressional records as noted on p. 2-3 of this document. We also follow current "Protocols for Native American Archival Materials" endorsed by the Society of American Archivists (August 2018).



F. Deaccessioning. Materials that do not reflect the Archives & Special Collections' collecting scope or do not possess sufficient archival value may be deaccessioned, subject to the documented terms of the deed of gift, university regulations, and state and federal laws.

G. Revision of Policy. The Archives & Special Collections reserves the right to amend its collection development policy at any time.

H. Academic freedom, privacy and objections to collections. The Society of American Archivists Core Values include the following statement: "Archivists promote and provide the widest possible accessibility of materials, consistent with any mandatory access restrictions, such as public statute, donor contract, business/institutional privacy, or personal privacy. Although access may be limited in some instances, archivists seek to promote open access and use when possible. Access to records is essential in personal, academic, business, and government settings, and use of records should be both welcomed and actively promoted. Even individuals who do not directly use archival materials benefit indirectly from research, public programs, and other forms of archival use, including the symbolic value of knowing that such records exist and can be accessed when needed." See <https://www2.archivists.org/statements/saa-core-values-statement-and-code-of-ethics>.

The American Library Association *Library Bill of Rights*, "Section II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval." See <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>.

The American Library Association (ALA) document *Privacy*, also notes "Libraries, librarians, and library workers have an ethical obligation, to preserve users' right to privacy and prevent any unauthorized use or disclosure of users' personally identifiable information or the data associated with their use of the library's resources. Article VII of the Library Bill of Rights counsels that libraries should 'advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.' This requires libraries and all those who work in libraries to maintain an environment that is respectful and protective of the library user's privacy. This includes the adoption of policies and practices that treat patron data as confidential." See <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/privacy>.

The document *Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights*, <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/privacy>, further notes: "Lack of privacy and confidentiality chills users' choices, thereby suppressing access to ideas. The possibility of surveillance, whether direct or through access to records of speech, research and exploration, undermines a democratic society. One cannot exercise the right to read if the possible consequences include damage to one's reputation, ostracism from the community or workplace, or criminal penalties. Choice requires both a varied selection and the assurance that one's choice is not monitored. For libraries to flourish as centers for uninhibited access to information, librarians must stand behind their users' right to privacy and freedom of inquiry."

Thus if a library user were to object to content in the Archives & Special Collections and request that materials be removed, academic freedom will take precedence and such requests will not be considered. Privacy of information also will be upheld in accordance with the ALA Privacy policies.