Library Special Collections and College Archives’ Deaccession

Policy AA014
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Responsible Administrator: Vice President for Academic Affairs
Responsible Office: Library
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Policy Statement
The Gladys Marcus Library’s unit of Special Collections and College Archives (SPARC) may, under certain circumstances and under carefully controlled conditions, deaccession material from its holdings. This policy applies only to the deaccessioning of materials accessioned and held by the Library’s SPARC unit.

Reason for the Policy
According to the Society of American Archivists (SAA), deaccessioning can serve as a collection management option for a number of reasons. A previous collecting mission that indiscriminately acquired materials, a lack of storage space, or the identification of materials that are more appropriately located or better cared for at another repository can begin reevaluation of the collection’s worthiness for continuing retention. Best practices in the special collections community demonstrate that it is unethical to take in material when it cannot be cared for properly. The unit cannot collect material with a sense of strategy if space requirements arbitrarily dictate decision-making.

Who is Responsible for this Policy
• Head, Special Collections and College Archives, FIT Library
• Director, FIT Library

Who is Affected by this Policy
• FIT Library Staff, especially those in Special Collections and Acquisitions and Metadata Services
• FIT Library Faculty, especially those in Library Administration, Special Collections and College Archives, and Acquisitions and Metadata Services
• FIT Foundation personnel

Definitions
• Accession: materials physically and legally transferred to a repository as a unit at a single time; an acquisition; to take legal and physical custody of a group of records or other materials and to formally document their receipt; to document the transfer of records or materials in a register, database, or other log of the repository’s holdings.
**Principles**

**Deaccessioning**

The unit of SPARC acquires, preserves, and provides access to a wide range of primary research materials in their original formats and across many languages and geographical spectra. All acquisitions support one or more curricula offered at FIT. The College Archives unit acquires, preserves, and provides access to college records permanently-scheduled for retention or deemed to have enduring, historical value created or received in the course of college business. Archival records can be created or received by administrators, staff, faculty, and students.

In keeping with the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), the Society of American Archivists (SAA), and other leading institutions and authorities, SPARC may selectively deaccession material to achieve a greater refinement of the collection and better match its collecting mission. No material that holds value in significant measure (whether it be the informational usefulness, historical significance, and/or monetary worth) will be deaccessioned. In accordance with federal law, no object shall be deaccessioned within three years of its acquisition. To be considered for deaccession, an object must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- The object no longer supports the mission of the Library or fits within the scope of the collections;
- The object’s condition renders it useless to the Library;
- The object unnecessarily duplicates other material in the collection;
- The object is a poor quality example of its type; or
- The object is proved to be a fake or forgery.

Deaccessioning allows SPARC to deal with out-of-scope materials that have been determined to be unworthy of continued retention through reappraisal. Deaccession may not be undertaken solely as a means of raising funds.

**Responsibilities**

N/A

**Procedures**

**Deaccessioning**

- The Library SPARC Deaccession Committee (LSDC) will meet once a month initially to survey proposed deaccessions. After one year, meetings will take place two times a year and on an as-needed basis.
- SPARC personnel shall present to the Head of SPARC recommendations for deaccession, including written rationale. SPARC shall not contact original donors regarding deaccession unless the material in question was acquired with pertinent restrictions or conditions that were documented in writing at the time of the gift or transfer.
  - Head of SPARC reviews the material and determines the method of disposition. A review is conducted by the Library SPARC Deaccession Committee (LSDC) comprised of employees from Acquisitions and Metadata Services; Special
Collections and College Archives; and Library Administration before seeking final approval.

- Final approval for deaccession must be granted by the College Administration SPARC Deaccession Committee (CASDC), a senior-level committee designated by the President. The CADC will meet proportionately in response to the LSDC meetings.
- The Head of SPARC will submit a report once each semester highlighting all deaccession activity. The report will be submitted to the CASDC and the President.
- Records of all deaccessioned material shall be kept and all documents will be placed in the unit’s Accession File. A completed disposal form will also be archived.

- **Disposition of Deaccessioned Material**
  Deaccessioned material shall be processed in one of the following methods, providing there is no donor restriction:
  - **Sale**
    - Material may be sold at public auction.
    - Material may not be sold solely for the purpose of generating income. Proceeds from any sale are for the purchase of other pertinent items for the collection or the preservation/conservation of existing assets.
    - Neither Trustees of the college or its auxiliaries nor college or auxiliary employees and their immediate family members may purchase or benefit from the sale of deaccessioned materials.
  - **Transfer**
    - Material may be transferred to another FIT Library unit. The FIT Library has right of first refusal.
  - **Donation or Exchange**
    - Material may be donated to another non-profit institution or exchanged for items of equivalent value (historical/research; evidentiary; informational; intrinsic).
  - **Witnessed Destruction**
    - Material that has deteriorated beyond repair, poses a health hazard or has little to no intrinsic or monetary value may be destroyed.
    - Destruction shall be witnessed by a minimum of two Library employees.
  - **Proceeds from the Sale of Deaccessioned Material**
    - In accordance with accepted standards of professional ethics in libraries, museums and other cultural repositories, funds realized though deaccession should be used to acquire and preserve Special Collections Library holdings. Proceeds from the sale of deaccessioned material shall be deposited in a SPARC unrestricted FIT Foundation Account.

**Violations**
N/A

**Related Policies**
- No related policies
Related Documents

- Association of College and Research Libraries’ Guidelines on the Selection and Transfer of Materials
- SPARC Deed of Gift
- Society of American Archivists’ Guidelines for Reappraisal and Deaccessioning

Contacts

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