



UCT Libraries

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SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

GUIDELINES FOR COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS	1
GUIDELINES FOR COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT	1
Introduction to Special Collections	3
PURPOSE STATEMENT	3
SCOPE AND RATIONALE	4
Language	4
Coverage	4
Thematic	4
Exclusions	4
Authorities	5
Documentation	5
Published Collections	5
African Studies Collections	5
Government Publications	6
Rare and Antiquarian books	7
Collections Maintenance of Published Collections	7
Unsolicited Donations	7
Funding to Support Gift Collections	8
Procedures for Offering Gifts to the Libraries	
Examples of suitable Published materials	
Examples of Materials Generally Not Suitable for Donation	
Terms for Accepting Donations	
Disposal	9
Restrictions	10
Delivery	10
Primary Collections	10
Collecting Rationale for Primary Collections	11
Types of archival materials	13
PERSONS AND FAMILIES	13
ORGANISATIONS	14
Further examples of material discouraged in Primary Collections	15
Technological constraints of Collection Development	15
Gaps in holdings and deaccessioning of archival collections	15

Introduction to Special Collections

Special Collections is a department of UCT Libraries with a specialty in Africana. It aims to support research, teaching and learning at the University of Cape Town. Its range of historical and contemporary holdings are considered to have unique cultural value, representing an important intellectual asset of the university. Special Collections plays an important role in the preservation of these assets by serving as a custodian of this national heritage on behalf of the university.

Special Collections has an outstanding internationally recognised collection focusing on the African continent. While its responsibility is to serve the research needs of faculty and students at the University of Cape Town, it also receives local and international researchers and services requests physically through the Jagger Reading Room and virtually through a variety of digital means. Emphasis is placed on material with African imprints, which is collected in conjunction with material directly about Africa from other continents.

Published materials are housed in the Jagger library stacks and unique archival collections are stored in secure, climate-controlled conditions, according to established archival standards. Designated cold storage accommodation for film and photographic records is available and the preservation and migration needs of both physical and digital collections are accommodated. In order to enhance access to collections by the scholarly community, the Libraries initiate projects to preserve, describe, digitise and/or exhibit collections, frequently in collaboration with academics or donors, and may seek grant funding for special projects. Although the chief responsibility is to the University of Cape Town, Special Collections also serves scholars at national and international levels. Consequently, it draws visiting scholars to the University of Cape Town and enhances the University's reputation as a centre for scholarship.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of the Guidelines for Collection Development is to define the processes and procedures used in the selection of materials for Special Collections of the University of Cape Town Libraries in a consistent manner that is relevant to the university's strategic goals. These guidelines define the context for collection development procedures and provide the rationale for why it is needed within a framework of the [UCT Libraries Collection Development Guidelines](#).

Access and copyright are dealt with separately for published and primary source material, respectively. Copyright and intellectual property are dealt with in the accompanying Guide to Copyright in Primary Collections.

These guidelines represent a mechanism for UCT Libraries Special Collections to engage with national and university-wide discourse of decolonisation, representation, accessibility, and accountability. They are influenced and informed not only by institutional documentation (the UCT Collection Stewardship policy, the [UCT Libraries Collection Development Guidelines](#), but by relevant legislation ([Archives Act](#), [PAIA](#), [POPIA](#), etc.) and similar guidelines and policies in the broader archival community.

SCOPE AND RATIONALE

The scope and rationale set out below specifies the considerations that are necessary to comply with the Collection Development Guidelines.

Language

All official South African languages are collected. Southern and Central African languages and works in French, German, Portuguese and Arabic are also included. African language materials are collected especially, but not only, for literature and language resources.

Coverage

The department collects intensively on the Western Cape, South and Southern Africa, and is committed to broadening coverage of all of Africa to meet existing needs and create new opportunities to enhance research and teaching within the University environment.

Thematic

The department selectively purchases published materials covering topics related to current issues, reports and events regardless of geographical area (such as climate change, civil unrest or reports published by, for example, the United Nations Development Programme, on current issues).

Exclusions

Special Collections does not collect administrative and/or technical material, nor accept collections that are closed to public access in perpetuity.

Authorities

The Executive Director of UCT Libraries or her designee has sole authority to solicit, accept, and acknowledge gifts made to the Libraries, and to negotiate and sign donor agreements on the Libraries' behalf.

Documentation

For small donations (fewer than 50 items), only a list of the offered items is required. A formal deed of gift will be drawn up for large, valuable, or significant gifts, as well as for all gifts of manuscripts, primary source materials, and archival collections. The deed of gift will include information about the donor and the nature of the gift, and set forth the terms under which the gift will be administered.

Published Collections

This includes the African Studies Collection (including published material relating to Africa and a large film collection), the Rare and Antiquarian Book Collection, Government Publications, and the African Map Collection. Published Collections contains estimated holdings of 85 000 African Studies titles; including more than 26 000 pamphlets; 444 current journal titles; over 15 000 Rare Books; historical collection of 8000 maps; 1700 posters; 3500 African films. The relevant search engine for these published works is Primo, providing access to rich and diverse collections, including books, pamphlets, government reports, dictionaries & films in a range of African languages.

African Studies Collections

including

- film resource collection
- historical maps
- journals, magazines and newspapers
- monographs
- pamphlets, posters and ephemera

African Studies is guided by the need to build depth and context in collections. On-going emphasis is placed on collecting published and original materials in Africa: history; languages; literatures; politics; arts; architecture; social studies; economics and land studies, with interdisciplinary focus areas such as health/disease, gender, media, culture, international relations and critical debate around the character of African studies. African

authors are collected intensively, especially those published locally and written in African languages.

Government Publications

including

- historical publications
- local, provincial and national collections
- regional governmental organizations
- international governmental organizations

Categories:

- gazettes
- legislation
- policy
- strategies, action plans and frameworks
- public finance
- statistics
- investigative reports
- research reports
- plans
- guidelines
- annual reports
- treaties
- parliamentary

Government Publications, collects official publications at all levels of government across the continent. Building on core official publications, key titles are also selected from international governmental organizations. The collection comprises material in a range of formats, including monographs and pamphlets, journals, annual reviews, maps and posters, CD-ROM, DVDs and microform. At a national level, priority lies in central/national government with a provincial focus on the Western Cape, a local focus on the City of Cape Town, and a thematic focus on current issues such as water, land rights, socio-economic justice and climate change.

Rare and Antiquarian books

Including

- Specialist collections
- Speculative fiction
- South African Children's Literature
- Fore edge painting collection

Antiquarian and Rare books focus on selective additions to collections, not only in subjects but including, Historical Children's books; Speculative fiction with particular emphasis on South African and African authors; Antarctica and publications related to San language and Folklore.

Collections Maintenance of Published Collections

Continuous review of Published materials is necessary as a means of maintaining an active collection of current interest to users, as well as ensuring that valuable and useful research materials are kept. Given the unique nature of the published collections within Special Collections, weeding or de-selection of materials is not standard practice. Historical perspectives on subject areas collected is critical to the continuing value offered by Published Collections. One exception could be in the possible de-selection of duplicated material.

UCT Libraries welcomes offers of books and other materials that will support the current and anticipated teaching and research needs of the University. We are grateful for the many generous gifts that have enriched our collections over the years. Because of space constraints and the costs of processing and storing materials, the Libraries must be highly selective in deciding which gifts to accept.

Unsolicited Donations

UCT Libraries will not accept or acknowledge donations that have not been selected and agreed to in advance. Please do not deliver books or other materials to the Libraries without contacting us first.

Funding to Support Gift Collections

Processing and cataloguing donations is costly. Donors of significant collections are urged to consider providing funding support to help offset these costs. Donors who wish to see their donations processed quickly are also encouraged to consider making a monetary gift to support expedited processing. A suggested guideline for collection support is R 1000 per 100 items. Because of the unique nature of materials housed in Special Collections, financial support is also important to process and sustain these collections.

Procedures for Offering Gifts to the Libraries

- Mandy Noble, the Manager of Published Collection is the contact person for donations of books to Special Collections.
- A list of titles, including the author, date of publication, and condition of the materials, should be submitted to the Manager of Published Collections.
- Once the books on offer have been appraised, the prospective donor is notified and transfer of materials may be arranged.
- In special cases, a librarian can visit and view the material on site before a final decision to accept a gift is made.

Gifts for the general collections are accepted in accordance with the same criteria that are used in selecting materials for purchase, as set out in our [Collection Development Guidelines](#).

Examples of suitable Published materials

- Recent scholarly monographs from academic publishers in disciplines supported by UCT
- Recent books of scientific, scholarly, or artistic substance from reputable trade publishers
- Published materials in all formats relating to Africa, particularly Southern Africa
- Important older books in good condition that fill notable gaps in existing collections
- Books that replace missing copies or copies in poor condition
- Scarce materials that are difficult to acquire through normal acquisitions channels
- DVDs, CDs, and scores relevant to teaching and research needs
- Journals that fill specific gaps in existing collections
- Materials that support new programmes, courses, or curricula
- Current textbooks in demand for course support in the Short Loans Centre
- African authors (especially those published locally and writing in African languages)
- Antiquarian and rare books which enhance existing collections
- African speculative fiction
- African ephemera (e.g., brochures, pamphlets, newsletters)
- Historical government publications of the continent
- Historical children's books
- Historical African maps

Examples of Materials Generally Not Suitable for Donation

- Duplicate copies of titles already owned by the Libraries
- Items in poor condition (damaged, brittle, discoloured, marked, soiled, musty, mouldy, mildewed, or pest-infested)
- Materials that do not support the teaching and research needs of the University
- Scientific and technical books more than 10 years old, unless of historical significance
- Textbooks not currently needed for course support in the Short Loan Centre
- Materials outside the scope of a research library
- Conference programmes that do not include the papers presented or abstracts
- Course packs
- Hobby, craft, or guide books
- How-to or self-improvement books
- Inspirational literature
- Laboratory, repair, or instructor's manuals
- Loose-leaf folders or binders
- Mass-market paperbacks
- Materials in languages not taught at UCT or that a reader in a given discipline is unlikely to know
- Offprints
- Old computer and technical manuals
- Old dictionaries and encyclopedias
- Photocopies
- Popular fiction (e.g., mysteries, romance, bestsellers)
- Popular magazines
- Preprints
- Printouts of born-digital resources
- Publishers' proofs, samples, or review copies
- Self-published, vanity-press, or promotional materials
- Workbooks
- Journals, unless they fill specific gaps in existing collections
- Scattered or single issues of periodicals or newspapers, unless they fill specific gaps in existing collections.

Terms for Accepting Donations

The prospective donor must be the legal owner of the item(s), or the duly authorized agent for the legal owner, and be free to give the item(s) offered. In general, the Libraries

do not accept donations of material on loan.

Disposal

It is our aim only to accept gifts that we intend to add to our collections. Once a gift has been made, the materials are the property of the Libraries, and we retain the right to dispose of them as we see fit. In the event that selected gifts are found to be unsuitable for our collections, they can be returned to the donor, if requested in advance. Otherwise, they may be donated to other libraries, schools or charities; sold to offset processing costs; or discarded.

Restrictions

The Libraries do not generally accept gifts with restrictions on their use or disposal. Only the Executive Director of UCT Libraries or her designee may approve acceptance of gifts with special conditions, including their shelving arrangements, housing, use, or access.

Delivery

In most cases, the donor will be asked to deliver agreed gifts to the Libraries. Depending upon the circumstances, it is sometimes possible to arrange for the collection of materials in the Cape Town area, or for the Libraries to assume packing and shipping costs.

Primary Collections

Primary Collections is responsible, on behalf of the University, for preserving original archival collections, in all media, including traditional paper-based collections, digital records and film, photographic and sound archives. Hence it is the permanent archival home for the University's special collections. The Department collects comprehensively in all media and is committed to preserving and making UCT's collections accessible to the academic enterprise.

Primary Collections is a repository for original, relevant archival material drawn from private individuals, non-governmental organizations and UCT academics, relating to the political, social, cultural and economic history of Southern Africa, with a strong focus on the Western Cape. Primary Collections includes over 1500 archival manuscript collections; 6000 sound recordings; approximately 30 000 archival film items and 100 000 photographic items.

These unpublished sources cover a range of themes, in dozens of paper-based and analogue formats. The collections support research by a wide range of scholars including academics, postgraduates, undergraduates, and other researchers whose work relies on primary resource materials and manuscripts.

Material is generally accepted after a thorough appraisal following criteria laid out in these guidelines.

Primary source material

Including

- Manuscripts and archives
- Audio visual collections
- film archives
- photographic collections

Collecting Rationale for Primary Collections

Primary Collections' primary responsibility is to serve the research needs of faculty and students at the University of Cape Town. To this end, it seeks to collect in subject areas which reflect the major research thrusts of this University, which represent ongoing research interests, or which are the focus of interdisciplinary programs. Collections are acquired on the basis of their value for current and potential future research at this University. Acquisitions that do not fall into existing collecting areas are sometimes made in anticipation of new emphases.

Emphasis is placed on the Western Cape but material of national or regional significance may be collected provided it would not more appropriately be preserved in another archival repository. The collecting scope below is informed by the ongoing research interests of scholars as well as UCT's current research thrusts and transformation imperatives, and the broader Higher Education debates. Preference is given to substantive coherent bodies of archival material. In exceptional cases, single items or small collections may be considered.

Deposit agreements, placing the material in trust to the university, must be confirmed before material can be received. Primary source material should be original and relevant to more than just a few. Some pre-processing of prospective papers and collections, including top-level listings and clear evidence of provenance, is required.

Unless stipulated in the deposit agreement, Special Collections cannot undertake digitisation of donated collections in their entirety. Donors should consider making financial contributions towards project-based work related to their collections.

Deposit agreements can be confirmed in the form of a Deed of Gift or a Material Transfer Agreement, both developed and ratified by UCT's Legal Services. Fixed term material transfer deposits (MTAs) will only be agreed upon under special circumstances. Permanent loan agreements are not offered.

Focus Areas

The broad subject areas include, but are not limited to, politics, social and economic history, literature and language, music, visual and performing arts, architecture, botany, education, science and medicine.

Within these subject areas, particular emphasis is placed on:

- Personal papers of people prominent in the above areas or whose papers represent an important record of social history
- Papers of social, ethnic and religious communities not strongly represented in archival repositories, and of individuals prominent in or representative of such communities
- Corporate papers of non-governmental organizations, companies and institutions prominent in the above areas
- Papers associated with important labour, trade, social, historical or cultural issues or movements
- Oral history and tradition
- Personal and research papers of UCT academics and executive managers
- Non-administrative records relating to the history of UCT
- Architectural collections of leading South African architects, in particular, those involved with UCT and/or the built environment of the Western Cape
- Manuscript music scores and personal papers of South African composers
- Visual records of social, cultural or historical importance, such as documentary film and photography

Types of archival materials

It should be borne in mind that ‘archival material’ refers to materials created or received by a **person**, a **family**, or an **organisation** in the conduct of their affairs, and preserved because of the enduring value of the information contained in the materials or as evidence of the core function/s of the creator.

Although not exhaustive or prescriptive, the types of materials listed below are indicative of archival materials typically encouraged or discouraged by Special Collections. As a general principle, archival materials that relate as directly as possible to the creator, whether **person**, **family**, or **organisation**, or that are integrally related to a specific collection focus of Special Collections, are encouraged.

* Items marked with an asterisk below may be included or excluded contingent on how closely they comply with these criteria.

PERSONS AND FAMILIES	
‘Personal’ archival materials	
Encouraged Correspondence Memoirs and reminiscences* Diaries/journals Scrap-books* Photographs and photo albums (preferably labelled/annotated)* AV materials*	Discouraged Appointment diaries/calendars* Medical records Personal legal records (wills, contracts, policies) Personal financial records (bank statements, tax records, assets)
Professional archival materials	
Encouraged	Discouraged
Original and/or unpublished creative and/or professional outputs: speeches, lectures, presentations, writings, drawings, plans, AV materials*)	Thematic folders* Employment records Curriculum Vitae (CVs) Writings by others

<p>Correspondence CVs and honours Scrap-books* Photographs and photo albums (preferably labelled/annotated)* Records pertaining to extra-curricular involvements* Publications*</p>	<p>Publications*</p>
<p>ORGANISATIONS</p>	
<p>Encouraged</p>	<p>Discouraged</p>
<p>Correspondence, memoranda Governance (constitutions, articles of incorporation) Financial reports/annual statements Agendas, meeting minutes and supporting documentation, reports Promotional materials* Photographs and photo albums (preferably labelled/annotated)* Press releases Organisational handbooks*</p>	<p>Day to day administrative and financial materials (bank statements, bookkeeping, receipts, invoices) Ephemera Legal documents: contracts, insurance, medical aid, tax Membership lists Technical/scientific manuals, drawings, datasets, publications</p>

Further examples of material discouraged in Primary Collections

- Artifacts or objects better suited to museum collections
- **Artworks** where not integrally linked to substantive archival collections
- Materials requiring special curatorial or conservation measures
- Materials that infringe copyright
- Bulk collections with a substantial proportion of unwanted materials
- Unsolicited estate donations

Technological constraints of Collection Development

Certain mediums present technological challenges that may be beyond our present capacity to handle. This applies especially to

- Electronic materials requiring outdated software or hardware
- Licensed software or non-commercial sound or video recordings
- Specialised archiving such as web-archiving, email archiving, and social media archiving are not within our mandate.

Gaps in holdings and deaccessioning of archival collections

Existing holdings will be assessed to determine strengths and weaknesses in relation to the revised collecting scope. Areas which are poorly reflected in the holdings are recorded in a collection development strategy and proactive steps are taken to seek to secure relevant donations and to accord priority to accepting donations that would fill gaps and increase representivity.

As a normal process in archival management, assessments are also conducted to determine the extent to which existing collections match the collecting scope set in the collection development policy. Collections are carefully assessed in terms of their content and relevance, proven or anticipated use by researchers over time, ownership, physical extent and space occupied. In cases in which collections do not meet the criteria for retention, a process of deaccessioning is followed in consultation with the donors and other stakeholders.