



University of Venda Library
Special Collections Policy
 LREF-SPCPOL1/2009

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1. PURPOSE

This policy is aimed at:

- a) Encouraging the creation of a special collection as evidence of business transactions
- b) Promoting the preservation of manuscripts, papers, theses, books and other notable items connected to Venda and the Limpopo region
- c) Regulating access to the collection
- d) Encouraging the use of primary sources
- e) Promoting the understanding of archival and rare book collections

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Special Collection

A Special Collection is a collection of information materials that are of a special kind in terms of value and rareness. In the Univen Library, such materials include student and academia research; pamphlets, manuscript, rare books and the newspaper articles.

2.2 Manuscripts

A manuscript is any document that is written by hand, as opposed to being printed or reproduced in some other way.

2.3. Thesis/dissertation

A thesis (also called a dissertation) is a document that presents the author's research and findings and is submitted in support of candidature for a degree or professional qualification.

2.4 Preservation

Preservation is the broad term encompassing storage and accommodation provision of library material, staffing levels, policies, techniques, and methods involved in preserving library materials and the information contained therein.

2.5. Primary Sources

Primary sources are material from, or directly related to, the past. In History, primary sources are usually letters, records or other documents created during the period that is being studied, such as diaries, legal notices or accounts. However, primary sources can include photographs, jewelry and other items.

2.6 Weeding

Weeding is the active discarding or transferring to storage, of unneeded library items.

3 PRINCIPLES

This policy is informed by the following underlying principles:

- a) easy retrieval of information enables the library to deliver services effectively and efficiently
- b) with a well-managed collection, the library is able to support the research needs of its clientele
- c) a special collection helps to document the culture of a local community
- d) both internal and external clients' entitlements to access the collection are protected

4 SCOPE OF APPLICATION

- 4.1** This policy, except otherwise indicated, is applicable to departments and sections of the University as well as outside researchers
- 4.2** In terms of types of materials collected, the policy applies to all information sources collected, regardless of form or medium. Material generated within the university including student and academic research, inaugural addresses, projects reports donations etc, should be managed in accordance with this policy.
- 4.3** All theses and dissertations produced by students and lecturers form part of the scope of this policy, and should therefore be classified appropriately until an electronic format is implemented by the university.
- 4.4** Rare publications, manuscripts, autographed copies, newspaper cuttings, books, personal papers of donors, pamphlets and journals also form part of the scope of this policy.
- 4.5** Audio-visual records, tape or CD recordings of speeches, lectures of donors and DVD of video recordings of public addresses, celebrations, narrations etc. should also form part of the scope of this policy.
- 4.6** Paper-based Other Records such as photographs, maps, diagrams, certificates etc should also be managed by this policy.

5 ACCOUNTABILITIES

- 5.1** Identifying and building a sound special collection is a collective responsibility. As a result all librarians have an obligation to keep an ear on the ground and to keep an eye for material with the potential to form part of the special collection.

5.2 Specific accountabilities are as follows:

- 5.2.1 The librarian: Special Collections has the responsibility of collecting publications by faculty and staff of University of Venda, theses and dissertations by UNIVEN students, material published by Venda authors or about Venda and the region, fine or special editions of any period, including photocopied editions, first editions of well-known authors, especially Venda and the region, autographed literary works of well-known authors, maps and charts of historical and regional value as well as critical works on the history of Venda and the region.
- 5.2.2 The Collection Development Committee has the overall responsibility of appraising donated items by Friends of the University to see if they tie in with the library's Collection Development Policy.
- 5.2.3 Staff in the Special collection section has the responsibility of preserving smaller and or loose items in preservation folders, photographs in archival sleeves, manuscripts in acid-free folders, and rare books conserved or preserved in archival boxes.
- 5.2.4 The Special collection staff is responsible for weeding older newspaper cuttings. The standing collection is normally not weeded. However, collecting emphasis changes over time and this may warrant weeding of some materials. Such weeding will be done under the terms of broader collection development policy and donation agreements.
- 5.2.5 In line with the Collection Development Policy, the special collection shall limit the number of duplicates donated to the library to only two per title. This will also be influenced by the nature of such donations.

6 POLICY PRONOUNCEMENTS

6.1 Criteria for library materials which be classified as "Rare."

- Books specifically purchased for Special Collections as determined in the Collection Development Policy
- Books of early print
- Regional imprints
- Limited editions of 500 numbered copies or fewer
- Books known to be bibliographically unique or otherwise irreplaceable

6.2 Criteria for library materials which will be reviewed for possible classification as "Rare."

- Out-of print books acquired on special order through an antiquarian dealer
- Books with high replacement value, scientific and reference material are exempt
- First editions of historical importance as identified in standard bibliographic sources
- Aesthetically noteworthy books
- Facsimile/photocopied editions of rare books
- Special or luxury binding (soft leather, inset medallion or raised design, hand-decorated)
- Miniatures (under 10 cm. in height)
- Extreme oversize volumes (Over 52 cm. in height) or other odd-sized volumes that are difficult to shelve

6.3 ACCESS

All Special Collections material shall be used within the section and no material shall be loaned out. The Director: Library Services can, however, on under very special conditions, authorize the loaning out of some items from the sections.

6.4 STORAGE

All material shall be classified and managed in accordance with approved and documented classification and filing systems. Members of staff are obliged to ensure that no individuals/separate files or record-keeping systems are maintained.

All material shall be stored in purpose built storage boxes and areas. Members of staff should minimize the number of material they keep at their workstations. It is advisable that only working material should be maintained by staff.

7. SECURITY AND PROTECTION

7.1 Material must be protected, maintained, and useable for their entire retention period as outlined in the Collection Development Policy

7.2 Effective key control should be instituted for the Special Collections sections. The keeping of the necessary key with security personnel and safe custody of duplicate keys and control over such keys must be strictly adhered to. Storage areas should be locked overnight to prevent unauthorized access.

7.3 Members of staff are obliged to handle materials sensibly and with care and respect in order to avoid damage to the materials and to prolong their lifespan.

7.4 All rare material should be placed in a secure storage area further away from the circulating material when not in use.

7.5 Members of staff should not eat, drink or smoke near records or in Special Collections sections.

8. INSPECTION OF RECORDS

The Chief Library Assistant Special Collections shall conduct internal audits on a regular basis and advise the head of the section about the conditions under which material are managed.

9. RECORDS DISPOSAL

Under no circumstances can rare material be removed from the section. Only weeding of newspaper cuttings will be conducted periodically (6 months interval) Where the Collection Development Policy dictates that certain materials do not have archival value, these may also be removed.

10. INCEPTION DATE

The inception date for this policy will be on signature of approving authority.

11. LAPSE/TERMINATION

This policy will remain in force unless withdrawn or amended.

12. REVIEW PERIOD

This policy will be reviewed by the Library Management Committee as recommended by the Director: Library Services