

## **WIDENER UNIVERSITY COMMONWEALTH LAW SCHOOL LIBRARY**

### **COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

The Commonwealth Law School Library is organized and developed to provide resources, facilities and services in support of the mission of the Widener Law Commonwealth.

On July 1, 2015 the two law school campuses of Widener University, became two independent institutions under Widener. Formerly known as Widener University School of Law the schools are now named Widener University Commonwealth Law School and Widener University Delaware Law School. The library, previously considered one collection housed on two campuses and referred to as the Legal Information Center, is now two separate collections. The law schools will continue to cooperate and share resources but will establish separate policies based upon the needs of their individual constituencies.

In 1989, the then named Harrisburg campus library opened with a collection of almost 100,000 volumes. The foundation collection was developed in compliance with the specific requirements of the American Bar Association (ABA) and Association of American Law Schools (AALS) to support the law school curriculum. Major sets were duplicated; complete runs of law review were purchased in hard copy for the past 20 years and in microform for earlier volumes. The top twenty-five law reviews were purchased in hard copy from their inception. A basic collection of print and non-print materials was assembled to support all courses offered. With advances in technology and changes to the ABA standards the Law Library has transitioned away from providing materials in multiple formats to providing materials in an electronic format.

#### **GENERAL POLICIES**

The Collection Development Policy provides guidelines for the continued development of the collection. The Policy is designed so that selection of materials is made within the context of institutional goals as well as in compliance with standards promulgated by the ABA and AALS. The Policy is reviewed periodically and revised as required.

The collection development process takes into account the commitment of all of the Widener University libraries providing intralibrary loan to each other for all reasonable requests. The online catalog allows faculty, staff and students to request items housed on the other campuses be sent to them.

The Collection Development Policy recognizes the central role of the Law Library in law school teaching and research. The Policy is designed to be flexible and responsive to the changing demands of the curriculum, faculty, and program offerings.

The objective of the Collection Development Policy is to support:

- The curriculum of the law school, including all core and elective courses, with emphasis on legislation, administrative law, public law and environmental law;
- The research demands of a faculty engaged in scholarship;
- The programs and offerings that help to share the law school environment, including:
  - Clinical programs;
  - Skills and practical training programs;
  - Institutes including Environmental Law and Sustainability Center, Law and Government Institute, and the Business Advising Program;
  - The research and publication of The Widener Commonwealth Law Review and the Widener Journal of Law, Economics and Race, and
  - Moot court and other competitions in which the students participate.

Strict adherence is made to the qualitative and quantitative standards set forth by the ABA's Standards for Approval of Law Schools and the AALS's Executive Committee Regulations.

#### SELECTION CRITERIA

Materials considered for purchase are subject to the following considerations:

- Objective review
  - Reliability of publisher or producer;
  - Reputation and importance of author or editor;
  - Accuracy of information and data;
  - Rating of title in standard bibliographies and reviewing sources; and
  - Availability of material in duplicate formats, i.e., electronic databases.
- Subjective analysis:
  - Relevance of the subject matter in support of the curriculum and faculty or student research interests;
  - Importance to total collection;
  - Patron awareness of the material;
  - Current and/or permanent value;
  - Availability of materials on the subject; and
  - Content duplication of existing materials.
- Physical/non-content concerns:
  - Format (book, paper, microform, disk, electronic);
  - Initial price and upkeep costs, if applicable;

- Required maintenance (filing);
- Required housing space.

#### SELECTION TOOLS

To meet the objectives of the Collection Development Policy, the Collection Development Team, working with the faculty liaison librarians, will monitor the research needs of the faculty and curriculum as well as the trends of legal scholarship and interest.

To meet the objectives of the Collection Development Policy, the Collection Development Team, reviews standard current awareness services for legal bibliography and interdisciplinary topics, publisher catalogs or titles, acquisition lists of other law libraries, the online catalog of various libraries, and patron recommendations. Immediate consideration is given to faculty requests for collection additions. Faculty and library staff may be consulted on titles in areas of their subject expertise.

To meet the objectives of the Collection Development Policy, standing orders are utilized to ensure the continued receipt of ongoing subscriptions.

#### ELECTRONIC FORMATS

With increasing frequency information is available in multiple formats. If a title is available in multiple formats, the decision of which format to purchase or whether print should be maintained will be considered. This decision will be based on price considerations as well as ease of use, accessibility, currency, dependability of alternative formats and space.

Online access to information provides an efficiency of searching; an enhanced selection of legal and general titles which would otherwise be available only through interlibrary loan; and, usually but not always, more current information. Open and Public Access to electronic materials will be considered in order to provide alternative access to library users.

The Law Library subscribes to the online services offered by the Bloomberg Law/BNA, LexisNexis, and Thomson Reuters. These subscriptions provide full academic access for the faculty, staff and students of Widener Law Commonwealth. Online services which meet our selection criteria are considered for subscriptions. Online services are evaluated as to ease of use, speed of retrieval, currency of information and relevance within the total collection. Decisions on whether to buy a title in print or rely on online access are made based on interest in the subject as well as comparative contents to the print product, though electronic access is the preferred format. The Law Library maintains numerous subscriptions to electronic databases including HeinOnline, LegalTrac, LLMC and ProQuest Congressional.

The Law Library will only purchase audio or video cassettes if a faculty member requests that format and the information is not available in a more accessible format. CDs and DVDs will be acquired only upon the recommendation of faculty for course-related use.

## WEEDING

The withdrawal of titles and discarding of superseded materials is done in recognition of the fact that the Law Library is a research center. The weeding process utilizes the selection criteria enumerated later in this document. Titles which are under consideration for withdrawal from the collection are evaluated as to their historical weight within the subject area as well as their importance to the Law Library collection. Faculty are consulted in the weeding process when a title falls within known areas of interest. A title may be weeded, if it is available in electronic format through a subscription database.

Weeding is applied routinely to subjects which have minimal interest, and where, for example, courses may no longer be offered or programs have been discontinued. In addition, deteriorated or defaced material may be removed.

When a title is removed from the collection, standing orders for supplementation to that title will be cancelled, including orders for future editions. Newsletters which are cancelled are generally removed from the collection.

## **SPECIFIC CATEGORIES OF MATERIALS SELECTED**

FEDERAL MATERIALS: STATUTORY, ADMINISTRATIVE, JUDICIAL

### **Statutory**

The Law Library relies upon electronic subscriptions for federal materials.

Congressional documents and indexes which provide insight into the legislative history of federal statutes are maintained through electronic subscriptions. To facilitate access to this material an electronic subscription to ProQuest Congressional has been purchased. The Law Library will purchase published legislative histories when the subject of the statute is one which we collect at the research level.

### **Administrative**

Sources necessary for research in federal administrative law are maintained with electronic subscriptions.

In selective areas of administrative law, subscriptions are entered with commercial services in order to supplement the official administrative reports.

Scholarly titles published on the subject of federal administrative law are routinely considered for purchase.

## **Judicial**

The Law Library relies upon electronic subscriptions for the official U.S. Reports, federal court opinions, as well as for subject access to the opinions.

### STATE MATERIALS: STATUTORY, ADMINISTRATIVE, JUDICIAL

Annotated codes for selected states are received in print through standing order. Superseded codes for Pennsylvania are maintained on microfiche and in print. The Law Library relies upon electronic subscriptions for state materials other than Pennsylvania. State Attorney General Opinions are maintained through HeinOnline. The Collection Development Team continually evaluates the desirability of continuing print subscriptions for state materials in light of electronic availability while keeping in mind issues of authenticity and preservation.

## **Pennsylvania Materials**

Selection of Pennsylvania publications are done on a comprehensive level. This collection is not limited to print materials but includes providing access, through the catalog, to state materials that are available on the Internet through government websites or subscription databases.

Titles most acquired include Commonwealth of Pennsylvania State Documents: opinions of courts in the state, state reports for Supreme Court, and district and county reports. The library received records and briefs of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in print and now receives them in CD format. The Law Library has created an index to the records and briefs for ease of access. Where available, indexes/digests and state encyclopedias are purchased for these reports. State statutes and materials relating to those laws are purchased. In addition, state administrative regulations, including the Pennsylvania Code and Pennsylvania Bulletin are purchased and maintained. The Collection Development Team also considers for purchase treatises dealing with Pennsylvania law, form books and practice sets. All Pennsylvania Bar Institute publications are received through standing order.

### PERIODICALS AND SERIALS

The Law Library provides access to the vast majority of periodicals listed in the Index to Legal Periodicals (ILP) either through electronic or print access. New law school titles are evaluated for purchase dependent on online access as well as other factors such as topic or region. The Collection Development Team monitors open access sources for periodicals and serials and will be a factor in decisions to maintain print materials or purchase new print materials. Selected foreign titles published by commercial publishers in Great Britain,

Australia and New Zealand will be reviewed for inclusion in the collection based on faculty request.

Because of space limitations and with the advent of subscription services such as HeinOnline and JSTOR which provide PDF access to journals the Law Library no longer maintains complete runs of journals that are available through these or other reliable databases. Where current subscriptions are maintained, the general rule is that the most recent ten years of a title will only be maintained in print format.

All state bar journals are available in microfiche through 2009. Selective bar journals are available in print. The Law Library subscribes to the state bar journal library on HeinOnline. Many state bar journals are now also available in full text through LegalTrac.

The Law Library provides electronic access to a broad range of full text articles in both legal and non-legal journals via HeinOnline, EBSCOHost, and JSTOR.

#### PERIODICAL INDEXES

To provide access to the collected American legal periodicals, the Law Library subscribes to the Index to Legal Periodicals, Retrospective Index to legal Periodicals, LegalTrac; and HeinOnline. These are all available electronically and provide some combination of indexing and full text access to legal periodicals.

The Law Library subscribes to periodical index/full text services which support the interdisciplinary interests of students and faculty. The Law Library has added a Full Text Finder list which enables users to better identify which database make available the full-text of a periodical title. The Law Library also uses a discovery service provided by EBSCO.

#### LOOSELEAF SERVICES AND NEWSLETTERS

Ongoing subscriptions are maintained for looseleaf services which directly support the curricular or research needs of the faculty. Selecting a looseleaf title is considered a long-term commitment and, if available through a reliable subscription service, electronic format is the preferred format.

The Law Library maintains a subscription to a package of BNA newsletters available through Bloomberg Law.

Commercial newsletters that serve as current awareness tools in specific subject areas of the law are collected very selectively. Newsletters published by legal professional organizations,

such as the American Bar Association and the American Trial Lawyers Association (ATLA) are collected and retained to the greatest extent possible.

Newsletters of all kinds continue to migrate to the Internet in various ways. The Law Library continues to catalog electronic newsletters and provide link to their content. The Law Library will purchase newsletters on the Internet when there is an identifiable person or group with an interest in the subject. Free newsletters which were formerly received in print and are of continuing interest are cataloged.

#### TREATISES

Treatises considered for inclusion in the Law Library collection fall into categories of federal, multi-jurisdictional, international or regional interest. Titles which deal with foreign law or state law outside the region, as well as treatises written in language other than English are subject to stringent review. Materials designed exclusively for practitioners are subject to a more stringent review as to their selection. If a treatise is available through a reputable, reliable online subscription database such as Westlaw, Lexis Advance, or Bloomberg Law, the Collection Development team will weigh the need to maintain a print subscription on factors such as public access, ease of use of the electronic version and faculty interest.

#### RESTATEMENTS AND UNIFORM OR MODEL LAWS

The Restatements are maintained, both in hard copy and on the Internet through HeinOnline. Standing order for the Principles of the Law are also maintained in hard copy.

The annual reports and Handbooks of the Commissioners for Uniform State Laws are collected. The Handbooks are collected in hard copy.

Uniform and model laws whether they are published in compilations or individually are Maintained on the Internet through HeinOnline and other subscription databases.

#### HORNBOOKS AND STUDY AIDS

The Law Library has a standing order to buy all West student edition Hornbooks. Hornbook-like texts issued by other publishers are also purchased. The number of multiple copies is assessed periodically and is dependent on student enrollment and use. The current edition of each Hornbook is kept on reserve. The older editions are marked as superseded and retained in the treatise collection.

Certain series, intended as student study aids, are purchased in print for the Law Library. The Law Library also maintains the Sum & Substance CD series.

The Law Library has purchased study aid subscription packages with digital access to LexisNexis Digital Library, West Academic Study Aid, and Wolters Kluwer Online Study Aid. These are multi-user titles that give users the ability to download, highlight, take notes, and “check-out” for the duration of the semester. Corresponding print subscriptions to the titles, will be phased out over time.

#### CASEBOOKS

In general the Law Library does not collect casebooks. An exception is made for casebooks written by any of our faculty members. This exception is followed in order to keep our collection of faculty publications complete.

#### INTERNATIONAL, FOREIGN AND COMPARATIVE LAW

The Law Library selects primary and secondary sources in international, foreign and comparative law to support faculty research. The Law Library relies on electronic content for many of these services with subscriptions through HeinOnline and international content available through database subscriptions, the Internet and U. S. government agency websites.

#### PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY LITERATURE

The Law Library subscribes to journals of professional topical interest to staff members. Monographic titles on librarianship which are relevant to current needs are also purchased.

#### FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

The Law Library will purchase, where reasonable, and include in the collection at least one copy of each publication of the tenure-track faculty.

#### MEDIA MATERIALS

##### **In-house Production**

The Law Library is a repository for the visual record of the Law School. DVDs of graduations, convocations and special events held at the Law School are kept in the Media Collection.



## **Commercial Products**

DVDs are purchased primarily on the recommendation of faculty for course-related use. A small collection of popular, legal-themed DVDs are available on the Delaware campus.

## GIFTS AND DONATIONS

The Law Library considers all offers of gifts of materials; however, we will only accept donations of material we believe will enhance our collection. Once accepted, a gift becomes the property of the Law Library and its disposition is determined by the Law Library.