

Selection and Transfer of Materials from General Collections to Special Collections

These guidelines are designed to be consistent with the ACRL Guidelines on the Selection and Transfer of Materials from General Collections to Special Collections (Appendix A). They are meant to facilitate the management and preservation of older, fragile and artifactually important elements of our physical collections. The passage of time changes in valuation have made older material still in circulating collections particularly susceptible to damage and loss. In addition, space pressures and the transition to electronic resources suggest that our collections should be examined, stabilized and (if necessary) better described before being sent to long-term storage.

The most efficient way of ensuring that artifactually interesting and important materials are identified and preserved is to establish certain broad categories based on publication date and to treat all members of these categories as deserving of mediated access, either in Special Collections or in specially designated reading rooms. Accordingly, the following categories have been established:

PART I

The following materials will be transferred from Library general collections to Special Collections:

1. Books printed prior to 1851, except:
 - a. Books printed in Canada prior to 1868.
 - i. Books printed in the territories and provinces west of Ontario prior to 1892
 - ii. Books printed in Newfoundland prior to 1950
 - b. American books printed west of the Mississippi before 1892
 - i. Books printed in Alaska prior to 1915 or in Hawaii prior to 1901
2. Serials whose publication ended prior to 1851
 - a. Serials which began before 1851 and continued to publish after that date will be examined to identify the extent of transfer. This may be defined by:
 - i. the end of a sub-series or change of title
 - ii. termination of artifactually important features (for example, the transition from engraved to lithographic illustration), supplements or special literary content.
 - b. Serials published before 1851 but still in current use may be retained by libraries serving professional faculties
3. Miniature books (under 10 cm.)
4. Oversize books (over 50 cm. in any dimension) that are heavily illustrated

PART II

The following materials should be brought to the attention of Special Collections for possible transfer:

1. Important association copies or autographed books, that is, books signed by literary or famous authors, gifted by or to famous people, or notable for local significance
2. Books with added manuscript or other material of significance, e.g. letters, authorial or non-student marginalia, ephemeral inserts

3. Books of aesthetic importance, exemplifying the book arts in terms of fine printing, fine binding or decoration, or fine illustrations
 - a. includes engraved plates, pre-1895 photographs and pre-1920 publisher's bindings
4. Broad­sides, posters and printed ephemera
5. Books thought to have exceptionally high value (\$1000 per volume)
6. Books printed in stated editions of 150 or less
7. Books thought to be vulnerable to vandalism or theft due to their form or content.
8. Books belonging to generic categories collected in Special Collections (see Appendix B) or established under the "Criteria for Placing Material in Special Collections" (Appendix C)
9. Maps, scores or other items in special formats published before 1851

PART III

1. As part of the identification and transfer of books to Special Collections or remote storage, materials in brittle, broken or unsupported condition will be evaluated for "last-use" digitization, stabilization or withdrawal, as needed.

PROCEDURES:

1. Run reports in Voyager to identify material printed before 1851
2. Flag items identified by these reports, checking that designations are accurate
 - a. Facsimiles are not meant to be flagged or transferred unless they were published prior to 1851.
3. Pull items and transfer locations through Voyager
 - a. Perform item maintenance and update all holdings summaries for multi-volume items
 - b. Set aside materials that require preservation or stabilization (See guidelines in Appendix D)
4. Send material to new location

APPENDICES:

- A. ACRL Guidelines on the Selection and Transfer of Materials from General Collections to Special Collections (3rd edition, 2008; new edition in preparation)
- B. Collecting Canadiana at Queen's University Library
- C. Criteria for Placing material in Special Collections
- D. Stabilization guidelines (Under development)
- E. Comparable policies:
 - a. Cornell University—Policy on Transfer of General Collection Material to Special Collections: <https://www.library.cornell.edu/colldev/RMCTransGuidelines.html>
 - b. University of British Columbia—Library Collections Transfer Policy: <http://collections.library.ubc.ca/about-us/policies/library-collections-transfer-policy/>
 - c. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign: "[Guidelines for Determining University Library Materials under the Care of the Rare Book & Manuscript Library](#)"