



Meadville Lombard Theological School

Wiggin Library Collection Development Policy

Last updated July 30, 2020

All policies are subject to change.

I. Overview

At Meadville Lombard Theological School (MLTS), we educate students in the Unitarian Universalist tradition to embody liberal religious ministry in Unitarian Universalist congregations and wherever else they are called to serve. We do so to take into the world our Unitarian Universalist vision of justice, equity and compassion. Meadville Lombard Theological School offers three graduate degrees: Master of Divinity, Master of Arts in Leadership Studies, and Master of Arts in Religion.

The Wiggin Library at Meadville Lombard Theological School specifically serves the mission of the school and Unitarian Universalism by supporting students and faculty in their teaching, learning, and research through providing both physical and digital access to current, useful, and relevant information resources and services.

II. Teaching and Learning Support

The primary community served by the Wiggin Library are its students and faculty. The core of our collection development policy centers around supporting learning as it relates to our curriculum. This includes collecting comprehensively all material relating to Unitarianism, Universalism, and Unitarian Universalism and collecting at an advance study level other material, such congregational leadership, Hebrew and New Testament Bible, and practical theology and worship arts that support the learning needs of our students within our curriculum.

In addition to collecting according to subject, the library also acquires two physical copies of all titles listed on syllabi as required or recommended reading for every class taught at Meadville Lombard and puts them on course reserve. In addition to these course reserves, the Wiggin Library acquires at least one copy of all material on the Ministerial Fellowship Committee Reading List. When possible, ebook copies of material on course reserve or the Ministerial Fellowship Committee Reading List will be purchased in addition to physical copies.

III. Research Support

For faculty and students engaging in research, the Wiggin Library collects comprehensively all material relating to Unitarianism, Universalism, and Unitarian Universalism. The Wiggin Library also provides database access to Atla Religion Database (Atla RDB), AtlaSerials (Atlas), and JSTOR-Religion and Theology.

For research inquiries that extend beyond to Unitarianism, Universalism, and Unitarian Universalism and the subject areas collected at the level of advanced and basic study, Wiggin Library provides I-Share access to students and faculty. I-Share is a merged, union catalog of the holdings of all I-Share libraries in CARLI (Consortium of Academic and Research Library in Illinois). The I-Share union catalog contains over 14.7 million unique bibliographic records and 38.1 million item records, representing the holdings of 91 CARLI I-Share member institutions. In addition to interlibrary loan through I-Share, students and faculty have access to ILL through ACTS (Association of Chicago Theological Schools) and OCLC WorldShare as well.

IV. Community Support

The Wiggin Library also serves the larger UU community, including ministers, religious educators, and lay UUs. Additional copies of introductory Unitarian Universalist material, religious education material, and religious education curriculum will be acquired to serve this patron group.

V. Subject Areas Selection Criteria

Comprehensive Collection Level

The Wiggin Library comprehensively collects all material related to Unitarianism, Universalism, and Unitarian Universalism. The Wiggin Library attempts, as much as it is possible, to include significant, secondary, and minor monographs, as well as journals, self-published material, and other resources related to Unitarianism, Universalism, and Unitarian Universalism. Although English is the primary language for all Wiggin Library materials, other applicable languages may be collected for the subjects in this collection level. Out of print titles may be acquired at this collection level, if the search process and cost of the materials are not prohibitive.

1. Unitarian, Universalist, and Unitarian Universalist History (BX9801-BX9869, BX9901-9969)
2. Unitarian, Universalist, and Unitarian Universalist Theology (BX9801-BX9869, BX9901-9969)
3. Unitarian, Universalist, and Unitarian Universalist Religious Education (BX9801-BX9869, BX9901-9969, BV1460-1615)

4. Unitarian, Universalist, and Unitarian Universalist cultural contributions, including: Hymns (BV445-BV447), Meditations and Reflections (BV4800-4911) and Sermons (BX9842-BX9853)

Advanced Study Collection Level

This level of collecting supports the course work required for the MLTS curriculum and is enough to maintain the level of knowledge required for general needs, though with less intensity than is required for research. Areas within these topics will be collected when relevant to current course offerings and faculty research needs. It includes current, historical, and retrospective monographs, and basic reference and bibliographic tools.

1. American Religious History (BL2500-2530), including Puritanism and Congregationalism
2. Congregational Leadership (BV646-652.9, BV4000-4470)
3. Ecology (GF1-900)
4. Ethics (BJ1-1725)
5. Hebrew and New Testament Bible (BS1-2970)
6. Humanism (BL2747.6)
7. Liberalism (Religion) (BR1615-BR1617)
8. Paganism, Neo-paganism, Occult, Earth Religions, and New Religions (BL473-619, BL900-980)
9. Practical Theology and Worship Arts (BV1-5099)
 1. Pastoral Theology (BV4000-4470)
 2. Practical Religion (BV4485-5099)
10. Religious Education (BV1460-1615)
11. Social sciences
 1. Social conditions and social reform (HN1-995)
 2. Communities, classes, and races (HT51-1595)
12. Theology
 1. Liberation Theology (BT83.57)
 2. Queer Theology (BT83.65)
 3. Process Theology (BT83.6)
13. Transcendentalism (B905, PS217.T7)

Basic Study Collection Level

This level of collecting supports the introductory study of the following fields. It includes significant monographs, as well as a limited number of secondary monographs, and a limited number of recent reference tools and journals. At this collection level, books

that are easily accessible through reciprocal borrowing programs and/or interlibrary loan will not be collected.

1. Buddhism (BQ1-9800)
2. Christianity (BR1-1725)
3. Comparative Religion (BL410-490)
4. Islam (BP1-610)
5. Hinduism (BL1100-1295)
6. Judaism (BM 1-990)
7. World Religions (BL74-99)
8. Theology- Doctrinal (BT1-1480)
9. Theology- Practical (BV1-5099)

VI. Other Criteria for Selection

The Wiggin Library will acquire at least one copy of all book-length material written, edited, or including contributions by core members of MLTS faculty. Materials written, edited, or including contributions by affiliate or adjunct faculty will be collected as deemed appropriate by the library director. The Wiggin Library will also attempt to acquire all material published by MLTS graduates, as deemed appropriate by the library director.

At the discretion of the library director, material in subject areas not listed in comprehensive, advance study or basic study levels can be selected and purchased.

VII. Responsibility for Selection

The library director is the primary selector for all library materials. Members of the library staff may compile lists of titles for consideration, but the library director will make all final decisions about which materials are selected for the library collection. All students and members of MLTS faculty and staff are encouraged to recommend titles for inclusion in the library collection. Book recommendations should be submitted by email to the library director.

VIII. Selection Process

Required Readings: 3 to 4 weeks prior to open registration for courses, faculty are required to submit a reading list to the Wiggin Library. The library will purchase two copies of each book and, when possible, a digital copy as well. After the course is over, the material selected for the class will be moved to the general collection.

Comprehensive Collection Level: All material related to Unitarianism, Universalism, and Unitarian Universalism is selected and purchased as soon as it published. Wiggin Library has a standing order with Midwest Books for library copies of all books published Skinner House (the official publisher of the Unitarian Universalist Association). Skinner House sends a complimentary paperback copy of every book they publish and that book is cataloged as well. Material published by other publishers will be purchased from the publishers directly or third-party vendors.

Advanced Study and Basic Study Collection Level: Material collected at the advanced and basic study level will be selected and purchased during the second half of the fiscal year (January to June). The amount of material selected at the advanced and basic study collection level is dependent upon the budget impact of acquiring the required readings and comprehensive collection level materials. The advanced and basic study collection level selection process is open-ended, and the library director will work with other library staff and faculty to determine what material to select. Material will be purchased from the publishers directly or third-party vendors.

IX. Formats Selected

Print books are the primary format for selection. Given similar costs, hardcover copies are preferable to paperback copies. Ebooks are only purchased to supplement existing holdings and Wiggin Library will only purchase unlimited or DRM free copies.

For periodicals, digital access through databases is preferable. Subscriptions of print journals will only be purchased when the title is unavailable electronically and an electronic subscription is significantly more expensive than a print subscription.

X. Gifts and Donations

The Wiggin Library may accept gifts of books and other materials with the approval of the library director. Those seeking to donate books and other materials must first confirm the Wiggin Library does not already hold those materials in its collection and then contact the library. Even if the material is not currently held by the Wiggin Library, the donation can still be denied. All donated materials become the property of the Wiggin Library upon receipt and will be evaluated with the same criteria applied to purchased materials. The library is free to dispose of any materials donated to the library if they are deemed unnecessary by the library director, or a person appointed by the library director, whether because they do not fit the collection needs of the library or due to poor condition. Both parties should be aware of this stipulation at the time the gift is offered and may be put in writing if it seems necessary.

Materials sent to the Wiggin Library without prior approval from library staff will be disposed.

XI. Weeding/Deselection

In order to maintain a collection that is both vibrant and useful, and to allow for its continued growth, the Wiggin Library regularly and systematically weeds materials from the collection. Weeding decisions will be made by the library staff and faculty members will be consulted about the titles chosen for deselection whenever necessary. For material comprehensively collected, material will be weeded only due to condition or duplicate copies. For all other material, weeding criteria will include condition, number of copies, relevance to the current curriculum of MLTS, relevance to the field, future value for research and historical purposes, and circulation history.

Material selected for weeding will be assessed for eligibility for the Last Copy Project at CARLI. Weeded items that are determined to be the last copy in Illinois will be submitted to CARLI. Items rejected by CARLI will be sold, donated, or discarded as appropriate.