

Northwestern University Library Collection Development Policy Statement

Philosophy by Harriet Lightman March 31, 1999

I. Brief overview of the collection

A. History of the collection

Not applicable

B. Broad subject areas emphasized or de-emphasized

Northwestern's Philosophy Department teaches both the Anglo-American and continental European philosophical traditions, and those are the areas that are emphasized in collecting. Over the years, special collecting strengths have included the history of philosophy, contemporary continental philosophy, ethics and political philosophy, and epistemology and the philosophy of mind. British and German traditions are exceptionally strong (especially, for German philosophy, Kant to the present day). The Kierkegaard collection at Northwestern is also traditionally strong, and strong collecting continues to be done in this area. Ancient philosophy is also stressed in collecting policies.

Collecting is done in all areas of philosophy, though little emphasis is given to eastern philosophy.

Philosophy of Science is the purview of the Science and Engineering Librarian.

Philosophy of Religion is the purview of the Religion Bibliographer.

African philosophy is collected in NUL's Africana Library.

C. Collection locations

Most materials are housed in the main stacks or in the periodical room, although materials can be found in Special Collections, and in Newspaper/Microtext (microfilm editions). Philosophy of Science materials may be found in SEL or in Main, while African philosophy is housed in the Africana collection. Reference materials are, for the most part, housed in the reference room, although some specialized bibliographies may be found in the main stacks.

II. Purpose or objectives

This collection serves the Department of Philosophy chiefly, and thus the collecting emphasis shifts as departmental teaching and research priorities shift. The collection also serves the teaching and research needs of those members of the broader university community who engage in philosophical inquiry. In particular, the philosophy collection supports the Departments of Classics, German, History, Political Science (for political theory) and Religion, as well as the program on Jewish Studies.

III. Library unit or title of the selector responsible for this collection

The Bibliographer for History, Economics, and Philosophy is responsible for the collections described in this document. Philosophical works are also gathered by bibliographers in Special Collections, Africana, Core and Schaffner.

IV. Scope of the subject coverage

A. Language

Works in western philosophy are purchased in their original language and in English translation. Eastern philosophy, when purchased, is purchased in translation. Critical and secondary materials are purchased in all western languages, with particular emphasis on English, French, German, and, to a lesser extent, Italian. The greatest stress is placed on English, American, German, and French critical editions, commentaries, and secondary works.

Hebrew is the purview of the Jewish Studies bibliographer.

Slavic is the purview of the Slavic bibliographer.

B. Geographical scope

Emphasis is on Western Europe and North America (exclusive of Mexico; we purchase very little

in Latin American philosophy), very minimal purchasing in Asian philosophy and in Middle Eastern philosophy.

C. *Chronological scope*

Ancient Greece and Rome

Western Europe, medieval to contemporary

United States, comprehensive

D. *Publication dates collected*

We attempt to collect all current North American and British university press monographs, as well as current academic-level monographs in French, German, and, to a much lesser extent, Italian.

We also attempt to gather new critical editions and commentaries in appropriate languages. We do not have a plan for retrospective purchasing, although we do purchase retrospectively as opportunities present themselves and circumstances permit. We buy out-of-print titles, and microfilm, on a case-by-case basis.

E. *Formats and genres*

1. *Inclusions*

Monographs

Serials

Electronic full-text journals (at the time of this writing, when included with the print subscription)

Some reference materials, chiefly specialized bibliographies

Facsimiles and reprints

Electronic full-text (CD and web products), selected

German Habilitationsschriften in subjects pertinent to the research and teaching strengths of the department

2. *Exclusions*

Audio, video, films

Introductory textbooks

Non-NU U.S. dissertations, unless requested

Pamphlet literature

V. *Acquisitions procedures affecting collection policies*

A. *Standing Orders*

We have several standing orders, but none put such undue stress on the budget that they need to be singled out.

B. *Approval plans and blanket orders*

No blanket order plans.

Approval plans as follows:

United States

France

Germany Great Britain

Italy (extremely limited)

C. *Gifts and exchanges*

Not a major collection avenue.

VI. *Duplication with other NU library units*

As a general rule, duplication with other units is avoided. There is duplication, by design, with Core. Limited duplication exists with Schaffner and Special Collections.

There may also be limited duplication with SEL, Law, and United Libraries.

VII. *Expensive purchases*

Expensive purchases, especially of critical editions, and of electronic materials, are critical to the collection. These are considered on a case-by-case basis.

VIII. *Interdisciplinary collections*

The philosophy collection overlaps with, but rarely duplicates, Africana, classics, German, history,

religion/Jewish studies, SEL (for philosophy of science and math), and the collections in the United Libraries. Materials are also available in Special Collections.

IX. Purchases with endowed funds

No endowed funds support this area

X. Cooperation with other libraries

A. Other resources, including local, regional or national libraries

Northwestern students and faculty have reciprocal borrowing privileges at University of Chicago, which has strong philosophy collections.

B. Consortia

Cooperation with CIC for electronic purchases

XI. Policies for purchasing journal article reprints or electronic files on demand

Not applicable

XII. Other factor of local importance

University of Chicago has strong collections in philosophy and classics

Recently, the CCMCC began a program whereby, with the help of state funds, consortial purchases of philosophy materials were made such that it would be insured that at least one copy of a given recent book was available in the state of Illinois.

XIII. Collection levels

The philosophy collection divides most neatly between 4/4F and 3/3F (with the first number being the historical collection strength and the second number being the current collecting level and language code). We attempt to collect in 4/4W for all areas of contemporary continental philosophy, and 4/4F for Anglo-American analytical philosophy, and for other key areas of philosophical inquiry. We are now collecting, as well, at a high 3F/low 4F in ancient philosophy. Areas that are not as strongly emphasized are aesthetics, and those areas of ethics that are peripheral to the teaching and research needs of the department (e.g., professional ethics).