**Collection Management Policy for American History**

**1. A detailed description of the collection**

**1.1 Purpose** **and description**

The purpose of the collection is to support teaching and research undertaken at UCL, primarily but not exclusively by the History Department and Institute of the Americas.

**1.2 Readership & access**

**1.2.1.** The main readership of the American History collection is UCL students (undergraduate and postgraduate) and UCL staff. There are also a significant number of affiliate students and intercollegiate students taking History courses taught at UCL.

**1.2.2.** Academic staff and researchers from other institutions are welcome to make use of the collection at any time.

**1.2.3.** Due to the high demands placed on the collection, access by students from other institutions is restricted. University of London students are given reference access (temporary variations to normal access policy apply April-June) but those from other universities are excluded except during UCL vacation periods.

**1.3 Description & holdings**

**1.3.1** The open access collection for American History contains over 14,000 volumes.

**1.3.2.1** The collection supports the undergraduate and postgraduate teaching carried out by the Department of History and Institute of the Americas. It also supports the interests of academic staff and research postgraduates, as well as the research elements of the taught courses.

**1.3.2.2** The sequence consists of 14 current print subscriptions. The Library also subscribes to a large number of electronic journal titles in American History.

**1.3.2.3** The Library provides access to a wide range of databases of relevance to American history, including: America: History and Life, American National Biography, Congressional Research Digital Collections, Digital National Security Archive and a number of US newspaper archives from ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

**1.3.3** The American History collection is located on the 2nd floor of the Main Library in the Wilkins building.

**1.3.4** There is also a substantial amount of less well-used material held in Store, including older journal volumes. Such material is usually available for next-day consultation on request.

**1.3.5** Any particularly old or rare material is held by the Special Collections department currently located at The National Archives, Kew.

**1.3.6 Relationships with other collections within UCL**

Material relevant to US history is widely distributed throughout most other social science and humanities subject areas as a result of the power of the United States and its economic, social, cultural and artistic influence. Thus many books and journals from other collections contain significant amounts of useful material. There is a particular link between the Latin American History and American History collections owing to the large Mexican/Hispanic population of the United States. There are also a links with Economics, History of Art, Geography and Architecture & Planning collections.

**1.3.7 Relationship with other collections outside UCL**

Senate House Library and The British Library have good collections in U.S. history, however, no formal acquisition policies are in place.

**2. Acquisition**

**2.1 Responsibility for selection**

Selection of materials is undertaken by the subject librarian for History and the subject librarian for the Institute of the Americas, within the framework of the Collection Management Policy. There is also a close liaison with Departmental Library Representatives and other members of the academic departments. Recommendations are always welcomed from staff and students. Final responsibility for collection management lies with the Director of Library Services.

* 1. **Subjects collected**

Good general coverage is aimed at, however, strengths in the Civil War, Black Studies and Labour History are continually augmented, and an improvement in coverage of the 20th century is under way.

**2.3 Priorities**

Priority is given to acquiring all materials necessary to support the undergraduate and postgraduate courses. If funds allow material is acquired to support the research interests of the departments and maintain the existing strengths in the collection.

* 1. **Level**

Material is collected at undergraduate and taught postgraduate level. Research level material is collected as funds allow and in collaboration with academic members of staff.

* 1. **Language**

Material is collected primarily in English, but important works in other West European languages may also be collected.

* 1. **Format & medium**

Material is still chiefly collected in print format but where appropriate - e.g. to support the requirements of a reading list - items in electronic format will be purchased if available. The preferred format for journals is now electronic where possible.

* 1. **Collaborative collecting agreements with other libraries**

There are no formal agreements with other institutions.

* 1. **Multiple copies**

Multiple copies of core texts and other books marked as essential on reading lists will be acquired using the dedicated book fund and according to the formula detailed in the generic Collection Management Policy. If possible, items in electronic format will be purchased to increase availability of material

* 1. **Donations**

Donations will be accepted for the American History collection subject to the criteria outlined in the Library Services Donations Policy.

**2.10 Exchange & deposit arrangements**

None in place

**2.11 Material not collected**

Except in certain circumstances, material of a non-academic level is not purchased

**3 Retention and preservation policies**

* 1. **Periodic review of the printed collection**

The open access American History collection will be reviewed annually for decisions on retention, relegation to store and disposal. These decisions are the responsibility of the Subject Librarians for American History and Institute of the Americas, although the advice of members of relevant UCL Departments may from time to time be sought.

* 1. **Open access material**

Newly acquired items and items of high or medium use will usually be given space on the open shelves. Priority is given to items needed for teaching purposes. In general, material is retained on the open shelves according to a number of criteria including usage, language, and date of publication. Important series will be maintained together on the open shelves.

* 1. **Relegation**

Any material may be relegated to store at the discretion of the subject librarians. Low use material will be relegated to store where necessary to accommodate more frequently used material on the open shelves.

* 1. **Retention and disposal**

Superseded editions of undergraduate textbooks are disposed of. (Earlier editions of current textbooks may be retained on the open shelves while their content is still relevant and while there is demand for additional copies.) Other material will be retained unless it is judged to be of little value to future scholarship, in which case it will be disposed of. Research-level collections will be retained. Where material is relegated to Store only one copy will be retained; any additional copies will be disposed of.

* 1. **Preservation**

The Library’s collections are preserved according to the principles set down in the Preservation Policy, accessible on the web with all public policy statements from Library Services. The preservation of digital materials is dealt with by the Digital Curation Strategy.

**This policy will be reviewed periodically by the Subject Librarians for American History and Institute of the Americas, in consultation with departmental library committees.**

Kieron Jones

30th April 2014