

PRESERVATION POLICY FOR PHYSICAL MATERIALS

BUSWELL LIBRARY, WHEATON COLLEGE

Adopted April 25, 2019

A primary task of Buswell Library is to acquire information resources for the benefit of our users, providing means of access to these resources and preserving these resources so that they can be used over time. This policy seeks to establish what the staff of Buswell Library will do to ensure the preservation of our information resources. The principles that have guided the writing of this policy are found in the Appendix, “The Context and Aims of Preservation.”

The preservation policy and preservation needs of an institution should be linked to its mission and mission statements. The mission of an institution determines the collections, types of materials acquired and the types of preservation activities that are needed. Since we are a Christian liberal arts undergraduate college with selected graduate programs, following are the main characteristics of our collection that affect preservation: the book collection is mostly less than 50 years old and is heavily used, both by our own users and by other users, especially those in our statewide library consortium; we are acquiring fewer print journals and more online journals; and we own substantial special collections with rare and unique materials. Additionally, Wheaton College’s position as a center of evangelical Christian thought and study has collection development and preservation implications.

Since Wheaton College is not a research-level institution, Buswell Library’s preservation and retention policies will necessarily be less comprehensive overall than those of a large research library. The preservation decisions we make must be appropriate for a liberal arts institution. Unique collections such as Buswell Library’s Special Collections, the Wade Center, and the Billy Graham Center Archives present some special considerations.

This policy gives priority to activities that are preventative in nature. Processing for longevity and binding paperbound items prevents damage to fragile items. Proper monitoring prevents problems from happening to the building environment. A separate disaster plan with which all staff are familiar promotes swift action that can limit damage done to the collections in case of a disaster. Proper planning in the creation of digital resources will prevent future preservation problems.

Since preservation is one of the areas of focus of the Resource Description and Digital Initiatives Group, the RDDI group leader coordinates periodic reviews of this document.

OUTLINE

1. Physical items in the collection

- a. Preventative processes
 - i. Binding
 - ii. Processing (processing for longevity)
 - iii. Monitoring of the collection
 - b. Building and environmental factors
 - i. Temperature and humidity monitoring
 - ii. Dusting and cleaning of shelves
 - iii. Disaster plan
 - c. Mending, repair and replacement
 - d. Reformatting
2. Digital items in the collection
 3. Cataloging/metadata/discovery systems
 - a. Catalogs and discovery systems
 - b. Persistent URLs

1. Physical items in the collection

1.a. Preventative processes

1.a.i. Binding

Buswell is committed to preserving its materials for long-term use by purchasing hardcover books or using commercial binding that meets current industry standards. A portion of the library budget is designated for binding and other preservation methods to ensure long-term sustainability of our collections.

Binding of Print Serials

All print serials that are on the Core Journals List are bound and retained indefinitely unless otherwise specified by policy made by the Collections Team in consultation with the appropriate subject librarian. Print titles that are non-core may or may not be bound, and they will be retained for varying lengths of time, as specified by policy made by the Collections Team in consultation with the appropriate subject librarian. All print titles that have back issues in JSTOR will not be bound and will be retained up to the publisher's moving wall.

The Continuing Resources Associate determines the binding frequency and size of serials, in consultation with the librarian responsible for continuing resources. The size chosen is based on the optimal size for long-term preservations over years of use and time on the shelf, and frequency of binding is dependent on the size of each issue and frequency of publication.

Binding of music scores

Music scores are usually printed only in paperback format. Since music scores are frequently scanned or photocopied and are used for performance, they need extra reinforcement to

withstand the use they receive. Therefore, all music scores are either hardcover bound at a commercial bindery or sewn and glued into fiberboard pamphlet binders.

Theses and dissertations

The library generally keeps theses and dissertations in digital form (PDF/A). In the rare instance that we want a print copy, we have it hardbound at a commercial bindery, since those items usually come as loose pages.

Binding Special Collections materials

Due to the unique and rare nature of most Special Collections materials, binding generally is handled by outside conservation professionals. Due to the necessary cost of such a process, the librarian responsible for Special Collections select only some items for binding as funds are available.

Binding damaged materials

For the binding or rebinding of damaged items, see the Mending section (1.c).

1.a.ii. Processing

Buswell Library processes each acquired item in order to make it an accessible piece of our library. Physical processing is necessary to identify items in our collection, designate their place on the shelf, and allow them to circulate while simultaneously protecting them with anti-theft measures. In order to ensure the long life and robust use of our materials, this processing acts as the first step toward their preservation. Part of the library's budget is dedicated to purchasing the materials necessary to ensure each item is processed for longevity.

All of our processing materials are of archival quality: they are long lasting and resistant to fading from natural and artificial light sources and use adhesives that do not dry out, liquefy, or stain the item over time. Important information on physical items—such as information on the spine, text, or illustrations—are kept as legible and unobscured as possible. At-risk items such as dust jackets, loose supplemental materials, and thin pamphlet-like items receive additional protection.

Processing Special Collections materials

Given the nature of Special Collections materials, processing is handled only by specially trained staff or students. These items receive minimal levels of processing to ensure their accessibility while being as non-invasive as possible. Items that are small or fragile are housed in envelopes, binders, or boxes for added protection. These containers, as well as all other materials used in conjunction with Special Collections materials, are non-acidic and archival quality.

Processing music scores

Music scores that have been bound at a commercial binder are processed like all other books. Music scores that have been sewn and glued into pamphlet binders receive extra labeling on the cover, to aid users in identifying the item on the shelf.

Processing media

The processing of each media collection is standardized by format, based upon the same considerations about long-term accessibility, etc., as the rest of the library's holdings. We avoid putting security strips onto the face of a disc, and any writing on the discs themselves is done with special disc-safe pens.

The DVD collection is shelved in locking cases, with oversized supplementary materials housed separately. The CD collection is a subset of the music collections, housed in jewel cases within filing cabinet drawers.

1.a.iii. Monitoring of the collection

It is the task of all library staff members to monitor the condition of items in the collection. As staff work with materials in the collection, they take note of items that need repair or replacement, or problems such as mold growth that indicate problems in the building environment.

Certain media types require regular monitoring and evaluation to detect traces of damage or deterioration. Such materials, held in Special Collections as microforms and magnetic audio and video tapes, are visually inspected by Special Collections staff at least every three years to determine media condition. Although stopping many kinds of physical deterioration is impossible, some measures can be taken to slow it, such as placing in cold storage. Such items displaying evidence of deterioration are also evaluated for possible reformatting or withdrawal.

1.b. Building and environmental factors

1.b.i. Environmental conditions

In order to prevent the physical breakdown of paper and book bindings, and in order to inhibit the growth of mold on library materials, the Operations Group Leader seeks to ensure that the library building is kept at optimal temperature and humidity levels, as defined by authorities in the preservation field. The target is 65 degrees Fahrenheit, and 40 percent relative humidity for storage areas where library materials are kept (staff-access only). Since these conditions are somewhat uncomfortable for staff and users, in areas where staff, users, and materials are located, temperatures will be the standard room temperature of 70–72 degrees Fahrenheit and 45–50% relative humidity.

Whenever the temperature and humidity conditions seem out of normal range, any staff member who notices this will notify the Administrative Assistant to place a work order. The

Administrative Assistant will inform the Operations Group Leader of work orders placed, so that he/she can address any long-term or recurring issues.

1.b.ii. Cleaning

Keeping the library's shelves as free as possible from dust and dirt is an important aspect of inhibiting mold growth. Dust provides nutrients for mold. The Circulation Services Supervisor ensures that all shelves, and the tops of all books, are vacuumed and cleaned once per year.

1.b.iii. Security and emergency manual

The Administrative Assistant maintains a Security and Emergency Manual that outlines how library staff will deal with damage to library materials due to flood, fire, or other disaster. The plan includes detailed procedures, a list of college or municipal personnel who may need to be contacted, and a list of vendors who are available for any remediation that may need to be done. The Administrative Assistant updates the manual at least annually, and all library staff review it annually in order to be familiar with important procedures. Library staff receive regular training for possible disaster scenarios.

1.c. Mending and Replacement

As they go about their daily work, all library staff should take note of items that need repair, when they are being used, being checked in, or during shelf inventory. Staff should particularly take note of unbound paperback books that are taller and/or wider than the most common size (roughly, more than 8–10 inches tall and 6–7 inches wide), and items that have a spine width of at least 1 ½ inches. These are more vulnerable to damage from use and from sitting unsupported on the shelf.

A designated person (currently, the chair of Collections Team, in consultation with the appropriate subject librarians) decides whether these items should be repaired, replaced, or withdrawn. If repaired, the Acquisitions/Processing Coordinator is familiar with book repair and decides if the mending can be done in house: simple repairs, spine or hinge repair, tipping-in of pages, or pamphlet repairs, etc. Since Buswell Library does not have a conservator on staff, items that need more extensive repair are repaired or rebound by a commercial bindery or given simple protective containers.

The Acquisitions/Processing Coordinator will have some formal training in the repair of books and media items that we have in our collection. He/she is responsible for the training of other fulltime and student staff members. Responsibility for training is part of that person's job description.

Due to the unique and rare nature of most Special Collections materials, repairs generally are handled by outside conservation professionals. Due to the necessary cost of such a process, the

librarian responsible for Special Collections will select only some items for repair as funds are available. Some materials may be re-housed in protective containers.

1.d. Reformatting

Under U.S. copyright law, libraries are allowed to make up to three copies (in analog or digital format) of a published work, if it is intended to replace a work in the library's collection and the original item is damaged, deteriorating, lost, stolen, or in an obsolete format. Reformatting is done by creating a better physical format (e.g., photocopying) or a digital copy, or sometimes both.

Textual items or printed music that needs to be reformatted are photocopied onto acid-free paper, attempting to replicate the original size and format as much as possible. This may involve significant efforts in terms of re-sizing the photocopied images and re-sizing or cutting the print output into the desired size. The copied item is then sent to the bindery for hardcover binding or pamphlet bound in house.

Photocopied items may also be retained as digital copies in PDF. This format may be the preferred format for long-term retention for some types of documents, such as electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs) or HNGR papers. In these instances, our standard is PDF/A, and more specifically PDF/A-2u, as the format of choice.

Published media recordings are particularly susceptible to obsolescence, and we prefer to acquire a commercially available copy of the newer format (e.g., VHS to DVD, or audiocassette to CD). In cases where one is unavailable, and if we have verified our rights under copyright law, we contract with a third party to convert from old to new format.

2. Digital items in the collection

As collection materials increasingly reside in the digital realm, it is crucial that we address their long-term preservation. Our Digital Preservation Plan ensures the authenticity, reliability, and long-term accessibility of digital materials and addresses the challenge of managing collections of both locally produced and leased digital content.

3. Cataloging/metadata/discovery systems

3.a. Catalogs and discovery systems

Data for the library's catalog and discovery systems are stored and maintained by CARLI and OCLC. They are responsible for the preservation of our catalog data. The RDDI Group Leader makes sure that these organizations have plans and procedures in place to ensure long-term survival of our catalog data.

The system administrator of our integrated library system will annually produce a backup copy of the catalog, for use in emergencies.

3.b. Persistent URLs

Library staff create and maintain persistent URLs for accessing digital objects in our collection. Staff members will ensure that the services we use to create and store these URLs have plans and procedures in place to ensure their long-term survival.

APPENDIX

THE CONTEXT AND AIMS OF PRESERVATION

[from R. Harvey and M. Mahard, *The Preservation Management Handbook*. Rowman and Littlefield, 2014, chapter 2]

[Z701 .P7445 2014 in BML]

- Preservation, as a key component in the sustainability of cultural property, is an imperative that transcends national borders and is essential for the maintenance and perpetuation of global cultural heritage.
- Preservation actions must take into account the needs of the user.
 - The ultimate goal of all preservation is to ensure continued access to information.
- Authenticity of the objects needs to be ensured in any preservation action.
 - Maintaining the integrity of the [physical] artifact in its original state maintains its authenticity.
 - Precisely what constitutes authenticity for a preserved digital object is a problematic concept, but authenticity does need to be demonstrated.
- Preservation is the responsibility of all, from the creators of objects to the users of objects.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- Effort put into creating long-lived objects and material reduces the need for preservation attention in the future.
 - E.g., using permanent paper, stable and well-supported file formats without lossy algorithms for digital objects.
- Collaboration is necessary to ensure preservation.
- Advocacy is necessary to ensure preservation.
- Taking preservation action now is better than doing nothing.
 - “Benign neglect” may be acceptable for physical objects, but it is not for digital objects.
- Preservation requires active, managed care.

- Especially important for digital objects because of their inherent instability: they are unlikely to remain readable and understandable unless they are actively managed from an early stage of their existence.
- Understanding the structure of materials is the key to understanding what preservation actions to take, as materials contain the seeds of their own destruction (inherent vice).
- Distinguish clearly between objects (containers) and the information they carry (content).
 - Digitization is not preservation: it is simply a means of copying originals.
- Prefer preservation actions that address large quantities of material over actions that focus on individual objects.

SPECIFIC PRINCIPLES

- Appraisal is both necessary and desirable.
- Keep the original.
- Keep multiple copies of objects.
- Do the minimum necessary to stabilize and preserve the object.
- Preservation actions should not exceed the abilities of the personnel who apply them.
- Preservation actions should aim at the highest quality possible.
- Preservation actions should not harm the object.
- Preservation actions should be documented.
- Preservation actions should adhere to ethical considerations.