

# Cook Memorial Library

## Materials Selection and Withdrawal Policy

### I. GENERAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Cook Memorial Library (CML) strives to inform, enlighten, and empower all patrons in our community. The Library and its advisory board uphold the right of all Americans to freely express their thoughts and ideas, both popular and unpopular. CML recognizes the importance of basic materials of permanent value and timely materials on current issues in formats that best suit patron needs. We support the right of each individual to privately read, listen, and view the full range of published thoughts and ideas.

In support of these ideals, CML offers a collection of materials that is diverse, inclusive, and protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and Article I of the Oregon State Constitution. CML and its advisory board endorse the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights as pertinent to the selection and use of Library materials.

### II. OBJECTIVES OF THE COLLECTION

CML is responsible for providing materials to patrons and taxpayers of all ages, backgrounds, and opinions. The Library collection taken as a whole will be an unbiased and diverse source of information, representing as many viewpoints as possible. Subjects will be covered in sufficient depth and breadth within existing financial resources to meet anticipated and expressed individual and community needs.

The collection is presented to provide individual access to information and materials in various formats to serve a wide variety of needs, including:

- To provide opportunity for the pursuit of happiness, education, entertainment, and enjoyment of life according to the full exercise of free choice.
- To assist in developing the skills and abilities needed for economic success.
- To develop the social awareness and knowledge needed for self-government and successful participation in a diverse community.
- To encourage and enhance personal, artistic, and intellectual growth.

CML neither encourages nor discourages any particular viewpoint. No material will be excluded because of race, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation, political, or social views of the author. Selection of materials by the Library does not mean endorsement of the contents or the views expressed by those materials.

CML and its advisory board recognize that Library resources are not unlimited. Selection of materials must be consistent with budget allocations. Resource sharing with other libraries, and electronic and other methods of information access, are valid and necessary ways of meeting patron needs.

### **III. SELECTION**

The responsibility for the collection rests with the Library Director. Reviews of new books from both professional journals and popular reviewing media form an important tool in the selection process. It is the Director's responsibility to choose materials that are of both current interest and permanent value, that are up-to-date, and that are responsive to the interest and needs of every segment of the community. This includes refraining from discrimination against any political, religious, economic, or social view or group through the deliberate exclusion of materials representing their views. Direct selection of Library materials can be delegated to staff members qualified for this duty by education, training, interest, and job classification.

Factors considered when adding specific material to the Library collection include, but are not limited to, the standards listed below. An item need not meet all of the provided criteria in order to be acceptable.

- Collection objectives
- Present collection composition
- Current or historical significance of author or subject
- Timeliness
- Community interest
- Level of demand
- Audience for material
- Community relevance
- Diversity of viewpoint
- Effective expression
- Format and format quality
- Contemporary significance or permanent value

- Accuracy of content
- Literary merit
- Price
- Availability of materials in other area libraries via Interlibrary Loan
- Shelf space

The nature of the media and the technical quality of production are additional factors to be considered in selecting audio, video, electronic, and other non-print formats. Internet sites linked from the Library's homepage are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials.

Children's materials are to be selected based upon their literary and artistic merit, contribution to the balance of the total collection, and the suitability of their content and vocabulary.

CML and its advisory board recognize that full information on issues of public concern may require access to information sources which exemplify those concerns. Individual items, which in and of themselves may be controversial or offensive to some patrons or staff, may appropriately be selected if their inclusion will contribute to the balance and effectiveness of the Library collection as a whole. Materials are evaluated on the significance of the entire work rather than individual parts.

The Library encourages public suggestion of items and subjects to be considered for the collection. Serious consideration will be given to purchasing patron-requested materials when these requests meet collection objectives. Remaining requests may be met through resource sharing with other libraries, electronic retrieval, or other means. The Library does not purchase patron requests for materials older than five years. Gift items and donations are subject to the same selection criteria used for purchased materials.

#### **IV. COLLECTION MAINTENANCE AND DESELECTION / WITHDRAWAL**

To maintain the effectiveness of the Library's total collection, the Library will attempt to systematically remove materials deemed no longer useful or relevant. The Library does not automatically replace all materials withdrawn because of loss, damage, or wear. Need for replacement is weighed with regard to several factors: number of duplicate copies, existence of adequate coverage of field, similar material in the collection, later or more authoritative materials, and current demands for the particular subject or title.

The Library recognizes that some materials may be controversial and that any given item may offend some patrons. Selection or retention of materials will not be made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval of any group of patrons, but solely on the basis of the principles stated in this policy. Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of their contents.

## **V. ACCESS**

The Library and its advisory board consider reading, listening, and viewing to be individual, private matters. CML believes that full, confidential, and unrestricted access to information is essential for patrons to exercise their constitutional rights. While anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves or their own minor child(ren), the freedom of others to read or inquire will not be restricted. Only parents and guardians have the right and responsibility to guide and direct the reading, listening, and viewing choices of their own minor child(ren). The Library does not stand in the place of parents (in loco parentis).

The Library collection will be organized, marked, and maintained to help people find the materials they want. Staff may not label, sequester, or alter materials because of controversy surrounding the author or the subject matter except when conducted in an educational context. "Restricted access" collections may be maintained for materials that are rare, fragile, cost-prohibitive to replace, at high-risk of theft or mutilation, or pending repair, addition, processing, or withdrawal.

## **VI. CONSTITUTIONAL PROTECTION**

The Library and its advisory board considers all materials selected under this policy to be constitutionally protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and the Oregon State Constitution.

## **VII. COLLECTION REVIEW**

The Library and its advisory board recognizes the right of individuals to question the inclusion of materials in the Library collection. The Library will give serious consideration to the opinions of individuals who are current Cook Memorial Library cardholders who have had their card for longer than three months.

Individuals questioning material in the Library collection may ask Library staff about such material. The staff person will hear and record these concerns, direct the patron to this policy, and, if necessary, refer the patron to the Library Director for further discussion.

Individuals still questioning Library materials may submit their opinion in writing via the Request for Review of Library Materials form found on the Library website. Individuals can print the form, fill it out completely, and return it in person to the Library, where it will be shared with the Library Director. If necessary, the requestor may print at the Library using a personal device or a public computer. Printing fees are the responsibility of the requestor. Digitally submitted forms will not be considered. The Library Director will consult with staff to review the patron's concern and material in question and determine whether the material was appropriately selected and made accessible under this policy.

Following a discussion with staff, the Director will make the final decision and reply to the individual in writing. The Director will keep the advisory board informed of all requests for review of library materials and their disposition. The Director will also report the challenge incident and outcome to the ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom and other relevant organizations that record challenges.

Persons still wishing to express concerns to the Library about materials in the collection will be heard during a regular Library Advisory Board meeting under the agenda item "public comment" or at another time designated by the advisory board for public expression. Time will be limited to three minutes.