



## **Collection Development and Maintenance Policy**

### **Purpose and Scope of Collection**

The purpose of Otis Library's (the "Library") collection is to provide individuals access to a broad and diverse range of materials that support their informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs. The Library is a community resource for people of all ages, races, creeds, national origins, sexual orientations, and political or social views as well as other categories and groups. The collection is intended to meet the interests of individuals of all ages, backgrounds, and perspectives and serves as a community resource that supports lifelong learning, free inquiry, and enlightenment. Library materials are selected and made accessible to ensure the widest possible range of varied and diverging viewpoints and subject matter in the collection as a whole, in accordance with the mission of Otis Library and the protections against discrimination as set forth in Section 46a-64 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

### **Responsibility for Selecting Library Materials**

The selection of Library materials is the responsibility of the Library staff, who are professionally trained in curating and developing a collection that provides for access to the widest array of informational, educational, and entertaining materials. Ultimate responsibility for materials and resources selected rests with the Executive Director, who will guide the development of the collection in alignment with the goals outlined in this policy.

### **Intellectual Freedom and Censorship**

Otis Library supports the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and affirms the principles outlined in the Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, and Freedom to View Statement as set forth by the American Library Association (ALA). The Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of the public library as a place for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information, and the promotion of free expression and free access to ideas by Norwich residents. As such, Otis Library's collection represents a wide spectrum of viewpoints, some of which may be controversial or unorthodox. The inclusion of materials in the Library collection does not equate to an endorsement of their content by the Library. The right of individuals to access a wide variety of ideas and materials is upheld, and the Library works to ensure that no one is denied access based on age, race, creed, national origin, sexual orientation, political or social views, or any other personal attribute.

## **Selection Criteria**

Decisions about adding materials to the Library collection are made through the application of general selection criteria, regardless of format and whether the material under consideration is to be purchased or accepted as a donation. One or more of the following selection criteria must be met for material to be added to the collection of the Otis Library.

1. **Support for the Library's Mission:** Materials that align with the Library's role in the community as a trusted informational and cultural hub that provides resources for personal growth, lifelong learning, and the free exchange of ideas.
2. **Content Significance and Contribution:** The work's significance or contribution to the depth or diversity of viewpoints in the collection.
3. **Critical Reviews:** Evaluation of materials based on professionally recognized review sources.
4. **Author and Publisher Competence:** Consideration of authority, significance, or competence of the author, producer, or publisher.
5. **Accuracy and Timeliness:** Materials that are accurate, relevant, and up-to-date for community needs.
6. **Public Demand:** Materials that meet expressed or perceived interest or demand as reflected in patron requests or data from library systems.
7. **Local and Community Relevance:** Materials that address local interest or have historical or community significance.
8. **Format Suitability:** The material's format and physical construction, ensuring that it is suitable for public library circulation.
9. **Technology and Library of Things:** Items selected are based on usefulness, interest, and the broadness of implications and importance.
10. **Budget, Availability, and Space Limitations:** Selection is made in consideration of the Library's budget, the availability of materials through vendors, and space constraints.
11. **Self-Published Materials:** Self-published or independently published materials are considered if they have local relevance, received favorable reviews, and are available through reputable distributors.

Suggestions from the public are encouraged and are evaluated by the staff based on the above criteria.

Efforts are made to provide materials in formats that serve the different learning styles and preferences of Norwich residents.

## **Gifts and Donations**

All gifts and donations to the Library are subject to the same selection criteria as purchased materials. Otis Library reserves the right to refuse donations that cannot be incorporated into the collection or require special handling. Materials accepted as gifts may be added to the collection, offered for sale, or discarded without consulting the donor.

## **Digital Collections and Databases**

Otis Library also maintains a growing collection of digital resources and databases. These resources are selected to complement the physical collection and provide patrons with 24/7 access to information. Criteria used in selecting digital resources include needs of residents, cost, ease of use, technology requirements, vendor reputation, and availability for onsite or remote access. Some digital collections are governed by the vendor's specific terms of use, including patron residency and, possibly, minimum age requirements. Some materials may not be considered appropriate for children. It is the responsibility of the parent or caregiver to decide what material is suitable for that child to read or view. That a child may possibly access materials that their parent or caregiver deems inappropriate does not impact the selection of databases or digital platforms.

## **Controversial Materials**

Otis Library acknowledges that materials in the collection may be controversial or may be viewed as objectionable, unorthodox, or unacceptable by some members of the community. The Library's role is to provide access to a broad spectrum of materials and viewpoints. The Library does not endorse any particular viewpoint but supports the right of individuals to access materials of their choice, regardless of others' opinions. The presence of a particular material in the Library collection does not indicate approval or endorsement of its content but rather a commitment to intellectual freedom and the right of free access to information.

## **Collection Maintenance**

To ensure the Library's collection remains relevant, accurate, and in good condition, materials are regularly reviewed for:

- **Relevance:** Ongoing assessment of materials based on current community interests and needs and historical value.
- **Condition:** Evaluation of the physical state of materials, with damaged or worn items being repaired, replaced, or removed.
- **Availability of Duplicates:** Availability of additional copies either in the Library or at other Connecticut libraries.
- **Availability of Age-appropriate or Grade-level Material**
- **Completeness** (sets or series)
- **Format:** Review of whether a more desirable or accessible format is available
- **Obsolescence:** Materials that are outdated, contain inaccurate data, or no longer serve the needs of the community may be withdrawn.
- **Demand and Usage:** Materials that have not circulated for a period of time may be considered for withdrawal, particularly if they are duplicative or no longer in demand.

Materials that have not circulated in three to five years or multiple copies of a once-popular item are considered candidates for withdrawal by the appropriate staff person. Materials that are

determined to be no longer appropriate for the collection are deleted and may be sold or discarded.

### **Reconsideration of Library Materials**

Otis Library values the right of individuals to express concerns about specific materials in the collection. However, the Library limits requests to reconsider materials to individual residents of Norwich, Connecticut.

Norwich residents may visit the Library's website, [otislibrarynorwich.org/policies/](https://otislibrarynorwich.org/policies/) to review the Request for Reconsideration Policy and access a Request for Reconsideration of Materials Form.