Purpose

The collection supports present and anticipated teaching and research in the fields of American, British, Comparative, and Post-Colonial literature. At present, the central focus of the department and the chief interests of the faculty are encompassed in the following general areas of teaching and research: American literature, African-American literature, New Orleans literature, British, Commonwealth, and Postcolonial literature, Creative Writing, Rhetoric and Composition, and Technical and Professional Writing. A sustained interest in minority literatures and cross-cultural studies is reflected in the curriculum, as is an increased attention to literary theory and multidisciplinary approaches.

The Department of English offers a four-year program leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree with five areas of concentration: literature, creative writing, professional writing, Pre-law, journalism, and New Orleans regional literatures.

The Department also offers graduate programs. The Master of Arts in English program features advanced study in British and American literature, in professional writing and editing, and in rhetoric and pedagogy. The program requires students to complete one of four areas of concentration: American Literature, British Literature, Professional Writing, and Teaching.

Also at the graduate level, the department offers Creative Writing Workshop, an interdisciplinary M.F.A. in Creative Writing.

Other academic units whose subject areas overlap significantly with those of English include the College of Education and the Departments of Film & Theatre, Foreign Languages, and Philosophy.

Languages

The primary language of acquisition is English. Materials in European languages may be acquired on a highly selective basis. Materials in non-European languages are not acquired.

Chronological Guidelines

No limitations.

Geographical Guidelines

Primary emphasis is on Great Britain and the United States. Interest is growing in Canada, Australia, India, the Caribbean, and Far Eastern and South American nations.
Treatment of Subject

Materials are collected in the following areas: history and theory of literary criticism, history of literature and approaches to the teaching of literature. Biographical treatments and letters of individual authors are also important to the collection. Critical editions of major literary works are collected, as is textual criticism.

Juvenile materials are not collected. Textbooks at the elementary level are not collected. Textbooks at the advanced level are collected on a very selective basis.

Works of contemporary fiction (novels and short story collections) and poetry are collected, in support of courses in the English Department as well as the M.F.A.

Types of Material

Monographs and serial publications form the basis for English Department acquisitions. Reference materials, including bibliographies, dictionaries, handbooks and encyclopedias, are selectively acquired. Subscriptions to standard research databases are acquired. Theses and dissertations from other institutions are acquired on a highly selective basis. Textbooks are generally not collected, although anthologies of literature that may be used in courses are collected. CDs and DVDs are also collected when funds permit.

Publications of national and international organizations, societies and congresses are acquired on a highly selective basis.

Major sets and collections of material that significantly supplement existing resources are acquired when funds permit.

The general format preference of students and faculty for monographs is print, but electronic books are collected on request and are encouraged as an option for Course Reserve purchases.

Date of Publication

Current and retrospective materials are collected, with emphasis in most subject areas on materials published within the last five years. Purchases of retrospective materials are made as needed with emphasis in the following areas: history of literature, literary criticism, comparative literature, and 20th-century fiction and poetry.

Other Resources

The principal collections used by the Department of English are housed within the general and reference stacks and following three areas of the library:

The Louisiana Collection contains literature, history and biographical materials pertaining to New Orleans and Louisiana.

Special Collections contains rare and delicate materials useful in the study of British and American Literature. Especially significant in the study of Southern literature is the Von der Haar Collection of materials by and about William Faulkner.
The Microfilm Room contains valuable collections for historical research, including the Early English Books I and II microfilm sets.

Related Policy Statements

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Materials related to composition pedagogy and the teaching of English as a second language are purchased by Curriculum & Instruction; English purchases general materials on rhetoric and style. Grammar handbooks and citation guides are purchased with Reference funds.

Film & Theatre

Contemporary plays, screenplays, and monologues are purchased by Film and Theatre, along with works on performance aspects of theater; English is responsible for literary criticism on dramatic works studied in the English department, and for primary texts of older plays.

Though the M.F.A. degree is interdisciplinary in nature, the English department has primary responsibility for collecting works of contemporary fiction and poetry.

Foreign Languages

The English department's interest in comparative literature is supported in part by the materials acquired by the Foreign Languages department, particularly in the Romance languages.

Philosophy

The Philosophy Department is primarily responsible for material on the philosophy of language, and shares with the English department an interest in critical theory (particularly those texts which are cross-disciplinary in emphasis).

Classical texts which are of interest to students of both literature and philosophy (e.g., Plato) are the primary responsibility of the Philosophy Department.

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