

Alva Public Library Selection Policy for Library Materials

Purpose of Selection Policy

The selection policy will guide the library staff in the selection of materials for purchase and in the evaluation of donated materials. It will also be used to inform the public about the principles used to determine if materials will be added or removed from the library collection.

It is not the librarians' responsibility to practice censorship, but to provide the public free access to materials, which discuss all points of view. Selection of library materials is based on the merit of the work as it relates to the Library's purpose and as it serves the needs and interest of the community as a whole. The Alva Public library supports the concept of intellectual freedom as defined by the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, Freedom to View Statement, Labels and Rating Systems, Diversity in Collection Development and Evaluating Library collections.

The Library takes no stand on public issues, does not attempt to promote any point of view, and does not endorse the opinions expressed in the materials in the collection. The Library will not add a material to the collection or remove it from the collection solely because of the race, religion, nationality, or political views of an author, controversial content of the item, or the endorsement or disapproval of an individual or group within the community. Materials which have been selected according to the guidelines in this policy will not be removed from the collection at the request of any individual or group; in addition the library will not feel obliged to add to the collection materials which do not meet the criteria set forth in the policy.

The Library recognizes a distinction between children, young adult, and adult collections on the basis of reading level, language comprehension and intended audience. Materials are housed and shelved based on organizational structure and which is not intended to restrict or prohibit use for any patron. Responsibility for the use of library materials by children and teens rests with their parents and/or legal guardians. Selection of materials for the adult collection is not restricted by the possibility that children and teens may obtain materials which their parents or guardians consider inappropriate.

Members of the public who wish to comment on a particular library item may do so on the form provided by the Library (Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials) and following the approved procedure (Procedure for Material Challenge/Reconsideration of Materials in the Collection).

Responsibility for Selection of Materials

The Library Director, operating under Library Board approval, is responsible for the selection of library materials. The Director may delegate the responsibility for the selection of materials to designated staff members. Reviews, best seller list, standard catalogs, etc., are tools utilized by staff to make selections. The Library welcomes suggestions on items for purchase from the community. The Library Director is responsible for expending funds in an equitable manner for the library collection.

Standards for Selecting Library Materials

- **Quality of content:** the Library strives to collect materials of reasonably high quality. Consideration is given to literary merit, readability, accuracy of content, awards received and quality of illustration.

- **Appropriateness for the collection and community:** an attempt is made to maintain a collection of print and non-print materials of permanent and enduring value. Materials may also be selected if they are currently in demand. The library does not purchase multiple copies of materials due to budget constraints. If the demand is judged to be temporary and the item does not meet other selection standards, then the need for the item may be met through the Overdrive e-book option or through interlibrary loan.
- **Format:** the library purchases hardback books, paperbacks if hard backs not available, periodicals, recorded books, CD and DVD recordings, electronic databases and microfilm.

Maintenance of a balanced collection, materials on as many subjects and points of view as possible, is a high priority for the Library. Materials focusing on controversial areas, such as religion and politics, are selected with the purpose of informing the reader rather than to convince.

Budget and space limitations are a consideration for the purchase of audio-visual materials. Emphasis for the selection of recorded books is placed on the purchase of popular or history-based materials. Emphasis for purchasing video materials is placed on educational, historical or children's DVD's. The majority of popular feature films in the library DVD collection are due to donations of materials by the public.

Materials relating to the history of Alva, Woods County and Northwest Oklahoma are collected at a reference level.

Materials that are useful to local genealogists are collected and placed in the Genealogy Area of the library collection. These materials are selected if they are of general public interest.

The Library does not purchase textbooks or workbooks unless they would be used in Library programs.

In some instances, materials will be selected when the standard criterion is not met, examples are

- Local history
- Materials in subject areas where information is scarce as long as the information is correct.
- Materials written by local authors.

Donations

The Library welcomes material and/or monetary donations. The same standard of selection will be applied to donations as to other library materials. The Library staff is available to assist patrons in selecting appropriate materials to donate to the Library. All donations become the property of the Library with the Director and library staff evaluating the materials to see if they will enhance the Library Collection. Donated materials that are not added to the Library may be offered to other organizations or included in the Library Book Sale. Donated items may be removed from the collection for the same reasons any other item is removed.

Selection Limitations

- **Duplication of materials within the library community:** when selecting materials, the staff considers the presence in the community of libraries of NWOSU and the public schools. Materials that are of a technical or research nature that are available in the college library are generally not selected. This includes area newspapers on microfilm if they are in the college library collection. The library does not provide the basic materials needed by all school children but attempts to supplement and enrich the public school curriculum. In order to meet

the informational needs of the public some materials owned by the other community libraries may be purchased.

- **Issues of theft or mutilation:** the liability of an item to theft or mutilation is not an influencing factor in its original selection. Some materials have traditionally been the objects of repeated theft or mutilation. If the item is determined to be essential to the collection, it will be replaced and possibly moved to a secure location.
- **High cost:** Budgetary limitations may curtail the purchase of high cost items which might otherwise fit the purchase criteria.