

Western Libraries Collections Management Policy For Maps and Data

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Revised:

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Purpose of the Collection:

The Map and Data Centre collection of Western Libraries is intended to support the research activities of faculty, students and staff and the instructional requirements of undergraduate and graduate programs. The collection also provides support for teaching and research in a wide variety of fields.

The Map and Data Centre (MDC) is the primary physical location for the support of cartographic material and data supporting the research and instructional needs of the university community. Its purpose is to provide a comprehensive print collection of world-wide coverage comprised of general and thematic, small and large scale maps; national, provincial or state, regional, and thematic atlases and related geographical materials. The MDC provides electronic access to geospatial and data sources through local delivery services and consortial memberships.

Subject Areas Covered:

Subject areas collected in support of teaching and research needs of the university and based on budget allocation have included: human geography (economic, land use, environmental, political, cultural, social, historical, urban and regional, resource studies); physical geography (climatology, soils, hydrology, vegetation); Third World issues; linguistics; history; geological sciences; astronomy; nursing; dentistry; kinesiology; economics; sociology; political science; business; law; epidemiology and biostatistics; social work; education; and engineering.

Format:

Acquisitions include: topographic and thematic sheet maps, digital geospatial data in standard GIS, raster or vector formats, electronic maps and atlases, city and country road maps, base and outline maps, aerial photographs, navigational charts, regional, national and thematic atlases, globes, wall maps, microform maps and gazetteers. Where available, materials are acquired in formats compatible with the ArcGIS software for which the university maintains a site license.

Electronic data products are acquired on CD-ROM and DVD, as well as through direct download through suppliers. Where files are downloaded, they are stored on physical media (i.e., hard drives and/or CD/DVD) for future use.

Downloaded data files and digital geospatial data are transferred to new media as applicable (e.g., conversion from DAT tape to CD, CD to DVD, etc.) as appropriate and necessary in order to preserve long-term access to the original materials. Where available, data files are acquired in ASCII format, which is machine and platform independent.

Language:

While English is the primary language of the collection, as maps and atlases are produced in the national language(s) of the countries in which they are published many languages are collected. The graphic method (legend) of presentation employed in cartographic materials reduces the difficulties associated with interpretation of foreign language materials. To date, no qualitative data have yet been acquired: where "text" is stored in data files, it is stored in English. Documentation for the data files is provided in both French and English whenever possible: no translation is done.

Source of Publication:

Sources of publication are primarily Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Western Europe. Material published in other regions may be considered and will be evaluated for quality and relevance based on the collection policy.

Date of publication:

Materials with a recent imprint date are preferred. Reproduction maps and atlases may be added to support the strong historical collection. Older original material will be considered. Older data may be collected and provided upon demand from users subject to availability and funding. Once a data file in a series is collected, typically the complete run of such data will be made available if possible, in order to facilitate comparisons across time.

Geographic scope:

Cartographic materials for all parts of the world are acquired at a general or reference level. However, emphasis is placed on Canada, particularly Ontario and the Great Lakes; United States; and Europe. Most countries have topographic coverage of 1:250,000 and 1:50,000. Data principally cover Canada: depending upon the study, the data may be provided at a local, provincial, or national level. Additionally, international data (from agencies such as the World Bank and OECD) are collected and provided, and membership in the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) provides access to international and American data.

Chronological Period:

Although the main emphasis is on contemporary publications, material portraying historical periods is also collected as appropriate.

Related collections and cooperation:

The Western Libraries collection for maps and data is supplemented by collections in related fields, such as Geography, History, Political Science, Engineering, Earth Sciences, Health Sciences, Visual Arts, Biology, and Anthropology. Western Archives represents an alternate location for the storage and maintenance of older and rare materials.

Geospatial data files are acquired from the Ontario Geospatial Data Exchange (OGDE) through the OCUL consortium subscription and from DMTI through a national consortium subscription. Local geospatial data files are donated by the City of London. Other consortium subscriptions have been arranged for geospatial files for Hamilton, Niagara Falls and Ottawa. Orthoimagery is included in most of these files.

ICPSR, Statistics Canada's Data Liberation Initiative, and the federal Depository Services Program serve as sources of data and/or geospatial files.

Gifts:

The library gratefully accepts gifts of materials in good condition which are within the scope of coverage for its collection and which the library either does not already own or does not own in sufficient depth to support teaching and research needs. Data collected by faculty members will be considered for provision through the MDC if it is available for secondary use and the documentation is sufficiently detailed to adequately describe the data file and its collection.

Managing the Collection:

In order to ensure that collections remain optimally useful for our patrons, it is necessary to analyze collection usage and available space regularly. Print items will need to be selectively removed from the active collection from time to time.

Duplicate items that are no longer required to support the curriculum, and damaged items that can no longer be replaced may be removed from the collection at the discretion of the Subject Librarian.

Items that are only available at Western or those with a local focus may be transferred to storage. Material housed in these storage facilities is available on request through the Library Catalogue.

Criteria for transfer selection include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1) Outdated or previous editions of titles
- 2) Medium- to low-use items
- 3) Material that is available in alternate formats, i.e., online
- 4) Materials that would benefit from storage in a more controlled environment.

Data files are removed from the collection only if they are completely superseded by newer revisions of the file or are recalled by the distributor.

Resources to aid in acquisition of material:

The collection is a full depository for Canadian topographic maps, hydrographic charts, and geological maps. Time-series coverage provided by superseded editions of national topographic maps is a particular strength.

The web and/or FTP sites provided by the DMTI, ICPSR, and DLI provided access to most data obtained. Additionally, other data-related sites (such as “Official Statistics” and “Crossroads of Social Science”) act as finding tools for identification of data sources. The Data Liberation Initiative, Canadian Association of Public Data Users, ICPSR and the International Association for Social Science Information Service and Technology (IASSIST) also provide member-only mailing lists which can be used to identify potential sources of data.