

Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies
Collection Development Policy

1. **Statement of Purpose:** The Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies serves as a center for the study of American politics with specific emphasis on the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The Russell Library seeks to document the dynamic relationship of politics, policy, and public life through the archival records, oral histories, and material culture of individuals, groups, and organizations. The Library also develops public programming, exhibitions, and educational materials that encourage and facilitate research, scholarship, and lifelong learning for the communities it serves.

A department of the University of Georgia Libraries, the Russell Library reports to the Associate University Librarian for Special Collections. The Richard B. Russell Foundation, Inc. provides supplemental financial and advisory support. The University Librarian and Associate Provost serves as an ex officio member of the Russell Foundation Board of Trustees, and the Russell Library Director makes an annual report to the Foundation.

2. **Types of Programs Supported by the Collection:**

- a. **Research:** The Russell Library collects manuscripts, records, oral histories, and artifacts that further research by scholars, students, and the public on politics, policy, and public life on the local, state, national, and international levels. The Library seeks to provide sources on the twentieth and twenty-first century political history of Georgia and the United States Congress as well as the activities of individual political activists, elected officials, and other participants in the political process. The Library also seeks materials that build on current strengths.
- b. **Exhibitions:** The Russell Library stages exhibitions on a rotating basis featuring materials from the collections. The Library may loan unrestricted materials and facsimiles for exhibitions to other research institutions and museums when those policies and facilities meet acceptable standards. The Library may borrow materials from individuals and institutions that complement or enhance displays. The Library may also host exhibits from other institutions and/or commercial firms that align with its subject strengths.
- c. **Outreach and Public Programming:** The Russell Library furthers the development and use of its collections through an outreach program including exhibits, tours and presentations, field trips, public programs, classroom teaching and instructional support, and digitizing collections.

- d. Acquisitions:** The Russell Library acquires materials through donation, transfer, and purchase. Donations of materials and funds are essential to maintaining and developing the collections. Grant funding for special projects is sought when it contributes substantially to the acquisition, preservation, arrangement and description, and servicing of the collections.
3. **Audiences served by the Collection:** The Russell Library is open to the University of Georgia community and public. Patrons include graduate and undergraduate students; university faculty and staff; independent scholars; K-12 students; public; donors and guests.
4. **Strengths of the Collection:** The Russell Library is strongest in twentieth-century Georgia politics and policymaking as well as public infrastructure and economic development, land use and environmental issues, social relations issues and trends (race and ethnicity, gender, disability, class), civil rights, national defense, and international relations and foreign policy.
5. **Priorities and Limitations of the Collections:**
- a. Present Collection Strengths:** The Russell Library covers the history and politics of Georgia and the United States from approximately 1900 through the present with emphasis on elected and appointed officials, political parties, and activists; civic, lobbying, and policymaking organizations; political observers and scholars; and University of Georgia alumni active in politics and public policy.
- b. Present Collecting Level:** The Russell Library seeks and solicits materials relevant to expanding collecting areas related to shifting demographics, grassroots movements, and issues of local, state, regional, national, and international importance.
- c. Subject Areas Collected:** The Russell Library collects in all subject areas, as specified in present and desired levels of collecting, with particular emphasis on political history and public policy development.
- d. Collecting Priorities:** In addition to building upon existing strengths, the Russell Library is actively building collections in these areas:
- Civic organizations
 - Criminal justice policy and reform, especially the Georgia carceral system
 - Economic development and tourism
 - Environmental politics, policy, and activism
 - Evolving Georgia demographics

- Georgia disability history
 - Georgia in the global economy
 - Grassroots activism
 - Local and state politics and government in Georgia
 - Public health policy and politics
- e. **Preservation and Security:** The preservation of research materials held by the Russell Library is crucial to the mission of the University of Georgia Special Collections Libraries. Materials are stored in a climate-controlled vault for optimal preservation of archival and published collections. To ensure the security of the Russell Library holdings, the collection is non-circulating and may only be viewed in the Montgomery Reading Room at the UGA Special Collections Libraries.
- f. **Format and Physical Characteristics:** The Russell Library seeks and solicits office and administrative files, correspondence, diaries, scrapbooks, speeches, reports, minutes, ledgers, photographs, original audiovisual materials, ephemera, and artifacts as well as certain electronic records and born-digital materials (word processing documents, digital photographs, emails, databases, and/or web pages) documenting its collecting areas. The Library also collects oral history interviews documenting the intersection of politics, policy, society, and culture. Regardless of format, the Russell Library considers available space and resources when making acquisition decisions.
- g. **Exclusions and Duplicates:** The Russell Library will not generally accept the following:
- Materials that reflect the history of another state or region unless those materials are created by a Georgian, University of Georgia alumni, and/or relate to subject strengths in the collections.
 - Partial collections or those which have already been deposited, in part or whole, in another repository.
 - Photocopies or other duplicates of materials held by individuals, UGA Libraries, or other repositories.
 - Research files consisting primarily of photocopies of monographs, serials, archival materials from other repositories and printouts from the internet.
 - Digital surrogates (e.g., scanned documents and photographs) created by donors or outside parties
 - Electronic records for which a preexisting analogue equivalent is available.
 - Certain older and defunct legacy media formats, which present an unrealistic burden on the Processing and Digital Stewardship units.
 - Works of art, portraits, and furniture

- Plaques, trophies, and jewelry
- Published audio/video recordings and microfilm
- Mass-market publications, periodicals, serials, and newspapers
- Financial and/or legal documents with private and/or sensitive information.
- Large slide, negative, or photograph collections. The Library will accept a small selection of identified photographic materials related to collection strengths and priorities

The Russell Library adheres to state and federal laws regarding privacy concerns, including FERPA, HIPPA, and attorney-client privilege.

6. **Cooperative Agreements Affecting the Collecting Policy:** The Russell Library recognizes that other institutions collect in the same or overlapping areas and will seek similar unique resources for their own collections. The Library also acknowledges that other institutions may have prior claims on such materials or may be a more appropriate repository to house them. In cases where the legitimate collecting interests of the Russell Library and another repository directly conflict, the Library will use the best interest of the scholarly community as a criterion in pursuing a resolution.
7. **Statement of Deaccessioning Policy:** Duplicates and materials that do not reflect the collecting areas of the Russell Library and/or possess no inherent historical value may be deaccessioned subject to the terms of acquisition as well as applicable state and federal laws. Such materials may be offered to other, more appropriate institutions or returned to the donor.
8. **Policies and Procedures for Collecting:**
 - a. **Deed of Gift:** The Russell Library does not accept materials without a legal transfer of title, deed of gift, instrument of donation, or other official acknowledgment.
 - b. **Loans and Deposits:** The Russell Library does not accept collections on permanent or temporary loan. Deposits of materials may be accepted only when the donor intends to give the materials to the Library and completes a formal letter of intent documenting that desire. All materials placed on deposit will be handled according to the Library's established policies and procedures and may be used for research, educational, and exhibition purposes. The Library will not perform any preservation, conservation, or processing actions to materials on deposit.
 - c. **Restricted Collections:** The Russell Library does not accept collections that are restricted or closed for Library use or research in perpetuity. Collections may be closed for a specified period according to the wishes of the donor. Any agreement regarding access restrictions is documented in the deed of gift.

d. Revision of Policies: The Russell Library reserves the right to amend the preceding policies.

9. **Procedures for Reviewing Collection Development Guidelines:** These policies are designed to fulfill the missions of the University of Georgia, UGA Libraries, and the Russell Library.

July 1993

Updated: April 1994, March 1996, June 2004, August 2015, December 2024, August 2025