

About the Library

The University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) Health Sciences and Human Services Library (HSHSL) is dedicated to fulfilling the ever-evolving needs of our diverse communities by providing exemplary services, resources, expertise, and space to cultivate transformational learning, research, and community engagement in an environment reflecting the University's mission, vision, and core values. The HSHSL serves UMB faculty, students, and staff in the schools of Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Social Work, and the Graduate School as well as other campus offices, programs, and initiatives. The Law School maintains its own library.

Recognizing that health sciences and human services incorporate individuals of all ages who represent a multiplicity of racial and ethnic backgrounds, economic and educational levels, and physical and mental abilities, the HSHSL is committed to building collections that reflect and support individuals with diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and abilities.

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of the policy is 1) to communicate to the campus community the framework for the selection and acquisition of scholarly resources to meet their information needs; and 2) to provide guidelines that ensure responsible stewardship of collection funds. There is a separate policy for Historical Collections.

Collection Development Scope and Guidelines

Who is involved?

The Head, Collection Strategies and Management (HCSM) budgets for and maintains the collection to support the mission and activities of the University. The HCSM is responsible for collecting and analyzing usage data to inform collection decisions. Information Services staff maintain a core book list for the reference collection. Research and Education Librarians (RELs) who are subject specialists are responsible for making book selection decisions for their assigned school. Through their close relationship with academic departments, institutes, and research programs, the RELs keep the library informed about new programs, research initiatives, and curriculum changes to better inform collection decisions.

The HSHSL participates in library consortia, principally the University System of Maryland and Affiliated Institutions library consortium (USMAI), to reduce costs and gain a broader scope of resources. These memberships support collection development through programs such as the joint purchase of resources and no-cost lending of materials between member libraries.

What types of resources are collected?

As it is impossible to collect everything published in the disciplines covered by UMB's programs, we consider format, currency, and cost when making collection decisions.

The HSHSL's collection consists primarily of journals purchased in large packages. Buying comprehensive journal collections from major biomedical publishers ensures coverage of emerging and niche areas of research as well as providing access to major journals at a reduced price. Books and databases are also purchased. The collection is primarily digital. All journals and databases are licensed in digital format. Print books are only purchased when there is no electronic version, or the electronic version is prohibitively expensive.

The HSHSL strives to ensure that all digital content licensed is accessible to all UMB's employees and students. We follow the [UMB Policy on Web Accessibility](#). When adding new electronic resources, we ask vendors for their Voluntary Accessibility Template (VPAT) report to ensure accessibility.

Materials added to the collection need to be current. Generally, this means materials published in the past five years unless an older item is requested by a member of the campus community. Since the campus community has a preference for materials that can be accessed anytime from anywhere, online materials are preferred. Gifts of print materials are occasionally accepted (see Gift Policy).

How is the collection managed?

Adding resources

Journals

A list of journal titles requested by UMB faculty, staff, and students is maintained by the HCSM and consulted when the budget allows for the addition of new journal subscriptions. Turnaway reports from publishers, Interlibrary Loan (ILL) requests, and circulation data provide helpful information as does the specialized knowledge of the RELs in predicting the future use of requested titles.

Databases

Requests for new databases are evaluated based on cost and a comparison with similar currently subscribed resources. Trials and pilots may be used to more closely evaluate the product and gather usage data. Considering the HSHSL's continuing budget constraints, schools and departments requesting a database to support their teaching and research will be requested to explore cost sharing.

Books

Books are purchased when requested and if they support the curricular or research needs of the UMB schools. While the library is unable to purchase textbooks for courses, we will purchase books for placement on reserves with electronic versions preferred. Additional copies may be purchased if high demand results in excessive turnaways.

Cancelling subscriptions and withdrawing items

Journals

Because the HSHSL's journal collection is extensively used, subscription cancellations are carefully considered. When budget constraints demand cancellations, the Dean of the HSHSL will constitute a task force consisting of the HCSM, representatives from Information Services and Research and Education Services departments, and the Assistant Deans for Research and Information Services, and Resource Development and Access. The committee will use usage data to devise a cancellation strategy, which is further informed by the expertise of the RELs.

Databases

Database subscriptions are cancelled if they are no longer cost-effective or have been superseded by another product.

Books

Purchased electronic books are maintained indefinitely. Physical books may be withdrawn from the open stacks if they are in poor physical condition, they are no longer in scope, newer editions are available, or they are not being used.

Recognizing its responsibility to USMAI and the State of Maryland as the sole publicly funded health sciences and human services library in the state, the HSHSL will move all books in the Library of Congress classification R selected for withdrawal from the browsing collection to closed stacks. If a book selected for withdrawal in other LC classifications is the last copy held by USMAI libraries, it will also be moved to the closed stacks. All other books withdrawn from the open stacks will be discarded.