

Rod Library Special Collections & University Archives

Collection Development Guidelines

The Rod Library Special Collections & University Archives (SC&UA) collects, preserves, and provides access to rare, valuable, and delicate collections of books, manuscripts, and institutional records. SC&UA is comprised of several distinct collections: the American Fiction Collection, the Rare Books Collection, the Small Press Collection, the Stageberg Collection, the Wadle Paperback Collection, the University Archives, and the Manuscripts Collection.

Collecting decisions are guided by legal and fiscal requirements, university policies and records retention protocols, enduring scholarly and research value, connection to the curriculum, existing collections and gaps therein, preservation and access / usability considerations, and resources for processing and storage in both physical and digital form. Collecting decisions are made by SC&UA faculty and staff. SC&UA faculty and staff may decline to accept materials or may deaccession or otherwise dispose of materials in accordance with the collecting guidelines outlined here, their professional judgment, practical considerations such as resource availability, and the evolving needs of the institution.

We collect a wide range of materials, including but not limited to books, paper documents, ephemera, photographic formats, audio and video recordings, born-digital, and other digital or electronic records. Born-digital and digitized materials often require particular resources for longterm care, access, and preservation, which are taken into consideration in collecting decisions.

Jaycie Vos, June 2022; revised July 08, 2022; revised May 01, 2023; revised February 19, 2025, Tessa Wakefield.

American Fiction Collection

The American Fiction Collection began in 1973 with a purchase from Serendipity Books in Berkeley, California, using UNI Foundation funds. It had been supplemented regularly with approval shipments from Serendipity and occasional purchases from other dealers. This collection is a research collection. We are no longer adding to this collection. Past criteria for inclusion were:

1. First editions of novels written by citizens and long-term residents of the United States who first published a novel between the inclusive dates 1960 and 1979; also included as very rare exceptions are authors who first published a novel in the late 1950s but whose work is most closely associated with themes and genres of the 1960s; writers whose primary work is science fiction, mysteries, gothics, pornography, espionage, and thrillers are generally excluded;
2. If the true first edition of a novel which meets criterion #1 is published outside the United

States, add both the true first edition and the first United States edition;

3. First editions of novellas and collected short fiction written by those who meet criterion #1;
4. First editions of novels about the Viet Nam War written by citizens or long-term residents of the United States without regard to date of author's first publication;
5. Later editions, incorporating major textual variations or significant editorial changes, of novels written by those who meet criterion #1;
6. First editions of poetry and non-fiction monographs written by those who meet criterion #1 will be added on a select basis with special attention to the closeness of the relationship between the themes of the poetry or non-fiction to the themes of the author's fiction;
7. First editions of books or anthologies edited by those who meet criterion #1 will rarely be added;
8. First editions of books with forewords, prefaces, or introductions by those who meet criterion #1 will rarely be added;
9. First editions of individually published short stories and broadsides will rarely be added;
10. Books in mint condition with dust jacket.

Material in the American Fiction Collection has the location "UNI Special Collections Fiction" in the library catalog.

Updated by Gerry Peterson, April 1992; updated April 2023 by Jaycie Vos

Rare Books Collection

The Rare Books Collection functions to provide access to rare and historical printed works; to document local and regional literature, history, culture, and other interests; and to demonstrate the history of the book, including changes and trends in printing, binding, and illustrating. The Rare Books Collection was kept as a separate, locked collection for at least 40 years before it became part of SC&UA in 1975. Originally, the collection was largely a miscellaneous accumulation of old, rare, and valuable volumes which needed special housing and supervised use. It has evolved over time, and all materials within the Rare Books Collection are currently available to the UNI and Cedar Valley communities and other research in the SC&UA reading room.

Materials are added through donations, purchases, and transfers from other collections at Rod Library. Collecting decisions are made on a case-by-case basis by the Special Collections Coordinator and University Archivist. Due to resource constraints, not all materials that fall within the following guidelines will be accepted, and the collection may be periodically weeded.

The primary function of the collection is to provide access to rare and historical printed works for

research, instructional, and general interest. The collection includes items across a wide range of subjects, geographic areas, and chronological periods. Materials are considered rare and / or historical based on a variety of factors, including:

- Date of publication
 - While this varies based on location of printing, we prioritize items published before 1801
- Location of publication
 - Notable fine presses
 - Private presses
 - Early printers
- Availability
 - Fewer than 25 copies available at other institutions, and / or
 - No other copies at libraries in Iowa
- Characteristics of the edition or physical item
 - Unusual and delicate formats such as miniatures, vellum, and special bindings
 - Limited editions (500 copies or fewer)
- Autographed copies *only* in cases of notable authors or associate copies with a direct connection to UNI or the local or regional community
- Market value
 - Materials currently valued at \$1000 or above
 - Note: this is subject to change with inflation

These factors will all be considered in purchasing or accepting items for the Rare Books Collection, though they shall not prevent the acquisition of an item that may not align with these factors but otherwise strongly supports the curriculum at UNI; supports research and instruction on local and regional literature, history, culture, and other interests; supports the holdings within the University Archives and Manuscripts Collections; or fills a gap within SC&UA.

Collecting priorities emphasize the following collection strengths:

Local and regional literature, history, culture, and other interests

The collection includes texts which reflect local and regional authors; various aspects of social, cultural, political, education, and political history; maps and plat books; directories; geography and the natural world; and other topics related to Cedar Falls, the Cedar Valley, Iowa, and to a lesser extent, the broader midwest. Materials that reflect a direct connection to UNI are also included. Particular strengths include:

- Texts with significant association with the UNI community: for example, a book written by Homer Seerley and inscribed by him to James Hearst's father;
- Local and/or UNI faculty authors, including James Hearst, Robert James Waller, Nancy Price, Bess Streeter Aldrich, and Ruth Suckow
 - Note: while the Rare Books Collection has historically included many faculty publications, these titles are now being collected in the Faculty Publications Collection and not the Rare Books Collection
- Community, city, and county histories across Iowa
 - This includes family histories, biographies and autobiographies, and genealogical resources
 - This includes publications relating to religious, ethnic, political, social, professional, and trade organizations
- Teacher training, including nineteenth and early twentieth century school texts and children's books
 - Note: we are not actively collecting children's books, and these may be referred

to the Youth Historical Collection or the UNI Museum

- The Prairie Press, a twentieth century Midwest small press operated by Carroll Coleman. Priority collecting will include volumes that document and reflect local authors, the history and evolution of teacher training in the state of Iowa, individuals and groups represented in the Manuscripts Collection and University Archives, and local history and culture within Iowa, particularly underrepresented communities and individuals.

Demonstrate the history of the book, including changes and trends in printing, binding, and illustrating

The collection includes examples which illustrate:

- The work of the earliest printers and their techniques, primarily in Europe and the US
- The work of the classic printers and binders
- High points and significant trends in printing, binding, and illustration
- Changing publication styles and formats, especially as they reflect intellectual trends
- The work of modern fine presses

Priority collecting in this area centers on texts that support the UNI curriculum, particularly women's history, North American history, and works of American, British, and French literature.

Within the Rare Books Collection, areas and materials we do not actively collect include:

- Duplicates
 - We may replace existing copies with a duplicate that is in better physical condition, or that is signed by the author / artist or is an associate copy (signed by the owner or associated person) when there is a direct connection to UNI or the local or regional community, or supports the holdings of the University Archives or Manuscripts Collection
- Art and music texts, unless there is a direct connection to UNI or the local or regional community, or supports the holdings of the University Archives or Manuscripts Collection
- Materials held at the State Library of Iowa, the State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa State University, or the University of Iowa
- Materials that are available online in digital form, including in the [Iowa Heritage Digital Collections](#), [Iowa Publications Online](#), and [HathiTrust](#)
- Autographed copies, except in cases of notable authors or associate copies with a direct connection to UNI or the local or regional community, or supports the holdings of the University Archives or Manuscripts Collection
- Publications by other state of Iowa agencies or institutions, unless there is a direct connection to UNI or the local or regional community, or supports the holdings of the University Archives or Manuscripts Collection
- Materials that are severely damaged and/or at-risk, such as exhibiting mold
- Materials which have heavily restricted access in perpetuity or which SC&UA deems to be impractical to enforce (beyond a reasonable limitation)
- Publications by UNI faculty and staff, which instead could be considered for inclusion in the Faculty Publications Collection at Rod Library
- Children's books, which could instead could be considered for inclusion in the Youth Historical Collection or the UNI Museum

Material in the Rare Books Collection has the location "UNI Special Collections Rare Books" in the library catalog.

Updated by Gerry Peterson, April 1992; updated April and May 2023 by Jaycie Vos

Small Press

The Small Press Collection was initiated in 1978 as the result of a recommendation from the Special Collections Librarian to collect the work of selected small and fine presses in Iowa. Investigation at that time also revealed the presence of fine presses in La Crosse (Wis.), Vermillion (S.D.), and Omaha (Neb.) along Iowa's borders. Those presses were included in the early collecting profile. With few exceptions, we are no longer adding to this collection.

The functions of this collection are: to acquire inexpensive examples of modern virtuoso printers' and illustrators' art in or very close to Iowa; to provide access to regional avant-garde poetry and prose; to document the tastes and trends of small presses in or very close to Iowa; and to help support the work of local small presses.

Special Collections attempted to acquire in mint condition a complete set of publications which these presses produce while they are located in or very close to Iowa. Standing orders covered current publications. The partial backsets purchased when the standing orders were originally established and subsequent purchases in the out-of-print market have left few gaps in the library's holdings. As funds permitted, Special Collections continued to try to fill those gaps. The Special Collections Librarian and the Head of Collection Management consulted on the appropriate course of action when a new press begins operation or an established press changes focus or leaves the Iowa area.

Standing orders were dropped sometime before 2017 for:

- Abbattoir--(1973-); Omaha
- Corycian--(1955-); Iowa City
- Cumington--(1957-); Omaha
- Grilled Flowers--(1977-1979); inactive
- Juniper--(1963-); La Crosse
- Meadow--(1975-1977); inactive
- Seamark--(1972-); Iowa City
- Spirit Mound--(1974-1976); inactive
- Spirit That Moves Us--(1975-1990); moved to New York City
- Stone Wall--(1958-); Iowa City
- Toothpaste--(1970-1987); moved to St. Paul, Minn.
- Windhover--(1967-); Iowa City
- Whale Cloth--1974--inactive

Additional presses represented in this collection include:

- Black Sparrow Press
- Coffeehouse Press
- Elizabeth Press
- Emmess Press
- Final Thursday Press
- Gruffyground Press
- Ice Cube Press
- Labyrinth Press
- Route 3 Press

Sumac Press
Working Week Press
Yellow Barn Press

Material in the Small Press Collection has the location "UNI Special Collections Small Press" in the library catalog.

Updated by Gerry Peterson, April 1992; updated April 2023 by Jaycie Vos

Stageberg Collection

The Stageberg Collection was donated to the Rod Library under terms of the will of Norman C. Stageberg, long-time professor in the UNI Department of English Language and Literature, who died in 1984. This collection, focused on linguistics and language, includes a substantial number of old, rare, and valuable titles. However, most of the collection is composed of twentieth century monographs, dictionaries, and essays. The primary function of the Stageberg Collection is to provide students and faculty with a professional linguistics reference collection with a special strength in historical linguistics.

The collection is comprised of approximately 1250 volumes. With the exception of preserving and cataloging these volumes, there are no plans to develop this collection.

Material in the Stageberg Collection has the location "UNI Special Collections Stageberg" in the library catalog.

Last updated by Gerry Peterson, April 1992

Wadle Paperback Collection

The Wadle Paperback Collection, named for donor and 1978 UNI alumnus Maurice "Moe" Wadle, contains more than 1,200 pieces of the well-known Pocket Book series, one of the first popular paperback series in the United States, and more than 4,900 pieces published by New American Library. The collection was acquired in 2011, with some later additions, from Wadle, who put the collection together as a hobby over nearly 25 years.

The Pocket Book series includes almost all of the titles that are available and contains books from 1939 to 1961, most of which are first printings. The Pocket Book series was a cheap alternative to hardback books and often sold at newspaper stands for only a quarter. In addition to its low price, the series received much of its appeal from the flashy, colored bindings and cover art. The designs were often drawn by well-known commercial artists. The New American Library series, beginning in 1946, was first published with the Penguin imprint and then transitioned to Signet. The books include several different subjects ranging from mysteries, popular pulp fiction, reference books and classic fine literature. The books represent a segment of 20th century U.S. popular culture, commercial art, and graphic design.

In addition to the paperbacks, the collection contains detailed inventories and custom-made references and card catalogs, notes, correspondence, and photocopies of cover art for Wadle's personal organization and use. There are also a number of reference books and journals on the topic of paperbacks, their artwork, and authors. There is one piece of original cover art, a painting by George Mayers for the book *Benjamin Blake, Son of Fury*, by Edison Marshall.

Except in the case of additions by Wadle, we are not adding to this collection. Material in the Wadle Paperback Collection has the location "UNI Special Collections Wadle" in the library catalog.

Updated by Gerry Peterson, ca. 2011; updated April 2023 by Jaycie Vos

University Archives

The University Archives at Rod Library collects, preserves, and shares materials that reflect the history, experiences, memories, and activities of the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) community. The archives were originally organized in the mid 1930s and came under library administration in the late 1950s. Today, we aim to be the institutional archives for the University of Northern Iowa, from its initial planning and inception as the Iowa State Normal School and into the future, and we seek to document all facets of campus life and activity in a variety of formats and mediums, both analog and digital. To learn more about the existing University Archives holdings, please see [finding aids here](#).

The University Archives collection is intended to serve as documentary evidence of past activity of the campus community and to be used by UNI students, staff, faculty, alumni, and beyond in a variety of research and institutional memory endeavors. The collection includes materials created by and for individuals, groups, departments, colleges, units, centers, and other entities related to UNI. This includes materials reflecting intellectual and academic pursuits, administrative work and daily tasks, special events, social and cultural experiences, extra-curricular activities, and other aspects of work and life in the UNI community. The collection has evolved as the academic programs, administrators, faculty, students, staff, and life on campus has changed over time. The collection strives to continue to adapt as UNI evolves in the future.

We aim to include all range of student, staff, faculty, administrative, alumni, and campus community experiences in the collection. We actively seek to expand our collections to document a full range of experiences by the campus community, while acknowledging the gaps in our existing collections.

University Archives collecting areas include:

- Administrative unit and departmental records

- These records document the creation, development, and daily work and activities of colleges, departments, units, committees, teams, centers, institutes, and other administrative entities related to UNI.
- This may include
 - Minutes, agendas, reports, and other papers of administrative councils, groups, and committees
 - Correspondence, files, presentations, and other papers of presidents, vice presidents, provosts, deans, department heads, and their staff
 - Departmental records, such as strategic plan documents, office files, reports, correspondence, ephemera or recordings from events
 - Budgets and financial reports
 - Codes and policies
 - Materials related to buildings, construction, facilities, and landscapes on campus
 - Course catalogs and schedules
 - Materials related to commencement and major events on campus
 - Collective bargaining materials
 - Promotional, public relations, and outreach materials
 - Athletics records
 - Photographs and other AV materials
- Faculty and Staff
 - Materials capturing the teaching, work, research, campus involvement, and contributions of faculty and staff on campus, in the profession, and in their broader careers. This material could include:
 - Correspondence, diaries, and journals
 - Syllabi, teaching materials and lecture notes, and curriculum development
 - Research files and manuscripts
 - Biographical materials
 - Speeches and presentation materials
 - Minutes, reports, and organizational records (such as committees or student organizations)
 - Photos, scrapbooks, other AV materials, and ephemeral materials such as programs and posters
 - Select publications
 - Faculty governance records
 - Records of faculty or staff clubs or organizations, including those for emeritus faculty and staff
- Students and Alumni
 - Records and materials reflecting student life on campus, past and present, both as individuals and in informal and formal groups. This could include:
 - Photographs and scrapbooks
 - Audio / video recordings and oral histories
 - Ephemeral materials such as dance cards, flyers, and posters
 - Theses and dissertations

- Student organizational records, such as minutes, reports, event flyers and programs, posters, including those of alumni clubs or organizations
 - Diaries, journals, and correspondence
 - Materials reflecting extra-curricular activities like music, athletics, theatre, and art
 - Unique materials created and/or collected by alumni during their time as students or in their engagement with UNI afterwards, such as commemorative materials
 - Materials documenting student activism by UNI students
 - Please note that we do not actively collect materials protected by FERPA, including coursework and class notes
- Publications
 - Internal and external publications by or related to UNI, such as student newspapers, alumni magazines, student-led publications such as literary magazines, and departmental newsletters
- Audio / visual materials
 - Recordings of events and activities on campus or UNI-sponsored activities in a variety of photographic, audio, and moving image formats

Material in University Archives has the location “UNI Special Collections Archives” in the library catalog, though much is not cataloged and is instead described in [finding aids](#).

Jaycie Vos, June 2022; revised July 08, 2022

Manuscripts Collection

The Manuscripts Collection in Rod Library Special Collections & University Archives (SC&UA) at the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) documents and reflects local and regional history and culture and the activities of multiple professional associations. We seek to collect, preserve, and share materials that capture many facets of professional, political, cultural, civic, and personal life and activity throughout the Cedar Valley and the broader region in a variety of formats and mediums, both analog and digital. To learn more about the existing Manuscripts Collections, please see [finding aids here](#).

The Manuscripts Collection is intended to serve as documentary evidence of past activity of a wide range of experiences and memories of individuals, families, and organizations that generally fall into three categories: local and regional history and culture, professional associations with an emphasis on education and/or a geographic tie to Iowa, and collections from people or organizations with some affiliation with UNI. Within these categories, strengths of the collection include education, politics and civic engagement, religion, and daily Iowa life in the 20th century. While the collection does not include materials directly produced by or for UNI, many collections come from people and organizations whose interests and history are in some way related to UNI, such as professional papers of UNI alumni and records for professional organizations for which UNI faculty members contributed. The collection is intended to be used

by UNI students, staff, faculty, alumni, community members, scholars, and beyond in a variety of research and creative endeavors. The collection has evolved as collecting priorities and interests of library faculty and the needs of the UNI community have changed over time. The collection strives to continue to adapt to meet the needs and interests of the UNI community and local researchers as they evolve in the future. Expanding documentation of political history, education, and daily lived experiences of lowans from various backgrounds are the current priorities.

Manuscripts Collection collecting areas include:

- Local and regional history and culture
 - These materials reflect a range of events, work, arts, culture, social life, religious activity, civic engagement, and daily activities by individuals, families, and organizations throughout the Cedar Valley and broader region. This includes individual and family papers as well as records from clubs and organizations. We are particularly interested in collecting materials that reflect a broad range of backgrounds and experiences to better represent the many populations in the region.
 - This may include:
 - Correspondence, diaries, journals
 - Reminiscences and oral histories
 - Speeches and lectures
 - Reports, agendas, minutes, ledgers, and bylaws
 - Subject files
 - Newsletters and memoranda
 - Pamphlets, posters, programs, and other ephemera
 - Photographs, scrapbooks, and other AV materials
- Politics and civic engagement
 - These materials document political activity, the work of elected officials, citizen engagement with various political processes, and community attitudes about local politics, with an emphasis on Black Hawk County and northeast Iowa. This includes political papers from local and area politicians and elected public officials, political papers from UNI alumni or others affiliated with the University who engaged in politics and / or government work, and organizational records.
 - This may include:
 - Correspondence, diaries, journals
 - Speeches, lectures, and other presentation materials
 - Reports, agendas, minutes, ledgers, and bylaws
 - Subject and research files
 - Clippings
 - Campaign materials
 - Pamphlets, posters, programs, and other ephemera and promotional materials
 - Awards

- Photographs, scrapbooks, and other AV materials
- Professional association records
 - These records capture the work of various professional associations, primarily with a focus on education and/or with a geographic tie to Iowa. This may include incremental additions to existing organizational records in the collection. SC&UA is only expanding this collection to include new professional associations in select cases, with a focus on organizational records with a strong tie to UNI faculty. Please consult the University Archivist, Jaycie Vos, at libarchives@uni.edu to discuss further.
 - This may include:
 - Correspondence
 - Speeches, lectures, and other presentation materials
 - Reports, agendas, minutes, ledgers, handbooks, and bylaws
 - Subject and research files
 - Newsletters and memoranda
 - Pamphlets, posters, programs, and other ephemera and promotional materials
 - Awards
 - Photographs, scrapbooks, and other AV materials
- Professional and personal papers of notable UNI alumni
 - Many UNI alumni have made notable contributions and accomplishments in a variety of professional and creative endeavors, such as politics, education, music, and the arts. These materials reflect the accomplishments, contributions, and daily work and activities of such alumni. They may include both professional and personal papers.
 - This may include:
 - Correspondence, diaries, journals
 - Reminiscences and oral histories
 - Manuscripts and publication drafts
 - Speeches and lectures
 - Reports, agendas, minutes, ledgers, and bylaws
 - Subject files
 - Newsletters and memoranda
 - Pamphlets, posters, programs, and other ephemera
 - Artworks in select cases; please consult the University Archivist, Jaycie Vos, at libarchives@uni.edu
 - Awards
 - Photographs, scrapbooks, and other AV materials

Material in the Manuscripts Collection has the location “UNI Special Collections Archives” in the library catalog, though much is not cataloged and is instead described in [finding aids](#).

Jaycie Vos, June 2022; revised July 08, 2022

Areas and materials we do not actively collect presently include:

- Note: please see the Rare Books Collection section for specific information about materials we do and do not collect for that collection.
- Mass produced materials, such as newspapers, scholarly journals, books, and magazines. Please note there may be exceptions in the case of faculty and student publications; consult the University Archivist, Jaycie Vos, at libarchives@uni.edu with questions.
 - This does not include internal and external publications by or related to UNI, which we do collect; please see the section on University Archives above
- Duplicate copies of historical materials, particularly the *Old Gold*, alumni magazines, campus newspapers, and other campus publications which the collection already contains. For information on specific gaps in our collection for such materials that we *would* like to collect, see the relevant finding aid or contact the University Archivist, Jaycie Vos, at libarchives@uni.edu.
- Materials actively being used by campus entities (i.e. active records)
- Materials that are required to be retained permanently in other departments or offices on campus according to the [University's records retention policy](#), such as student evaluations and Professional Assessment Committee (PAC) files
- Student work other than theses and dissertations by UNI students
- Materials by or about other colleges or universities, or outside of our geographic scope. These materials may be of interest to other universities, colleges, local historical societies, and museums, and we may refer you to the appropriate institution.
- Records for organizations that already have an established archive at another institution
- Materials unrelated to UNI and our other collecting areas in SC&UA and in Rod Library
- Objects, artifacts, and textiles; these materials may be of interest to the UNI Museum, and we are happy to refer you to the UNI Museum director & curator.
- Financial records unsuitable for preservation and access at a public institution, such as tax files, receipts, reimbursements, checks / check stubs, and/or records still in active use
- Materials with extensive personal medical and/or financial information; records of retirement, insurance, or other benefits; or other confidential or highly sensitive content
- Materials that are severely damaged and/or at-risk, such as exhibiting mold
- Materials which have heavily restricted access in perpetuity or which SC&UA deems to be impractical to enforce (beyond a reasonable limitation)

To donate materials, ask questions, or further discuss the collection and potential future donations, contact the University Archivist and Special Collections Coordinator, Jaycie Vos, at libarchives@uni.edu.

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