# English and American Literature

Purpose: To support teaching and research from the undergraduate through the doctoral level. Graduate programs in English allows students to concentrate either on literary study (British, American, and postcolonial Anglophone literatures) or on rhetoric and composition. The English Department also participates in Washington State’s interdisciplinary American Studies program, which offers opportunities for M.A. and Ph.D. students to take specialized seminars in American Studies. Doctoral degrees in English and American Literature include concentrations in either literature or in rhetoric and composition. M.A. degrees may also be earned in English with an emphasis in rhetoric and composition or in literature. The B.A. in English offers four options for the major: literary studies; rhetoric and professional writing; English teaching; and creative writing. The English Department also supports an interdisciplinary major in Digital Technology & Culture. Many courses given by the English Department, especially those with a humanities prefix, also include foreign literary works in translation. English teaching and ESL teaching are also available as majors in the College of Education.

## General Collection Guidelines:

Languages: English is the primary language, but historical and critical works in other languages are acquired selectively if not available in translation. Normally these are limited to Western European languages. Secondary works in Eastern languages are not acquired. Translations of primary works into other languages are not acquired except in the case of special collections.

Chronological Guidelines: All literatures are collected from their beginnings to the present time, although emphasis on specific periods varies according to departmental needs and research trends.

Geographical Guidelines: Literature in the English language is acquired on a world-wide basis, although the primary emphasis is on literatures of the United States, the United Kingdom, and those geographical regions which encompass postcolonial Anglophone literatures.

Treatment of the Subject: Scholarly critical works and primary texts; contemporary fiction, poetry, drama, belles lettres. Significant scholarly or critical editions. Science fiction and detective fiction are acquired on a highly selective basis. Other popular fiction and textbooks are normally not acquired.

Types of Material: Monographs, journals, literary magazines, and selected print and electronic reference resources. Some multimedia products are acquired on a highly selective basis. Films and television programs on a selective basis, whenever possible on digital versatile discs (DVDs). Selected audiobooks of classics on compact disc. The general collection guidelines and the collection level of electronic information resources do not differ significantly from those of print resources.

Date of Publication: Both current and retrospective works are acquired, although emphasis is on current titles. First editions or rare books are not acquired for their own sake, but only if they have important textual variations or form part of a special collection. When possible, retrospective needs are met by purchasing large microform, reprint, or digital collections. Older unedited editions of primary works are not acquired unless no modern critical edition exists. Minor critical works which are out of print are not normally purchased since these can more expeditiously be obtained via interlibrary loan or via Summit through the Orbis-Cascade Alliance.

Other General Considerations: In all areas, there is a need to continue retrospective strengthening of collections because of the relative youth of our graduate programs or emerging scholarly trends. Categories needing special attention are: backfiles of scholarly journals, complete files of older literary periodicals, primary works by minor authors, literary award-winners, older reference works, and scholarly material for humanities research (e.g. art history, philosophy, religion, cultural history, film) in fields which do not currently have doctoral programs at Washington State University and thus have correspondingly weaker library collections. Start collecting at appropriate level for emerging programmatic areas like Digital Technology & Culture. Book history titles and graphic novels purchased selectively.

Washington State Cooperative Library Project (WSCLP) is a project of the six public baccalaureate degree-granting institutions in Washington (CWU, Evergreen, EWC, UW, WSU, and WWU), WSCLP receives funding from the Washington legislature. Also known as WCLP and CLP, project activities include the group purchase of electronic resources. The Interinstitutional Committee of Chief Librarians (ICCL) oversees WSCLP. ICCL is a subcommittee of Interinstitutional Committee of Academic Officers (provosts of the six institutions). A formal arrangement for joint purchase of expensive but specialized materials with the ICCL consortium [Interinstitutional Committee of Chief Librarians] has resulted in the shared acquisition of several important collections of primary source materials. [Some text in this paragraph taken from the Orbis Cascade Alliance web site].

An informal reciprocal agreement with the University of Idaho Library provides for complementary purchases of large microform collections containing primary source material for research.

## Observations and Qualifications by Subject with Collection Level:

English Linguistics:

See: Linguistics

Teaching of English:

See: Education: General; Linguistics

### American Literature:

Colonial Period: B

Acquisition of several large microform collections has strengthened primary works. More backfiles of journals, literature of New England, and primary and critical works of ethnic minority and women writers should be acquired.

Nineteenth Century: B

Emphasis is on the Transcendentalist movement and on fiction and poetry, especially Emerson, Thoreau, Fuller, Poe, Dickinson, Hawthorne, Melville, Twain, Stowe, Whitman, Jewett, and Chopin. Acquisition of large microform sets has strengthened primary works. Slave narratives are regularly purchased, often cooperatively with the history subject specialist when collection interests overlap. Areas which should be strengthened are: journal backfiles, regional writers, earlier ethnic minority authors, and women writers throughout the century. Synthetic secondary works emphasizing cultural history purchased selectively.

Twentieth Century to 1960: B

Emphasis is on fiction and poetry, especially James, Wharton, Cather, Porter, Stein, Harlem Renaissance writers, Ellison, Faulkner, Hemingway, Pound, Lowell, and Frost. Holdings of literary magazines have been strengthened by purchase of microform and reprint backfiles, but this area needs further improvement. Primary works by minor authors, especially from the Pacific Northwest, should be improved. More primary and critical works of ethnic minority and women writers should be acquired.

Twentieth Century from 1960 to present: B

The collection is strong in primary works by the better-known poets, novelists, and playwrights, and in critical works. Holdings of literary and "little" magazines have been strengthened but need further improvement, as do the holdings of ethnic minority (especially Asian Americans) and women writers. Primary works by minor authors should be improved.

### English Literature:

Anglo-Saxon Period: B

Emphasis is on Beowulf material. Collection needs strengthening in related fields, including art, archaeology, history, linguistics, and religion.

Anglo-Norman and Middle English: B

Emphasis is on Chaucer, medieval drama, and the romances. Collection needs improvement in Continental "Arthurian" material and both English and Continental religious texts as well as in materials in continental literature and social history that influenced English Medieval thought. For the period 1473-1700 the collection significantly augmented (with digital texts, upgraded bibliographic access, and enhanced search capabilities) with the recent acquisition of Early English Books Online (EEBO).

Renaissance (excluding Shakespeare): B

Emphasis is on the drama, poetry, iconography studies. Holdings of primary texts have been considerably strengthened by acquisition of large reprint and microform collections. Collection needs improvement in primary texts of related works from Continental Europe, and works on the cultural-historical background. Primary and critical works on ethnic minority and women writers should be added as they become available.

Shakespeare: B

Major strength is in recent texts and criticism. Holdings of earlier primary editions have been strengthened by microform, reprint, and facsimile purchases. Interpretive works and primary and secondary texts on the cultural and historical background are emphasized.

Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: B

Collection is strongest in the Metaphysical poets, Milton, Restoration and Eighteenth-Century drama, and the Augustan poets and essayists. Recently significant numbers of microfilm files of literary periodicals have been purchased. Improvements are needed in primary texts of early fiction, and materials on the social, religious, artistic, scientific, and historical background. Primary and critical works on women and ethnic minority writers should be strengthened.

Nineteenth Century: B

Collection is strongest in poetry and fiction, especially fiction by women writers. Microfilm backfiles of literary periodicals have been added in significant numbers. Improvements are needed in older bibliographies, biographies, biographical reference works, and works on art history.

Twentieth Century: B

Special strength is in fiction, especially by women writers, including special collections of works by and about Edith Sitwell, Rose Macaulay, and Elizabeth Robbins. Holdings of contemporary poetry have recently been strengthened, although more needs to be done, particularly with "small press" publications. Backfiles of literary periodicals and "little" magazines on microfilm or reprint need further attention, and current interest demands strengthening of holdings in 20th c. British drama.

We continue to build a strong special collection of works by and about Virginia and Leonard Woolf and the "Bloomsbury" writers and artists. We buy relevant "Bloomsbury" art and original manuscript material when possible. We are expanding the Hogarth Press Collection and the works from other presses of women printers. Additions such as the microfilm of Virginia Woolf manuscripts at the University of Sussex Library and critical works enhance and support the special collections.

### Commonwealth Literature: C(1)

Courses are taught at the undergraduate and occasionally at graduate level. Emphasis is on Canadian literature and Caribbean, East Indian and African literatures in English.

### Ethnic Minority Literature: C(1)

African American, Asian American and Chicano/a literatures are taught at the undergraduate and graduate levels by faculty on appointment in both English and Comparative Ethnic Studies and by graduate faculty in American Studies. Relevant holdings, as indicated in various categories above, need strengthening.

### Popular Fiction (English and American): D

"Best-sellers" are not purchased unless they have some literary or cultural value. Some classic Western fiction and spy fiction is acquired on a very selective basis. Mysteries and science fiction are purchased very selectively to support undergraduate courses. A special collection is being built up at the C(1) level in the area of post-nuclear war fiction, including science fiction and general fiction in English, including translations from other languages.

### Juvenile Literature:

See: Juvenile Literature

### Literary Criticism and Theory: B

This field is of interest to all literary scholars. It encompasses not only literary material, but also works in philosophy, linguistics, and psychology (especially psychoanalysis and cognition). A recent departmental emphasis on post-colonial theory is being supported. Work continues on improving the collection in relevant foreign language material. Additional journals still need to be purchased, including backfiles.

### Composition and Rhetoric: B

The collection supports the M.A. and Ph.D. programs in Composition and Rhetoric, as well as undergraduate coursework. Some expansion in the number of journal subscriptions is needed. The increased purchase of monographs and bibliographic materials is also recommended.

Bob Matuozzi

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