

## WEEDING PROJECT: GETTING STARTED

Weeding a library collection is both an art and science. Objective and subjective criteria should be used to help guide the weeding process, along with professional knowledge and critical thinking. Some weeding criteria can be used as a ‘rule of thumb,’ while other criteria, such as recent use, may be important when deciding to retain or discard an item. If an item is clearly outdated, damaged, or contains erroneous information, it’s a candidate for weeding. If warranted, it should be replaced with a newer edition or a new title on the same subject. For all items under review, consider the following factors:

- GCC Library mission (our primary mission at GCC library is to support the college’s curriculum with resources, instruction, and services)
- Needs and demands of our community of users
- Availability of more suitable material
- Relationship of an item to others on the subject
- Degree to which we serve as an archive
- Possible future usefulness of an item
- Availability of more current online information
- Cooperative agreements with other libraries
- Ability to borrow item through interlibrary loan

## WEEDING GUIDELINES

The guidelines below are designed to help with the weeding decision making process. These guidelines are intended to assist you in evaluating resources, but are not a substitute for professional judgment or common sense.

- **Date**—Depending on a title’s subject, the date may or may not be a deciding factor when determining if a resource should remain in the collection. Check the subject of a title and then check the copyright date to establish if the date is an issue. For example, if evaluating a book on the subject of nanotechnology, a 1990 title would likely be weeded, while a 1990 edition of literary criticism on Mark Twain’s works may still be relevant.
- **Author**—Ask yourself (or try to find out) if the author is still read or likely to be read in the future. Is the book a seminal work or a lesser work?
- **Publisher**—Look to see if the book was published by a reputable publisher, or possibly self-published or published by an ‘instant’ press.
- **Physical condition**—Assess all titles to see if there any factors that make it appear unusable (poor

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condition of cover, yellowed pages, warped paper, etc.).

- **Additional copies**—Check to see if there are more copies available in the collection that may be in better condition. Determine if all copies should be retained.
- **Other books on the same subject in the collection**—If recommending a title be discarded, check to see if there are other resources available on the subject. If not, note that the area needs collection development by placing a Replacement/New Edition flag in the book.
- **Out of print titles**—Some items are out of print and can be difficult to replace. If this is the case, determine if it makes sense to mend or rebind an item, rather than trying to replace it.
- **Circulation**—Make note of the last time an item was used in-house or checked out. If the item has not been used in 5+ years, it may be a candidate to be discarded.
- **Relevance of the subject to the curriculum and community**—Determine if the material is related to courses offered at the college, or of general interest to the community.

#### ADDITIONAL CRITERIA TO CONSIDER WHEN WEEDING

Below are additional criteria to keep in mind when weeding:

##### Examples of Books with Poor Content

- **Outdated and obsolete information** (especially on subjects that change quickly or require absolute currency, such as computers, law, science, space, health and medicine, technology, travel)
- **Trivial subject matter**, including topics related to outdated popular culture
- **Mediocre writing style**, especially material written quickly to meet popular interest that has passed
- **Inaccurate or false information**, including outdated information and sources superseded by new titles or editions
- **Material that contains biased, racist, or sexist terminology or views**

##### Examples of Outdated or Inessential Books

- **Unused sets of books** (although you may keep specific volumes if they meet the library's needs and are used)

- **Superseded editions** (in general, it is unnecessary to keep more than one previous edition, discarding as new editions are added)
- **Repetitious series**, especially series no longer popular or published to meet a popular demand that no longer exists
- **Resources not on standard lists** or that were never reviewed in standard review sources
- **Inessential duplicates**, especially if worn or tattered
- **Materials not circulating**, especially if they were added as gifts

Examples of Books With Poor Appearance

- Worn out, ragged items
- Poorly bound or poorly printed editions
- Rebound editions that are worn and shabby or have torn pages
- Items that are dirty, shabby, warped, bug infested, or otherwise marked up, mutilated, or 'edited' by patrons
- Books with very small print or poor quality pictures
- Books with yellowed, brittle, torn, taped, or missing pages
- Books with dust jackets or cover art that is dated

**STEP BY STEP INSTRUCTIONS**

<b>Steps</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pull books from the shelves – fill up the “Weeding Project” cart and mark stopping point on shelf list.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a multi-volume reference set of more than 5 volumes, Pat will put only first volume on cart and add a card with information on the remaining number of volumes, years covered, etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Ref – Pat                      Circ - Zo</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change pulled books to “In Process” and temporary “Weeding cart” location, then take them to the designated Technical Services area.</li> </ul>	<p>Circ Staff</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Part-time Librarian Review:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>For Circ:</b> Evaluate the area you will be weeding as a whole. This will be reflected on the shelf list report you are assigned.</li></ul></li></ul> <p><b>Examine each item, checking for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Physical condition</li><li>• Most recent circulation date</li><li>• Copyright date</li><li>• Appropriateness for collection</li></ul> <p>• <b>For Ref:</b> Complete evaluation of each item individually</p> <p><b>Examine each item, checking for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Physical condition (for large multi-volume sets, you may have to go back to the shelves to look at the complete set)</li><li>• Copyright date</li><li>• Appropriateness for collection</li></ul> <p>• <b>If uncertain about a decision, check the library's holdings. Keep in mind some subjects are classified in other Dewey areas. You may also check the holdings of other nearby libraries. If readily available elsewhere, it may make sense to discard our copy.</b></p> <p>• <b>Note: When recommending to keep a title</b> – review what other books on the same subject are also in the Reference collection. While each individual title may be well-reviewed, if there are multiple titles on the same topic in a similar format, e.g., 3 or 4 one volume dictionaries/handbooks on a topic, please also consider whether all of these titles need to be kept in Reference. If each title does not offer unique information/aspects of the topic, keep the best in Reference and consider the others for Circulation or discard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Place a routing flag in books removed from the collection to identify the next step:</li></ul> <p>Weeding Project Discard – Book Sale</p> <p>Weeding Project Discard - Better World Books</p> <p>Weeding Project Discard –Trash</p>	<p>Part-time Librarians</p>
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**Weeding Project Keep**

**Part-time Librarians**

**For Ref:**

If you decide that a reference title should be kept, then also check for online availability of exact title or **title with similar content/subject:**

- First, check to see if GCC already owns an e- reference titles can be found using Worldcat Discovery or directly in the following databases: ebrary, Credo, Gale, Salem Press, EBSCOhost
- If Yes, then determine if print should also be kept

If No, check BIP for online version (print out the BIP record and write a note whether both print and online should be kept; if nothing is available in BIP, use a white flag to note this)

Every book must have a DISCARD or KEEP routing flag. Additionally, use the following flags as needed:

**Book Repair Slip**

Use the “**Book Repair Slip**” for “Keep” items needing physical repair/mending.

**For Ref:**

“Move to Circ” flag (write this on white slip) may be used to indicate a reference title to be reclassified into the circulating collection.

**Replacement/New Edition**

- When recommending a Replacement/New Edition, please print-out the bibliographic info or (at minimum) indicate the ISBN and year of the new edition.
- Please also indicate what to do with the item once the replacement comes in (i.e., booksale, BWB, or trash). If you want the book to remain in the collection until the replacement is received, please write a post-it note indicating this and attach to the slip.
- If an area needs subject development in addition to the replacement you are recommending, please
  - (1) Checkmark the “Needs Collection Development” box on the Replacement/New Edition flag, and
  - (2) write down the subject area (LCSH) and/or the Dewey number which needs collection development on a post-it and attach it to the orange Replacement/New Edition flag

After all the books are flagged, initial the routing form on the cart to mark that you have completed this step.

**For Ref:**

<p><b>ALL REFERENCE</b> must have an additional <b>BIP print-out or a White Flag</b>. For each title you complete, use a white slip to provide information to the Librarian reviewing your recommendations re: titles available in other Dewey areas or other libraries, already available online, more recent/appropriate print titles in Reference collection, etc. As noted above, also note items you are recommending to keep when there is no online version available. Initial this white slip or BIP print-out so that the Reviewing Librarian may ask you questions if necessary.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review recommendations made by part-time librarians</li> </ul> <p>After all the books are reviewed, initial the routing form on the cart and leave the cart in the designated area in Technical Services</p>	<p>Collection Development librarian or subject liaison librarian</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take all books marked for “Discard” and place them on the “Items to be Discarded” shelves             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Route “Needs Collection Development” notes to collection dev librarian</li> <li>Books marked as “<b>Keep</b>” stay on the cart and go to technical services librarian for MARC Review</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<p>TS Supervisor</p>
<p><b>Discarded items:</b>          Step 1: Remove holdings from OCLC Connexion          Step 2: Check Voyager – if no blocks - Remove items, holdings, bib records in Voyager          Step 2a: If item has PO, forward to acquisitions technician to first delete PO, then Remove items, holdings, bib records from Voyager          Step 2b: If item has fines/fees, forward to circulation staff to first delete Fine/Fee, then Remove items, holdings, bib records from Voyager          Step 3: Deprocess Withdrawn items per procedures for BWB, Booksale, or Trash</p>	<p>Step 1: Cat Tech          Step 2: Cat Tech          Step 2a: AcqTech          Step 2b: Circ staff          Step 3 – Circ Staff</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Keep - MARC review</b> for Reclassification of Dewey, Cutter, LCSH, TOC, and OCLC# and obsolete MARC fields.</li> </ul> <p>Initial the routing form on the cart and place books on the “Correct in System,” “Mend,” or “New Spine Label” shelves in the Technical Services Area</p>	<p>TS Librarian</p>
<p><b>Kept items:</b>          Step 1 – correct in System, if needed          Step 2 – Physical mending, if needed          Step 3 – New Spine, if needed          Step 4 – Remove IP and temporary Weeding location, then reshelve</p>	<p>Step 1 – Cat tech          Steps 2 and 3 – TS student assistants          Step 4 – Circ staff</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove routing form off the cart, file, then replace with new routing form and give the cart to Circulation Staff to pull the next batch of books from the shelves</li> </ul>	<p>TS Supervisor</p>

Cart # \_\_\_\_\_

**Weeding Project Routing Form**

This cart starts at \_\_\_\_\_ and ends at \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Date</b>	<b>Initials</b>
1. All items on this cart have “In Process” item status and temporary location “Weeding Cart”	
2. Part-time Librarians Review All items on this cart are flagged “Discard” or “Keep”	
3. Full-time Librarian Review	
4. MARC Review	

Cart # \_\_\_\_\_

**Weeding Project Routing Form**

This cart starts at \_\_\_\_\_ and ends at \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Date</b>	<b>Initials</b>
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2. Part-time Librarians Review All items on this cart are flagged “Discard” or “Keep”	

3. Full-time Librarian Review	
4. MARC Review	