

Murray Library Freedom to Read Statement

Murray Library endorses the [Freedom to Read Statement](#) of the American Library Association. In particular, the following tenets need to be emphasized:

1. A quality Christian education requires that students have opportunity to study and gain understanding of a wide *diversity* of intellectual and artistic viewpoints and expressions, including those that are not in agreement with the Christian faith.
2. The inclusion of a particular work in the Murray Library collection does not imply university endorsement of any portion or all of the content of that work.

Commitment to the above tenets does not, however, suggest that there are no limits to the intellectual and artistic expressions that ought to be included in the Library collection. For example, a work that is exploitative, gratuitous, or unworthy of serious scholarly reflection ought not be included. Obviously, there will be gray areas where there may not be campus-wide agreement concerning a particular work judged by some to be controversial. In light of that, **the following procedures and guidelines will be operative.**

1. Since the Library collection is intended to support the instructional program of the university, the faculty will bear primary responsibility for requesting Library acquisitions, keeping in mind the following guidelines in cases of works that may be considered controversial:
 - a. The work should be integral to the instructional program, providing a resource that is judged to be important for teaching the university curriculum.
 - b. The work shall be judged to be worthy of serious study and scholarly reflection.
 - c. The work should provide insight into the human condition, with potential to give students a greater understanding of the world in which they live, in a manner that is not exploitative, gratuitous or sensationalistic.
 - d. If the work contains materials that may be offensive to Christian sensibilities, the overall educational importance of the work must be more significant than the potential offensiveness of some aspects of it.
2. The above guidelines are not to be used in any simple check-list fashion since they allow for some differing judgments by persons having equally good intentions. Therefore, legitimate questions may still arise as to the appropriateness of acquisition or maintenance of a given work. Such a question may be raised by a faculty member contemplating such an acquisition prior to requesting purchase by the Library. In this case, the faculty member shall discuss the potential purchase with the Library Director. Based on this discussion, the Library Director shall make a final decision, which shall be one of the following options:
 - a. The work shall be included in the Library shelf collection.
 - b. The work shall only be available in a permanent reserve collection in the Library.
 - c. The work shall not be purchased by the university.
3. A question as to the appropriateness may also be raised relative to a work ordered by a faculty member for the shelf collection or already included in the shelf collection. Such a question may be raised by any member(s) of the university

community and shall be directed to the Library Director who shall discuss the concern jointly with the person raising the question (or a representative if a number of people are raising the question) and the Chairperson of the academic department of the faculty member who ordered the work. The issue shall be closed if all three parties agree to one of the following options:

- a. The work is suitable for the Library shelf collection.
- b. The work shall be moved from the Library shelf collection to the permanent reserve collection in the Library.
- c. The work shall be withdrawn from the university collection.

If all three parties do not agree to one of these three options, then the person raising the question may appeal the case to a committee consisting of the following persons: Dean of the school of the academic department of the faculty member who ordered the work, Chair; Student Affairs representative chosen by the Vice Provost and Dean of Students; Vice Chair of the Ranked Faculty; President of Student Government Association, or designated representative. This appeals committee shall then take action in the form of a recommendation to the Dean of the school (who, as Chair of the Committee is a non-voting member). The Dean shall then make a final decision on the matter, which shall be one of the options 3. a, b or c noted above.

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