

Art History

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1. Purpose

The Library of Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar (VCU Qatar) acknowledges its responsibility to develop and maintain a dynamic and relevant arts collection for the current and future students and faculty of VCU Qatar. The Art History Collection Management Policy and Strategy is part of the larger VCU Qatar Library Collection Management Guidelines. This policy and strategy aims to define the scope of the VCU Qatar Library art history collection and to establish the principles upon which selection and de-selection decisions are made.

The purpose of the Art History Collection Management Policy and Strategy is:

- To provide guidance to librarians in the selection of art history resources in all formats
- To provide guidance to librarians in the de-selection of art history resources in all formats
- To assist with the development and maintenance of a balanced, relevant, and usable collection that meets the academic and research needs of VCU Qatar students and faculty
- To provide guidelines for the development of a distinguished collection in support of the study of the visual products of Islamic cultures

The functions addressed within the scope of this policy and strategy include:

- Consideration of criteria for the selection of art history resources in all formats
- Consideration of funding for selection of art history resources in all formats through purchasing or licensing
- Management and ongoing assessment of the library's art history resources
- Evaluation and disposition of donations and gifts is addressed in the [VCU Qatar Library Collection Management Guidelines](#).

2. General Collection Guidelines

The VCU Qatar Library employs a librarian-subject liaison model for the selection and de-selection of library materials. The art history liaison works closely with art history faculty for purposes of selection and de-selection. The VCU Qatar Library reserves the right to decline a purchase suggestion for one or more of the following reasons: a.) The title falls outside the collection scope or runs contrary to the collection guidelines documented in this policy; b.) The title is unlikely to be of subsequent interest to a sufficient number of other VCU Qatar students or faculty; c.) The cost of acquisition is beyond reasonable budgetary constraints.

a. Priority Collecting

Consistent with the mission of VCU Qatar Library, the guiding principle of collection management is to develop a collection that supports the curricular, academic, and research needs of VCU Qatar students and faculty. Consistent with the mission of the [VCU Qatar Art History Program](#), the profile of the art history collection will also be developed and maintained to support the study of dialogue and exchange through the critical analysis of visual cultures of “the Islamic world, the Western world, and the non-Islamic cultures of Asia.”¹

The core art history collection is to include seminal works of the visual culture of Islam from the 7th-21st century and ancient and contemporary civilizations of South, Central, And Eastern Asia, Greco-Bactrian culture, Indonesian culture, Sub-Saharan Africa, Byzantine Empire in relation to medieval Europe, and Europe from the 15th-21st centuries.

The art history core collection goals have first been prioritized in collaboration with the art history faculty and further codified according to established collection depth indicators (see section 7 of this document):

Tier-1 (highest priority)

Subject (Prehistory – present)	Indicator
Ancient civilizations of the Mediterranean (focus: Near East and Egypt)	2-4
Central Asia (Greco-Bactrian)	2-4
China	2-4
Colonialism (Middle East, Asia, North Africa)	2-4
Crusades	2-4
Hindu	2-4
Jain	2-4
Japan	2-4
Modern Islamic cities/Islamic urbanism	2-4
Mughal 1. Architecture/Indian subcontinent	2-4
Ottoman 1. Pre-modern Europe 2. Modern Europe	2-4
Orientalism	2-4
Persian Dynasties	
Photography (historical)	2-4
Southeast Asia (Islam, indigenous cultures)	2-4

¹ Virginia Commonwealth University, Qatar. “Art History.” Accessed December 2, 2013, <http://www.qatar.vcu.edu/arhistory>

Tier-2 (high priority)

Subject	Indicator
American	2-3
Art methodology, theory, historiography	2-3
Byzantine	2-4
European 13 th – present	2-3
Indonesia	2-4
Literature with art historical relevance (English translation)	2-3
Sub-Saharan Africa	2-3

Tier-3 (lesser priority). Selections from Tier 3 promote a balanced collection with representation of other geographical areas, time periods, or specialized artistic themes.

Subject	Indicator
Americas	1-2
Europe 1. Medieval – Modern Russia (re: Ottoman interaction)	2- 3
Oceania	1-2

b. Language

The primary language of instruction at VCU Qatar is English and English language materials predominate the existing collection and the acquisition of new materials; however, non-English language materials may be purchased to support a specific curricular, creative, or research-oriented need. The library catalog will hold transliterated records for any Arabic or non-Roman script materials added to the collection.

c. Chronology

No restrictions.

d. Geography

No restrictions.

e. Publication Date

No restrictions. Particular attention is paid to the acquisition of retrospective titles foundational to the discipline and to specific areas of study.

f. Treatment of Subject

Materials providing historical, critical, or technical aspects of art history, architectural history, and museum studies are acquired. With few exceptions materials oriented towards the general population are not acquired (e.g., collector's buying guides, auction catalogues).

g. Types of Materials and Formats

Materials containing graphic content are generally preferred in print format; whereas, reference works, serials, and historical monographs are collected with a preference for

digital format. Print serials relevant to art history are retained for 1-3 years, depending upon availability of electronic format.

Streaming media programs and DVDs are considered for purchase if the content is relevant to the art history program. Statistical review of media programs is conducted annually to determine use and to determine the appropriateness of a continued subscription.

3. Area Resources

The following libraries are complementary resources in Doha for the study of art-related disciplines and the VCU Qatar Library maintains a working relationship with each: *Qatar National Library*, *Museum of Islamic Art Library*, and *Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art Library*.

4. Subjects and Collection Depth Indicators

Art historical resources, relating to the curriculum in the department are collected through the following indicators. These indicators are numerical values used to describe a library's collection activity as it relates to the library's current scope and collection management goals. Further definitions are provided at the end of this appendix.

Indicators:

- 0 = Out of scope
- 1 = Minimal information level
- 2 = Basic information level
- 3 = Study or instructional support level
- 4 = Research level

Resources related to faculty or senior-level research are collected at Level 4 (research). Areas outside the research or curricular focus of the department are collected at Level 1 (minimal information level) or Level 2/3 (basic/study or instructional support) depending upon the needs of other VCU Qatar majors and programs.

6. De-accession

Information about de-selection policies and procedures may be found in the VCU Qatar Library [Collection Management Guidelines](#).

6. Related Policies and Documents

[VCU Qatar Collection Management Guidelines](#)

[VCU Libraries: Art History Guidelines](#)

[Guidelines for Collections: VCU Libraries](#)

[VCU Qatar Art History Curriculum](#)

7. Collection Depth Indicators: Definitions

Collection depth indicators are numerical values that are used to describe a library's collection activity levels in relation to the library's current collection level, acquisition commitment, and collection goal.

The Research Libraries Group (RLG), under the auspices of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and the Western Library Network (WLN), created the definitions of these indicators, referred to as the RLG Conspectus. While the definitions noted below are uniformly applicable to all subjects and the majority of the original language is retained, VCUQatar Library has made minor modifications to further define and clarify its collection activity.

Indicator Definitions

0 = Out of Scope

The library does not intentionally collect materials in any format for this subject.

1 = Minimal Information Level (uneven coverage)

Collections that support minimal inquiries about this subject and include a very limited collection of general resources, including monographs and reference works. Print periodicals dealing with this topic are not collected.

Level 1 collections generally contain few title selections and may not have systematic representation of the subject.

2 = Basic Informational Level

Collections that introduce and define a subject, indicate the varieties of information available elsewhere, and support the needs of general library users through the first two years of collection instruction.

Level 2 collections may include a limited number of general monographs and reference tools.

3 = Study or Instructional Support Level

Collections that provide information about a subject in a systematic way, but at a level less than research intensity. Level 3 collections support the needs of library users through college and beginning graduate instruction.

Level 3 collections are characterized by a more extensive collection of general monographs and reference works as well as a collection of more selected specialized monographs and specialized periodicals. The collection may also be more extensive in terms of the collection of both well known and lesser-known authors. Additionally, resources collected at Level 3 are adequate for imparting and maintain knowledge about the primary topics of a subject and include a high percentage of the most important literature or core works in the field, including retrospective resources.

Level 3 collections support undergraduate and upper division and master's degree level programs as well as other specialized courses.

While Level 3 collections in academic and research libraries may also contain a limited collection of representative print periodicals, the VCUQatar Library does not collect print periodicals that fall outside the scope of VCUQatar curricular needs. VCUQ also gives priority to periodicals available in digital format.

4 = Research Level

Collections that contain the major published source materials required for doctoral study and independent research. Level 4 collections include very extensive (exhaustive) coverage of general and specialized monographs, an extensive collection of appropriate materials in languages other than the primary language of the country and collection, and an extensive collection of the works of both well known and lesser-known authors. The older material in Level 4 collections is retained and systematically preserved to serve the needs of historical research.