

Psychology Collection Development Policy

Last updated: January 2004

I. Academic Programs Served

A-B. The main purpose of the collection is to support instruction and research in psychology and related disciplines. The Department of Psychology offers an undergraduate major (Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science) and minor in psychology and graduate programs leading to the Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degrees. The doctoral program in psychology provides advanced training in the areas of clinical psychology; cognitive, instructional, developmental, and school psychology; neuroscience and behavior; and social and industrial/organizational psychology. All strongly emphasize research, teaching, and the development of appropriate skills.

II. Purpose and Clientele Served

A-B. The collection primarily serves the students and faculty in the Department of Psychology. Interest in psychological topics is shared by faculty and students in other academic departments. Other disciplines whose interests widely overlap those of psychology include, but are by no means limited to, anthropology, biology, business, communications, education, linguistics, literature, nursing, political science, and sociology.

III. General Collection Policy Consideration

A. Languages collected; language exclusions: English is the primary language of psychological publication and the same applies to the NIU collection. Foreign language materials of major importance in all subdivisions of psychology are usually translated into English and these English translations will be acquired. Original foreign language materials, especially German, French, Russian and Spanish will be purchased selectively, as the budget permits. When the English translation is acquired first, the publication in the original language will usually not be sought. Works published in languages other than those mentioned above will ordinarily be purchased only when translated into English.

B. Chronological Emphasis: Psychology emerged as an independent scientific discipline in nineteenth century Germany. By the turn of the century, English publications from the United States and Western Europe began to dominate. Therefore, the primary emphasis is on the twentieth century. However, retrospective purchasing of nineteenth century works, especially in the form of reprints and microforms, will occur as the budget permits. (Materials from the pre-nineteenth century period most probably will be treated in the philosophy collection.)

C. Geographical Limitations or priorities; exclusions: The primary focus of research and publication in psychology is on the United States and Western Europe. Selective collecting will concern mainly Scandinavian countries, South America, Russia, some countries in Eastern Europe, as well as Israel, Japan and India. There are no geographical distinctions to be drawn within the subject matter of psychology that would preclude purchasing from other geographical areas in case need is demonstrated.

D. Formats of Material Collected; formats excluded: Most materials acquired for the psychology collection will be in the form of books and periodicals. Special emphasis is on periodicals.

Microform material will be purchased if the hard copy cannot be obtained or for budgetary reasons. The collection will continue to include, in addition to serial and monograph publications, reference works such as dictionaries and encyclopedias, significant bibliographies, abstracts and indexes (usually in the form of electronic databases) and directories of psychologists and psychological institutions. Proceedings or reports of conferences, symposia, and international congresses will be collected selectively. Handbooks are useful especially for clinical and laboratory situations. According to the general collection principles at NIU Libraries, textbooks will not be purchased unless they are of landmark significance to a particular area of psychology. Theoretical and methodological materials on testing will be ordered for the psychology collection. Purchases of theses and dissertations from other institutions will be done on a limited basis. Biographies of psychologists are in demand at NIU and will be collected. Popular psychology materials will ordinarily not be purchased. It is the Library's policy not to acquire duplicates but duplicate copies of frequently used materials in psychology are of importance. Pamphlets and clippings are excluded.

E. Publication Dates of material collected: Emphasis is on materials published since 1970. Retrospective purchasing will be selective and may involve microforms and reprints rather than the original format.

IV. Collecting Levels

Biopsychology

Library materials concerning this sub-discipline of psychology are dispersed in several disciplines. In this heavily interdisciplinary area of study and research there is no one single grouping of books by subject and, therefore, this material is almost impossible to measure quantitatively. If one should specify the most relates area, it certainly would be the section within *Neurophysiology and Neuropsychology (QP 351-430, including Neurochemistry QP 356.3). Just as important for Biopsychology is neuroanatomy (Human Anatomy--Nervous System QM 451-471) and Endocrinology (QP 187). Numerous topics within Genetics and Pharmacology (especially related to neuropharmacology) are of significance. To saturate the current departmental Ph.D. program grouped around this area, departmental recommendations for ordering of relevant titles is essential.

Clinical Psychology

In addition to sections in Psychology (BF) some sections in Medicine (R) are essential for studies in clinical psychology. Clinical Psychology is classified as one single number (RC 467) within Psychiatry and Psychopathology (RC 435-576). Therefore, library books on clinical psychology are shelved within Medicine (R). In addition to the restricted area which the LC system classifies as clinical psychology, the whole library collection on Psychiatry and Psychopathology with such LC subclasses as Psychotherapy, Psychoanalysis, Mental, Psychoneurotic and Personality Disorders should be taken into consideration as supporting the departmental studies in clinical psychology. The bulk of the library collection on clinical--child is concentrated in Pediatrics (RJ) with a section assigned to Mental Disorders for Children. Within the collection, the section BF 173-175 relates to Pathological and Abnormal Psychology and the other span of BF numbers to diversified topics (for example, theory and assessment of intellectual functioning, behavior modification, etc.). Clinical psychology is an accredited Ph.D. area at NIU with many course offerings. It is crucial to continue to build a highly developed research collection in this broad area.

Developmental Psychology

In the past, major research emphasis in the scientific literature was on the first two decades of life, and accordingly, the library coverage was chiefly related to child and adolescent psychology. Research and publication has increasingly focused on adulthood and gerontology in the last decade. Our collection reflects this. The use of the adulthood/gerontology collection is extensive because of interdisciplinary interests. The most related section is in Psychology (BF 699-724.85) but numerous behavioral development aspects from childhood to old age are covered in Sociology (HQ) as well.

Human Learning and Memory. Animal Learning and Behavior

Some special topics in learning (e.g. conditioned response) that would relate to both human and animal learning are classified within Psychology (BF 318-319.5). Titles with the more general approaches to human learning are in the (LB 1051-1075) range whereas animal learning and behavior are in the (QL 785-785.5) range. Books on memory may be found predominantly in the (BF 370-395) range yet the section within Neurophysiology and Neuropsychology (QP 406) should be consulted for physiological approaches. According to some prominent personalities in psychological science, learning was a dominant topic in American psychology for several decades. The library has a very good collection in human learning. The collection on animal learning is not as extensive, but is improving.

Social Psychology

There is no classification for social psychology in the LC schedule for Psychology (BF). This subclass of psychology is classified in Sociology (HM 251-291) and, consequently, by its location in the library it is part of the sociology collection. Because in the Department of Psychology, the Ph.D. program is built around the area of Social Psychology/Personality (the emphasis is strongly on social psychology), the respective collection has grown to the research level.

History of Psychology

This is a relatively small, basic level collection. In the last decades, especially from the sixties, history of psychology, through a very active professional movement, began to change from a relatively neglected area to a significant branch of psychology. Growth in this area has resulted in a corresponding broadening of the NIU collection. The collection supports the regular course offering in the Department of Psychology.

Perception

This is a classic field in psychology with an abundance of theory and research. The library's book collection on sensory processes and perception is within Psychology (BF 231-317) but for physiological aspects the section in Physiology (QP 431-495) has to be considered as well. To expand this collection to a research level would be fully justified mainly because of graduate course offerings in this area of study and research. Perception is included within the departmental doctoral program focusing on cognitive, instructional, developmental, and school psychology.

Motivation, Emotion

The collection on motivation and emotion is within Psychology (BF) but the Sciences section on Physiology of Emotion (QP 401) should be taken into consideration as well. These topics are also included in the doctoral program on cognitive, instructional, developmental, and school psychology. Because of graduate course offerings on motivation (with emotions closely related) and

because of the relationship of this topic to other subclasses in psychological science, this part of the library collection should reach the research level.

Parapsychology

Our Department of Psychology does not offer courses in parapsychology, yet library users' interest in the field is evident. Many reference questions are directed mainly to scientific foundations of methods in parapsychology and to topics of extrasensory perception, witchcraft, tarot card reading, astrology, etc. This area of Psychology is not covered by the approval plan but new volumes are added on occasion by firm order and faculty recommended when warranted.

Industrial and Organizational Psychology

The library has a growing collection in this area. Most titles are added through direct ordering by librarians and various departments (e.g. Business, Economics, Sociology, Psychology). The Department of Psychology has upper division courses in organizational-industrial psychology at the 400 and 500 levels.

Other

By breaking down the collection according to the departmental curriculum, some sections of the Library of Congress classification for Psychology (BF) have been omitted. They may serve mainly to support general course-work.

V. Other Resources

A. The library subscribes to numerous online databases which offer indexing and abstracts for the periodical literature in Psychology such as: PsycInfo, Social Science Abstracts, Science Direct, Periodicals Abstracts, and Sociological Abstracts are a few examples. Some databases provide the full text. The Annual Review of Psychology is available full text online via the Annual Reviews database. The American Psychological Association's Guide to Publication (style guide) is also available online. Links can be found on the Psychology Subject page, and under "How Do I Cite It?" on the library's home page. Other web-based resources are linked on the Psychology subject page as well.

B. Psychology resources not available in NIU Libraries can be obtained through the Interlibrary Loan Service in Founders Memorial Library.

VI. Special Remarks/Observations

Psychological science is a theory and research oriented discipline. While monographs are still important, professional periodicals are the most heavily used sources for the latest developments in research. The Library has a very good collection of English-language journals in psychology and related disciplines, and the addition of full text databases such as Science Direct have strengthened it. Future serials cuts and the lack of funding for new periodical titles may contribute to its gradual weakening.