Evaluation of Materials

Before the disposition of archival materials, the following questions will be considered by the OLC Archivist.

1. Does the material fall within the scope of current collecting policies? How does it relate to the current mission policy?
2. Is the material a duplicate or does it duplicate information already held in the collections in another format?
3. Has the material deteriorated beyond usefulness?
4. Does the Archives have a Deed of Gift or documentation that proves clear title to the material?
5. Do any externally imposed restrictions, such as donor agreements, apply to the material?
6. How would de-accessioning the material affect public access to information and historical research?
7. How accessible is the material? Are funds available for processing and preservation?
8. What is the relationship of the material to other archival records, both internally and externally?

Disposition of Materials

In practice, material to be de-accessioned may be transferred to other repositories, returned to the owner, or be destroyed. Any such disposition of material with substantial research or financial value will be governed by the following considerations:

1. Materials must be free of all legal obstacles. No materials will be de-accessioned when a written agreement between the donor and the OLC Archives that contradicts such action exists. A reasonable attempt will be made to consult donors when materials are considered for de-accessioning.
2. The method of disposition will be determined by the OLC Archivist or jointly by appropriate staff: the OLC Archivist, Learning Resource Center (LRC) Director, and the LRC Assistant Director.
3. Prior to any de-accession action taken, the OLC Archivist will fill out the De-accession Form. Once completed this form must be reviewed and approved by the LRC Director and the OLC President. Additional documentation regarding the destruction, transfer or return of the items will be produced and made available by the OLC Archivist.

Types of De-accessioning

Once it has been determined that the materials are to be dispensed of, three methods of de-accessioning materials may be used.
1. **Destruction:** Outright destruction is a suitable method of disposition for materials that have been reappraised and determined not to have any merit for continued preservations.

2. **Transfer:** Materials that have been evaluated and identified to be out of the mission of the OLC Archives and would be better served at another repository shall be made available to that repository for transfer of ownership if the OLC Archives has clear title to the materials. The repository receiving the collection will pay all expenses involved in shipping and sign a release form in which they assume ownership of the material. The receiving institution may also be required, at the OLC Archives’ request, to issue a press release concerning the transfer of the collection and identify the OLC Archives as the donor.

3. **Return to owner:** Materials may be returned to the legal owner if they have requested the return of their materials and OLC Archives ownership of the collection cannot be clearly established.

**Other Considerations**

Other factors need to be considered during the de-accessioning process and apply to both the donor and the archivist.

1. Donors and records creators should be informed that factors such as a change in mission, new accessions, and financial responsibilities may preclude the perpetual preservation of a collection and that these changes may compel the OLC Archives to dispose of materials that had been acquired earlier. Donors will be made aware of these necessary activities by the Collection Policy which clearly states that the OLC Archives may dispose of parts or the entire collection based upon these factors.

2. Although appraisal and de-accessioning are needed tools for refining collections, their importance can be reduced by keeping selection policies current and by applying sound appraisal standards.

3. The reformatting of materials – e.g., digitization – does not in and of itself constitute a reason to de-accession the materials in their original formats.