Weeding Policy
last updated - 2015

What is weeding? In a library, weeding is a shelf-by-shelf and/or title-by-title review and withdrawal of certain items in a library's collection.

Why are we weeding? At High Point University Libraries, we need to weed the collection for many reasons, including the necessity to keep the collection up-to-date and to keep the information available as accurate as possible. Another reason is that, as the curriculum evolves, the collection needs to evolve in order to adequately support it. Books also wear out and fall apart. At other times, certain materials were added to the collection that no longer fit our collection development policy. For example, there may be duplicate copies of some titles, where single copies are now sufficient. For these reasons, there are always materials that need to be removed from our collection.

What happens when you weed a collection? When the library staff selects materials for withdrawal, the items will be checked against our circulation statistics to obtain usage information. If a librarian has a question about the removal of an item, a faculty member in the appropriate department will be contacted. If the faculty member believes the item selected for withdrawal should be retained, it will be returned to the shelf. If an item in poor condition is still circulating strongly, a new copy may be obtained and the old copy weeded out.

General Weeding Criteria

- Discard superseded editions that do not contain unique information, data, or provide a historical reference not available in the most current edition.
- Do not keep duplicate titles unless a proven demand exists for multiple copies.
- Discard titles unused within a reasonable time period based on subject and scope of the work, except for items considered classics or standard editions.
- Discard if currency or reliability of the resource's information has lost value.
- Discard superfluous subjects no longer relevant to the curriculum.
- Discard items in poor condition that are beyond reasonable preservation efforts.

How often does weeding occur? We try to weed on an ongoing basis, only scheduling organized weeding when absolutely necessary. A large, organized weeding is a complex job so we will schedule weeding activities during a time when the students are not on campus so that the professional library staff can all participate with a minimum of disruption to the students and other library patrons.

What happens to the items that are weeded? Materials in good condition are donated to Better World Books (betterworldbooks.com) if possible; very outdated or damaged materials are marked as discarded and destroyed/recycled.