



# Gamble Library Archives Collecting Policy

## Gamble Library

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### Introduction

Archives are those records, regardless of medium or format, which are chosen for permanent preservation as evidence of the history of an organization or individual. Archives is also a term used for an archival repository or archival institution. The Gamble Library of Union Theological College's Archives Collecting Policy outlines the procedures and resources required to manage the archives in its custody. Those archives include Union Theological College's own institutional archives and the archives created by individuals whose work is, or was, related to, or aligned with, that of Union Theological College.

Union Theological College "welcomes students from all backgrounds to study Christian theology in a community of faith and research-led scholarship to prepare them for life, work and service in both local and global contexts." Union Theological College's vision is "to equip all our students with a theological literacy that will enable them to flourish as individuals, and contribute positively to society and culture. To train effective ministers to lead Christ's church in fulfilling its calling in the world. To resource all in the Church by providing a hub for learning and research." The aim of the Gamble Library's Archives Collecting Policy is to ensure that Union Theological College's institutional archives, as well as the archives of individuals whose goals and work align with those of the College, are identified and preserved for current and future stakeholders, such as staff and researchers. In managing and preserving its archives effectively according to the relevant standards and good practice, the Gamble Library of Union Theological College is supporting the fulfillment of the College's mission and vision and its own mission and vision.

### Policy statement

The Gamble Library of Union Theological College is committed to identifying and acquiring archives in accordance with the collecting scope outlined in this Policy. The Gamble Library will only acquire archives through formal acquisition and/or transfer documentation, in line with best practice for managing archives (e.g. [National Archives guidance](#), Archival Description [ISAD\(G\)](#)). It is also committed to ensuring that it has and will continue to have, the necessary resources to acquire, accession, process, preserve, and provide access to the archives in its custody, and to manage them as appropriate.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to guide acquisitions into the Gamble Library's archives and to give authority to the archives collecting process. It outlines the activities and responsibilities required to ensure that archival records are identified and acquired according to Union Theological College's mission and vision and in line with good practice for managing archives.

The benefits of an archives collecting policy include:

- Providing a framework for consistent decision-making
- Eliminating subjectivity from collecting decisions
- Making sure resources are effectively used in line with Union Theological College's mission and vision
- Enabling cooperation with other repositories and avoiding conflict over acquisition of archives
- Assisting donors to identify the best repository for their material as well as helping other repositories to re-direct donors appropriately



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- Supporting the diplomatic refusal of materials by providing specific criteria about what records can be accepted
- Explaining to donors the value and complementary nature of their material prior to deposit
- Facilitating re-appraisal (weeding) and de-accessioning
- Ensuring continuity and consistency to the acquisition programme even if there are organizational and staff changes
- Enabling more efficient use of resources by collecting according to available storage facilities, preservation resources and use.

### **The Gamble Library of Union Theological College's Archives: identity and authority to collect**

The Gamble Library, Union Theological College's archives are owned by:

Union Theological College

108 Botanic Avenue

Belfast

BT7 1JT

Which is under the management of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

As an entity of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Union Theological College, is a registered charity in Northern Ireland (charity number 104483) and the Republic of Ireland (charity number 20015695). As such it is required to manage its records in compliance with the relevant statutes and related regulations. There is no legal requirement to maintain an institutional archive, although there is a requirement to retain its corporate records. Union Theological College is free to maintain its own archives and to acquire archives of other organisations and individuals provided such parties are free to dispose of their archives in this manner.

### **Procedural documentation**

The Gamble Library of Union Theological College is committed to establishing the descriptive and procedural documentation necessary to manage their archives according to the applicable standards and best practice. This includes:

- Procedures for transferring material to the archives
- An Accessions Register to document all acquisitions from September 2024 onwards
- Appraisal guidelines.

### **Scope of archives collecting policy**

The Gamble Library of Union Theological College acquires and accessions into its archives those records which document the history and development of the College, the Gamble Library, their predecessor bodies and key individuals associated with them, such as Faculty members. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Union Theological College Annual Reports and Enhancement Plans, Prospectuses, Strategic Development Plans, and Teaching and Learning Strategies
- Faculty and Management Committee Minutes
- Union Theological College Conference Handbooks
- Plans of the College building
- College Publications
- Named group photographs of students
- Graduation, Carol Service, and new Professor/Faculty Member Installation Orders of Service
- The personal papers and research of former Professors and Faculty members.



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The Gamble Library of Union Theological College reserves the right to evaluate and remove non-archival material from acquisitions. This will be done in line with the Gamble Library's archive appraisal criteria (appendix 1). When non-archival material is removed it may be put into the Gamble Library's other collections. If it is not appropriate for any of the Gamble Library's collections, such material may be offered back to the depositor of the material. In the event that the depositor cannot or will not take the material back, the Gamble Library will dispose of the material, either by giving it to a suitable repository or, destroy it in an environmentally friendly and secure way.

### Collecting priorities

Archive material emerging from Union Theological College as it fulfils its mission will be prioritised over archives from other sources.

### Non-archival material and exclusions

Archival material that has no connection with Union Theological College or the Gamble Library will not normally be acquired.

Artefacts and objects are not usually considered archival and will therefore not be acquired for, or accessioned into, the Gamble Library of Union Theological College's archives.

Where archival or other material offered to, or considered by, the Gamble Library of Union Theological College for acquisition into their archive is ultimately refused, the Gamble Library may assist to identify an appropriate alternative repository.

### Media and formats

The Gamble Library acquires archives in both physical and digital formats, for example:

- Paper files and volumes
- Large format plans
- Photographic prints, negatives and slides
- Digital records and images.

The Gamble Library of Union Theological College may need to refuse the acquisition of materials when unable to provide an adequate standard of, and commitment to, appropriate archival collection care, management and space. (See, for example [National Archives guidance](#) for best practice).

### Cooperation with other repositories

Where the Gamble Library Archives Collecting Policy overlaps with the collection policy of other archives, the Gamble Library will work with other interested parties to ensure the material is deposited with the most appropriate body. This entails:

- Referring potential donors with archives outside the scope of this Policy to another relevant repository
- Working with other institutions to ensure our collecting policy is complementary but does not overlap significantly.

### Acquisition Conditions

Acquisitions to the Gamble Library Archives will usually be through internal transfer from other departments within Union Theological College. (See the Union Theological College Data Retention Policy).

When archives are accepted from external parties, such as individuals and organisations whose material meets the criteria articulated in the scope of this Policy, the Gamble Library will normally gain legal custody of the material and to establish and take ownership of intellectual property rights. All archive acquisitions via bequest, donation or loan from external parties will be formally documented in a legally binding agreement,



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e.g., a donation, bequest, or loan agreement. See appendix 2 for the points to be covered in an acquisition agreement.

If legal counsel is required each party will be responsible for obtaining their own advice and any associated fees. The archives donation, deposit, or loan agreement will be retained and preserved permanently.

The Gamble Library is not in a position to purchase archival material.

Where the Gamble Library of Union Theological College does not hold the intellectual property rights, the Gamble Library will seek to obtain permission to copy archival material for access and preservation purposes. The Gamble Library Archives will be open to access by researchers and other stakeholders unless they are subject to data protection, ethical or other legal restrictions and embargo periods. See the Special Collections Access Policy.

Where records are damaged and require extensive conservation, it may only be possible for the Gamble Library to take them if funding is available to ensure their physical preservation. It may be necessary to apply to external funding bodies to obtain this funding prior to acceptance.

All new acquisitions, be they internal transfers or external deposits, will be documented in the Gamble Library Archives' accession register. See appendix 3.

### Responsibilities

Operational responsibility for the implementation of the Gamble Library Archives Collecting Policy rests with the Librarian. Any queries or concerns about potential acquisitions will be shared with her line manager, the Principal. Where financial arrangements are necessary, e.g., for the conservation of donated archives, the Principal and/or Operations Manager will be informed and/or consulted to ensure funding exists or can be obtained. The Management Committee will be informed of all significant acquisitions.

### Relationship to other Gamble Library policies

The Archives Collecting Policy works together with:

- The Special Collections Access Policy
- Gamble Library Member Agreement
- Library Donations Policy.

The Gamble Library Archives Policy operates within the remit of Union Theological College's Data Retention and Data Protection Policies. The Data Retention Policy identifies some of the materials which will be transferred to the Gamble Library Archives. See appendix 4.

### Review

The Gamble Library Archives Collecting Policy once approved will be reviewed bi-annually in consultation with Faculty.



## Appendix 1: Appraisal Guidelines

The Gamble Library of Union Theological College reserves the right to appraise the records currently in its Archive, and new acquisitions to the Archive. Records are appraised based primarily on their evidential and informational value. Evidential value is evidence that an organization or individual existed and its activities and functions which give details of its history. Informational value is the information contained in the archives which is distinct from their evidential value, that will be used for research which has not been envisaged by creators and custodians. The Librarian will preserve records which:

- Were created by the organization in the course of business or social activity and are therefore genuine
- Are master records, unique to the organization/individual(s)
- Document the origins of the organization, its legal status, rights, and structure over time
- Which provide evidence of key events, goals, reports, policies, publications, programmes, activities, and decisions of the organization, according to its mission statement
- Which measure the impact of the organization's/individual's activities which may include the social, economic, or political arenas
- Document the birth, background, professional status, and significant life events of the individual
- Information-rich, summary records should be selected over routine data, e.g., annual accounts rather than invoices and receipts
- Give context and background to the Archives, even if it is not itself unique and archival (i.e., complementary/supporting material)
- Complement or supplement records already in the archive.

## Appendix 2: Points to cover in an acquisition agreement

From Crockett, M. *The No-Nonsense Guide to Archives and Recordkeeping* (London: 2016), 137.

- Identity of the person or organisation transferring the archives
- Identity of the owner of the archives
- Identity of the owner of any intellectual property rights residing in the archives
- Identification of repository as new owner or custodian of the archives
- Assignment of any intellectual property rights and applicable conditions
- Clear description of the archives, the quantity and content
- Agreed access permissions and restrictions
- Conditions around disposal of material that is non-archival
- The repository's undertaking to care for the archives
- Date of agreement, names and positions of signatories.

Where the archives are being lent to the repository, there needs to be additional clauses covering:

- Financial compensation to the repository for storing, preserving, cataloguing and providing access (including insurance implications)
- The right to make copies of the archive as a surrogate of the original.

For more detailed guidance see, The National Archives *Loan (Deposit) Agreements for Privately-Owned Archives* (Richmond, 2006). [Online PDF](#).



Appendix 3: Accession Register (screenshot – the actual register is in the ‘Key documents’ / ‘Library’ folder of the N-drive)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
	Unique accession number	Date of entry	Title	Amount of material	Details of depositor/donor	Creator	Terms of deposit	Date coverage	Summary description	Media	Accruals	Final reference once catalogued
1												
2												
3												
4												

Appendix 4: Materials to be transferred to the Gamble Library Archive outlined in the Data Retention Policy

College Annual Reports and Enhancement Plans

College Prospectuses

College Strategic Development Plans

College Teaching and Learning Strategies

College publications

Union Theological College Conference handbooks

Faculty minutes

Plans of the College building

Programmes from: the installation of new Faculty members; Graduation; Christmas College Carol Service