

Multi-Media Services Media & Equipment Collection Development Policy Collection Description – January 2009

Mission and General Purpose

Multi-Media Services (MMS) seeks to facilitate and enhance educational communication by providing materials in subjects and multimedia formats that support and enrich the Institute's curriculum. The department's aim is to assist students, faculty and staff in locating multimedia materials that meet their educational needs.

To accomplish this Multi-Media Services selects audiovisual materials for the purposes of teaching, researching, and exposing the Pratt community to different creative visions and current cultural trends.

The media collection includes materials in various multimedia formats: compact discs, 1/2" VHS videocassettes, Laserdiscs, 16mm films, and DVDs. Due to obsolete equipment and maintenance support, the purchase of 1/2" VHS videocassettes and Laserdiscs are being phased out. Multi-Media Services must separately consider the demand, format and characteristic of each medium to aid in collection development decisions.

Multi-Media Services purchases documentary, educational, instructional, performances, performance art, animation, television shows, classic and popular feature films. Popular feature films, such as one might expect to find in a video rental store, are purchased upon the request of an instructor to support classroom instruction, for research, and to expose the Pratt community to various creative visions and cultural trends.

The purpose of the equipment collections is for the creation, documentation and presentation of student projects and faculty presentations. Thus general equipment categories sought include: video recording, audio recording, still photography and projection. The equipment collections change overtime depending on technological trends and equipment availability.

Subjects

The Media collection supports most academic programs within the Institute, and strives to include all subject classifications. However, the collections are not evenly divided among the subject areas. Some subject areas are more frequently represented in the production of video and audio materials and more suitable for video or audio presentation, such as those films used in film history courses.

Languages

Materials are collected primarily in the English language, and other languages with English subtitles. Foreign language productions without subtitles will not be purchased.

Multi-Media Services Media & Equipment Collection Development Policy

Dates

Priority is given to documentary programs produced within the past ten years. Older programs will be purchased only when they are classic titles, relevant to film history, or when it has been determined that no more recent production offers the same level of coverage -- in terms of content or quality. There are no chronological guidelines for the purchase of feature films.

NTSC and Region coding

Programs will be purchased in the NTSC standard if available; programs in all other standards will be purchased on a highly selective basis. At this time, MMS is purchasing DVDs encoded for North America (Region 1). This may change if demand for international films on DVD cannot be met with North American releases.

Cooperative Resources and Donations

Departments may donate titles relevant or necessary to their programs of study purchased on their own budgets. It is at the discretion of the Director of Multi-Media Services to determine if reimbursement is appropriate or available. For particularly expensive items, MMS may jointly purchase items with other departments to be added to the circulating collections on a case by case basis. Departments, faculty, staff, alumni and students are welcome to donate their own works or documented events to the MMS collections.

Any and all donated items (media or equipment) are evaluated for quality, format, content, relevance, and need before being added to the collection. Items that do not meet the criteria will be disposed of as deemed appropriate by Multi-Media Services. Once offered and accepted, donations become the unconditional property of the Multi-Media Services and will not be returned to the donor.

Transfer of ownership from the donor to Multi-Media Services will be required via a signed document. Acceptance of donations is unconditional and not subject to agreement of valuation of materials. Multi-media Services reserves the right to make the final decision of acceptance of any donations into the collection. Multi-Media Services will accept only unconditional donations and reserves the right to retain or dispose of donated material in any fashion according to the needs of the Institute.

Criteria for acceptance of donations include

- Clean, unmarked and in good repair
- Relevant to the current and future teaching/research activities of our users
- Meets selection criteria as outlined below

Titles that duplicate existing Multi-Media resources may be accepted where appropriate. Official charitable tax receipts for income tax purposes will not be issued.

Multi-Media Services Media & Equipment Collection Development Policy

Selection Criteria - Overview:

Multi-Media Services selects video and audio recordings for purchase based on a number of sources: reviews, online previews (television broadcasts, film festivals, media markets), film requests from faculty, researchers, students, and staff. Once an item has been determined to fall within the collection parameters, it is evaluated according to the following specific criteria:

- Accuracy/authoritativeness
- Timeliness of information
- Level of treatment (analytical vs. descriptive)
- Technical quality
- Aesthetic appeal
- Relative cost
- Availability at local public libraries

Multi-Media Services makes every effort to assure acquisition of the best audio and video materials available. Multi-Media Services may duplicate titles that have heavy use, or become available on a more current format. All purchases are subject to approval by the Director of Multi-Media Services, who reserves the right to return to a distributor material that does not meet expectations with regard to content or quality.

MMS also seeks to purchase films created by or about Pratt community members (including: faculty, staff, students, and alumni), as well as, films about the Pratt family, local neighborhood, and the greater New York City metropolitan area.

Selection Criteria - Feature Films and Non-Documentary Television Programs:

Feature films and non-documentary television programs are purchased on DVDs. DVD is the preferred format and DVD play back equipment is available in classrooms. DVDs are less expensive and offer superior video and audio quality to VHS and 16mm.

The feature film collection supports courses in Film History as well as a variety of other disciplines. Therefore, the collection includes the works of recognized directors and significant individual titles from the perspective of film scholarship. However, it also includes films that may not be recognized for their excellence but may contribute to teaching in disciplines, such as art, history, sociology, architecture, and English. The feature film collection reflects these various uses.

Selection of titles is made on the basis of reviews and faculty recommendations. As the collection reflects the research interests of the faculty as well as their instructional needs, some directors and some genres are collected more comprehensively than others. Multi-Media Services gives priority to films/programs being taught in classes; faculty are encouraged to submit their course syllabi so that films/programs being taught are considered for acquisition.

Popular, current-release video recordings of feature films and non-documentary TV

Multi-Media Services Media & Equipment Collection Development Policy

programs are purchased upon the recommendation of faculty, with the assurance that they will be used for research and/or instruction. Multi-Media Services will also consider the purchase of popular, current-release video recordings based on films nominated by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, the American Film Institute "best" list, and the Library of Congress' National Preservation Registry List subject to the needs of the Institute.

Selection Criteria - Audio:

A limited collection of audio recordings exists. MMS is not currently adding audio recordings to the collection. Exceptions will be considered for materials on compact discs whose content relates to specific coursework on a case by case basis.

Selection Criteria - Digital Streaming and Cable:

MMS is currently exploring the possibility of accessing streaming media.

MMS has a cable subscription for the purpose of viewing current events and programs in certain special event spaces. Charging admission, allowing non-Pratt community members, and the recording of cable programs is strictly prohibited by the cable contract.

Selection Criteria - Equipment:

Multi-Media Services seeks to identify equipment that will be useful and viable for several years and can accommodate the audiovisual needs of the community. This may include digital and analog technologies. An effort is made to maintain certain older technologies to accommodate nontraditional uses and the creative and teaching needs of the Pratt community. Older technologies are phased out as replacement and repairs become cost prohibitive. Maintaining and purchasing equipment is very costly and circulation places unusual stress on the equipment, therefore the main factors considered when identifying new equipment for purchase are the following:

- durability
- functionality
- safety (of the users)
- portability
- cost

Formats Excluded

Multi-Media Services will not consider purchasing the following items: other Region encoded materials not listed above without equipment to support its playback, 3/4" inch (U-matic) or Betamax videocassettes, 1/2" VHS, 16mm films, 8mm films, 35mm films, Music CDs/vinyl, or Laserdiscs. Although MMS no longer actively collects 16mm films, 1/2" inch videocassettes or Laserdiscs, they will remain in the collection as long as they are applicable to the needs of the school or until suitable replacements on current formats can be acquired.