

Principles for Print Collection Layout in the Dartmouth College Library

This set of principles serves as a basis for deciding where in the Dartmouth College Library to shelve particular printed volumes and, within each library unit, how to arrange the print collection. Given the complexity of scholarly literature and the physical realities of the book stacks in the Library system, these principles will compete with one another or not be fully achievable – but they do represent the ideal toward which we work.

1. **User Proximity.** Print volumes will be shelved within square footage currently allocated to physical collections as close as possible to users most likely to use items in a particular subject.
2. **Library as a Welcoming Place.** The print collection will be located and arranged within the library to optimize the quality of a user's overall experience in the library.
3. **Integrity of Subject Areas.** Print volumes will be arranged by subject using standard classification schemes and call numbers. Related subjects will be shelved in adjacent areas and then arranged within those subject groupings in logical call number sequences.
4. **Multiple Classification Schemes.** To the extent that is practicable, the number of different classification schemes and call numbers should be minimized. In general, highly used materials should be moved out of older schemes and moved to the dominant scheme.
5. **Hierarchy of Shelving Types.** Most libraries on campus employ a combination of compact, moveable shelving and standard, fixed shelving. Standard shelving provides greater ease of access than compact shelving offers, especially for collections in which users are likely to browse at the stack for extended periods and for collections with many simultaneous users. Both standard and compact shelving on campus provide better user access than shelving off-campus in the Storage Library. All of these factors bear on decisions about where to shelve particular subjects.
6. **Digital Surrogates.** When the library holds an item in both digital and print formats, the print copy usually may be shelved in off-site storage. Conversely, items not digitized offer better access when shelved on campus.
7. **Continuous Collection Management.** Collection layout decisions should constantly be reviewed given the fact that collection growth and use patterns continuously change. However, decisions to move major subject collections from one area to another should factor in the high cost of user re-education.