

Policy 3-044: Museum and Library Collections and Non-Museum Decorative Items

I. Purpose and Scope

To establish University policy with respect to the preservation and display of works of art, artifacts, and other museum and library collections. This policy applies to the Utah Museum of Natural History, the Utah Museum of Fine Arts, and the University Libraries. For decorative items purchased or otherwise acquired by any unit of the University (including the Museums and University Libraries), see also Policies 3-003, 3-041 and 3-040. The circulating collections of the University Libraries are excluded from this policy.

II. Definitions

- A. Museum collections - An assemblage of objects (art, artifacts, and specimens) and their associated documentation from various disciplines legally acquired as per Museum Collections Management Policies and preserved, studied, interpreted, and held in trust for public benefit by the University's Museums. Objects usually are considered part of the Museums' collections once they are accessioned.

- B. Art - As contained within the collection of the Utah Museum of Fine Arts, "art" includes a physical object or non-material art work created to fulfill an aesthetic or artistic function, usually one of a kind. Including: Visual Work of Art - painting, drawing, photograph, print, mixed media, artist's book, rare book, or sculpture; Decorative Art - ornamental or functional purpose glassware, ceramic, metalwork, furniture, furnishing, or textile object; Conceptual Art - work of art consisting of an idea, and Traditional Art - a ceremonial, religious or functional object created by an ancient, traditional, or contemporary culture.

- C. Artifact - any object made or modified by a human culture and later recovered by an archeological endeavor
- D. Specimen-any geological or biological object
- E. Library collections - includes books and other printed material such as broadsides, maps, and newspapers held in the University Libraries. These may be considered art or artifacts as tangible creations of artists and craftspersons such as printers, bookbinders, papermakers, illustrators, designers, and writers. The function of these pieces can be historical, aesthetic, artistic, artifactual, and/or intellectual. For the purposes of this policy, the circulating collections of the University Libraries are not included. See Policy 6-318 for guidance related to books purchased outside of the University Libraries.
- F. Museum - term used collectively to refer to both the Utah Museum of Natural History and the Utah Museum of Fine Arts.
- G. Libraries - term used collectively to refer to the J. Willard Marriott Library, the Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library, and the S.J. Quinney Law Library.
- H. Governing Authority - the University Officer or Administrator to whom the museum or library director reports.
- I. Collections management policy - a museum professional term encompassing procedures established to manage the referenced collections - evidenced by a written document and approved by the governing authority. The policy addresses all collections-related issues, including accessioning, documentation, storage, and disposition.
- J. Decorative items - decorative items are generally ornamental or functional works of art intended to provide a pleasing environment at the University. While such items may have significant value, they are, by definition here, not included in the collections of either Museum or the Libraries.

III. Policy

A. General

1. Utah Museum of Natural History - consistent with Utah Code, the Utah Museum of Natural History (UMNH) is a place where tangible objects reflecting the past, present, and continuing development of our natural history may be collected and displayed for educational and cultural purposes. The UMNH makes available to people throughout the state anthropological (including archaeological), geological (including paleontological), and biological objects retrieved primarily, but not exclusively, from the state of Utah. The Museum provides professional expertise and assistance in the proper care of archeological and paleontological collections from state lands as they are housed throughout the state.
2. Utah Museum of Fine Arts - consistent with Utah Code, the Utah Museum of Fine Arts (UMFA) is a state general and multicultural art museum charged with the broad responsibility of collecting and exhibiting, for the education and enrichment of its citizens, art and related objects from around the world from prehistoric times to the present.
3. The directors of UMFA and UMNH (collectively, the "Museums") and the University Libraries are delegated the authority to carry out their respective collections management policies including inventory, security, preservation of, and access to the collections entrusted to them. Such policies are developed by the Museums and Libraries, are internal to those organizations, and approved by the appropriate governing authority. Such policies must be consistent with ethical and accreditation standards established by the American Association of Museums or appropriate library associations.
4. The University will only accept objects (including art, artifacts, books, and specimens) which have been legally and ethically acquired.
5. Deaccession or other disposal of Museum or Libraries collections shall not be for financial gain or to offset operating expenses; but will be done in

accordance with the collections management policies of the Museums and Libraries - which stipulate that funds so obtained may only be used for the acquisition of objects for the collection.

B. Accounting and Financial Reporting

1. Art, held by the Utah Museum of Fine Arts, or books, held by the Libraries, are capitalized based on the costs of acquisition; or the fair value at time of donation; or, based on generally accepted accounting principles governing nonmonetary exchange transactions if exchanged for another object of art. These items are not depreciated for financial reporting purposes. Items with an acquisition cost or donated value of \$5,000 or more will be capitalized.
2. Individual objects of art, artifacts and specimens held by the Utah Museum of Natural History are not capitalized unless purchased for more than \$5,000 and with an estimated useful life of more than one year. Such objects, if capitalized, are not depreciated.

C. Decorative Items

Decorative items, including prints, sculptures, rugs, paintings, ceramics, etc., may be purchased with appropriate funding sources by various colleges, departments or units as part of maintaining a pleasing environment on campus. While such items may be expensive or be considered “museum quality”, they are not considered part of the collections of either Museum. Such items may also be received from donors. The following specific requirements apply in these circumstances:

1. Purchase of decorative items is subject to Policy 3-003.
2. Such items will be capitalized if at least \$5,000 and may be depreciated, if appropriate. Policy 3-040 applies with respect to these assets.
3. Items less than \$5,000 are considered noncapital assets for which Policy 3-041 applies.

4. Decorative items that will be primarily displayed in an individual's office or workspace may be subject to an additional level of scrutiny to assure that the item is 1) reasonable, 2) for business purposes, 3) appropriate to the circumstances, and 4) properly safeguarded. Such acquisitions will require the approval of that individual's supervisor if the item could appear to a reasonable person to be either extravagant or lavish.
5. Decorative items, if possible, should have affixed a Property Accounting property tag. In situations where the item's physical characteristics preclude affixing a label or where affixing the label cannot be done without affecting the item's value or visual design, then the college or department must assure the item is secured and safeguarded.

IV. Rules, Procedures, Guidelines, Forms and other Related Resources

- A. Rules *[reserved]*
- B. Procedure *[reserved]*
- C. Guidelines *[reserved]*
- D. Forms *[reserved]*
- E. Other related resource materials

[UMNH Collections Management Policies](#)

V. References

- A. [Utah Code 9-8-302](#) Utah Museum of Natural History – Definitions
- B. Utah Code 9-8-804 to 806 Utah Museum of Natural History and Utah Museum of Fine Arts - Reposited Materials
- C. [Utah Code 9-9-403](#) Utah Museum of Natural History - Ownership and Disposition of Native American Remains

- D. Utah Code 53B-17-601 to 603 Utah Museum of Natural History
- E. [Utah Code 53B-17-701](#) Utah Museum of Fine Arts
- F. Utah Code 79-3-501 to 503 Utah Museum of Natural History - Paleontological Collections
- G. Utah Rule R807-1 Utah Museum of Natural History - Curation of Collections from State Lands
- H. Utah Rule R850-60 Utah Museum of Natural History - Cultural Resources
- I. Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, Chapter 79 (36CFR79) Utah Museum of Natural History - Curation of Federally-Owned and Administered Archaeological Collections
- J. Antiquities Act of 1906 vol. 34 Stat. 225, 16 U.S.C. 431-433
- K. Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) of 1979, vol Public Law 96-95; 16 U.S.C. 470aa-mm
- L. Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) 25 U.S.C. 3001 et seq. (November 16, 1990)
- M. Paleontological Resources Preservation Act (PRPA) of 2009, Omnibus Public Lands Management Act (OPLA) of 2009, Public Law 111-011, P.L. 111-001, Title VI, Subtitle D
- N. [Policy 3-003](#) Authorizations and Approvals Required for Financial Transactions
- O. [Policy 3-040](#) Property Accounting
- P. [Policy 3-041](#) Accountability for Noncapital Equipment
- Q. [Policy 6-318](#) Acquisition and Control of Non-Library Books

VI. Contacts

- A. Policy Officers: Exceptions to this policy can be granted by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, in consultation with the Vice President for Administrative Services.
- B. Policy Owners: The respective directors of the Museums and Libraries are responsible for answering questions regarding the application of this policy to their collections. Questions regarding decorative items or financial reporting should be directed to the Associate Vice President for Financial and Business Services.

VII. History

Approved: Board of Trustees Date 06/07/2010, see [Executive Summary](#)