

Effective Date: **September 1, 2011**

POLICY

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Deaccession Policy

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE

Office of the Controller

Introduction

Deaccessioning is the process by which objects of value (such as works of art, artifacts, rare books, historical documents, and other similar materials) are permanently removed from the University's collections. Deaccessioning is a necessary component of collections management and development. Its purpose is to enhance the quality, integrity, and identity of a collection without violating legal or ethical obligations.

Criteria for Deaccessions

The decision to deaccession any object from the University's permanent collection is based on, but not limited to, the following criteria:

- Whether the object falls within the scope of the University's current collecting policies;
- Whether the object is relevant or useful to the University and is likely to be used for its

intended purpose in the foreseeable future;

- Whether deaccessioning the object is likely to have a significant negative effect on the University's academic or intellectual reputation as a leading private research university;
- Whether the object duplicates other objects in the University's collections;
- Whether the University is able to preserve the object properly;
- Whether the object has deteriorated beyond usefulness or reasonable repair;
- Whether the object's removal will provide the means for improving or enhancing the University's collections;
- Whether the object is subject to any externally imposed restrictions, including those imposed by law or agreement with the donor;
- Whether deaccessioning the object is likely to affect public access to information that is not otherwise available.

Disposition of Objects

Any proposed disposition of an object having significant research or financial value shall be subject to the following guidelines:

- The object must be free of all legal restrictions; no object will be deaccessioned when such action would be contrary to an agreement between the University and the donor. Reasonable efforts will be made to contact the donor, if living, when a donated object is considered for deaccessioning unless the donor has previously agreed to such action.
- Reasonable efforts will be made to determine if other University collections have an interest in the object.
- No private sale or gift of an object will be made to University faculty, staff, board members, or members of their immediate families.
- All proceeds from the sale of an object will be used to support the preservation and development of the University's collections including, where appropriate, the purpose (e.g., artistic, reference, archival, etc.) served by the original donation. If applicable, any object acquired as a direct result of the deaccession of another object shall be noted as "provided by" the donor of the original object.

Deaccessioning Process

The head of the school, college, or other unit having possession of the object(s) in question shall submit a written recommendation for deaccessioning to the University Librarian and the Director of the Gotlieb Archival Research Center. The recommendation shall include a description and an evaluation of the object and the reason for and proposed method of disposition, which may include a sale (by public auction or private sale), donation (to a public or private museum, educational institution, or other scholarly organization), exchange, return to the donor, or destruction. In the case of a proposed sale, the recommendation shall include the intended use of the sales proceeds. (Destruction of certain works of art is governed by state and federal law; accordingly, any recommendation for destruction should be discussed with legal counsel.) The recommendation shall also include the date the University received the object and the expected date of disposition. Recommendations may require consultation with the artist, donor, external scholars, curators, conservators, appraisers, or other experts.

Final recommendations for deaccessions must be approved by the University Provost and Chief Academic Officer and the Senior Vice President, Chief Financial Officer, and Treasurer.

Deaccessioning will be documented in writing; such documentation shall include the amount of any consideration received by the University in connection with the disposition of the object. The Office of the Controller shall retain the original documents pertaining to the deaccession and be responsible for filing IRS Form 8282 (if required).

END OF POLICY TEXT

Additional Resources Regarding This Policy

This Policy is part of the [Finance and Administration Policies Manual](#).