

Our Vision is to bring national recognition to the university for distinctive research collections documenting the diverse histories and development of San Antonio and South Texas.

Our Mission is to build, preserve, and provide access to distinctive archival, photographic, and printed materials, with a particular commitment to collections with significance to our region. We embrace the changing digital landscape by actively exploring new ways to enhance access to our collections. We support the university's ascent to Tier One status by building nationally recognized collections that inspire new knowledge, serving researchers at UTSA and from around the world.

Statement of Purpose

Collecting policies are necessary to ensure that collection development is planned, rational, tied to institutional needs and priorities, and realistic compared to repository resources. Formal policies account for and therefore minimize wasteful competition among repositories and the fragmentation of material related to a particular topic or place, and are more likely to result in integrated and inter-related holdings of maximum value to students, scholars, and other researchers.

The UTSA Special Collections Manuscripts Collection Development Policy is driven by UTSA's Mission Statement, the UTSA Libraries Strategic Plan, and UTSA's designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution. Therefore, Special Collections is committed to preserving and providing access to the history of Mexican Americans, African Americans, and other historically underrepresented communities, cultures, and identities in South Texas. The Manuscripts Collection Development Policy is intended to complement the Rare Books Collection Development Policy, the Photographs Collecting Policy, and the University Archives Collecting Guidelines.

Acquisition of Materials

Special Collections acquires Manuscript materials through donation or bequest but may acquire very select materials by purchase if funding is available.

Material accepted into Special Collections should supplement existing collecting areas or strengthen weak areas that have been identified as areas of interest by this policy. All gifts are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Special Collections cannot provide monetary appraisals of any materials, but can direct donors to qualified appraisers (this should not be construed as a recommendation by Special Collections of a particular appraiser).

All materials permanently added to Special Collections will be assigned an accession number, and all paperwork related to the acquisition of the materials will be maintained permanently in Special Collections' files.

Ownership and Copyright

Material will be accepted by deed of gift, contract, bequest, or purchase agreement. Special Collections will not accept items and collections on “deposit” or “loan” or by any other means whereby UTSA Libraries does not become the owner of the items. Rare exceptions may be made for items placed on permanent deposit or loan. Such deposits or loans must further the mission of UTSA Libraries in a considerable fashion and must be approved by the Dean of Libraries. Donors must have clear ownership of materials at the time of donation. Special Collections will not knowingly acquire items that have been stolen or illegally exported.

Transfer of copyright to Special Collections along with transfer of ownership is preferred. However, transfer of ownership along with granting Special Collections the right to use, reproduce, and make the donated material publicly accessible is also acceptable. Donors may transfer ownership along with copyright of materials by signing the Special Collections standard Deed of Gift or Purchase Agreement which transfers copyright to Special Collections. For transfers of ownership without transfer of copyright, donors must sign the Special Collections standard Deed of Gift or Purchase Agreement which does not include transfer of copyright to Special Collections. The Dean of Libraries will sign deeds, purchase agreements, or any other documentation which officially transfers ownership and/or copyright of materials donated to Special Collections.

Access, Use, and Preservation

Special Collections will not acquire materials with onerous or permanent restrictions on access or use, or for which the restriction cannot be enforced or applied equally to all researchers. Special Collections will ensure that the use of any material identified as sensitive by the donor is restricted from use in accordance with an agreement in writing accepted by both the donor and Special Collections. Any limitation on use must be approved by the Head of Special Collections at the time of accession.

To the best of our ability, accepted material will be housed in appropriate containers and stored in secure, climate-controlled areas; electronic records will be securely stored, backed up regularly, and migrated as needed. We reserve the right to determine retention, location, cataloging treatment, and other considerations relating to the use or disposition of the material. Special Collections also cannot accept liability for loss or damage of materials due to deterioration, fire, or other disasters which befall the material or are inherent within it.

Responsible Collecting

When choosing whether or not to accept materials, Special Collections will consider the constraints of available storage space, the ability to process material within a reasonable amount of time, and ability to provide for the care and preservation of, and access to, the material. Special Collections should not accept collections that are too costly overall to acquire or manage. Special Collections may choose not to accept collections which require significant research and arrangement before they can be made useful. Sampling and weeding may be used to selectively acquire a manageable quantity of materials.

Donors will be directed to appropriate repositories if their material is not deemed relevant to our collections. Dispersal or fragmentation of a research collection is inconvenient to researchers and does nothing to enhance the reputation of the institution. Special Collections will try to avoid acquiring material known to be primarily collected by another institution, unless there is a strong connection with an existing Special Collections collection or some other compelling reason to accept the material.

Subject Areas Collected

UTSA Special Collections' greatest subject strengths are San Antonio History, Mexican American History, and Women's History. The majority of collections contain materials from the twentieth century, though materials from the nineteenth century and earlier are present, as well as twenty-first century materials. Subject areas that we collect are divided into two groups: Primary Collecting Areas (active collecting), and Secondary Collecting Areas (passive collecting). Current holdings in each subject area are evaluated on a scale ranging from Minimal to Comprehensive. Goal levels for active collecting are also articulated using this scale.

Levels of Collecting

Minimal: No or very few collections

Basic: Some collections, but scattered chronologically, geographically, or thematically. Not sufficiently intensive to support any courses of independent study in the subject area. Select materials may be suitable for instruction.

Selective: Substantial collections, providing relatively comprehensive coverage of one or more sub-sections of this topic. Adequate to support undergraduate or graduate instruction. Ability to support independent research is limited.

Representative: Substantial collections, providing a representative cross-section from multiple sub-sections of this topic. Includes major collections adequate to support undergraduate or graduate instructions as well as sustained independent research.

Comprehensive: Thorough coverage of most aspects of this topic. Adequate to support any level of instruction or sustained independent study, including thesis/dissertation development and faculty research.

Primary Collecting Areas

Special Collections proactively works to acquire collections in the subject areas listed alphabetically below. Generally, Special Collections seeks to acquire materials which directly relate to San Antonio and South Texas that date from the post-Civil War era to the present.¹ However, this geographic area and the time period are not exclusive. Collections are evaluated on a case-by-case basis and materials from other geographic areas and time periods may be considered, especially if they document underrepresented communities, if they could serve as a strong instructional example, or if the materials have some other significant research value.

African American History

Current Collections: Selective for San Antonio and Minimal for South Texas. Strengths include the Mario Marcel Salas Papers, Sterling Houston Papers, the Hattie Elam Briscoe Papers, the Helen Cloud Austin Papers, and the SNAP News Collection.

Collecting Focus: Increase to Representative for San Antonio and South Texas. Focus on acquiring personal papers and organizational records of members of the San Antonio and South Texas African American community, especially those of women and activists. Also strive to acquire materials documenting African American life in the region prior to 1930.

¹ Much of San Antonio's history from the arrival of the Spanish through the American Civil War is already well-documented in other archival repositories.

The Arts

Current Collections: Selective for San Antonio and South Texas. Strengths include the Serie Print Project Collection, the Cruz Ortiz Collection, and the Leo Garza Political Cartoon Collection.

Collecting Focus: Representative for San Antonio and South Texas. Collecting in The Arts may include the fine arts and performing arts, as well as the entertainment industry. Focus on acquiring print materials that are suitable for instruction and which overlap with other collecting areas outlined in this policy. Materials are complemented by the Artists Books Collection in Special Collections' Rare Books division, as well as by the University Archives collection of Jacinto Quirarte Papers.

Food and Drink

Current Collections: Basic for San Antonio and South Texas. Strengths include the Adams Flavors, Foods, & Ingredients, LLC Records, the Gebhardt Mexican Foods Company Records, the San Antonio Restaurant Menus Collection, and the Rosemary Kowalski Papers.

Collecting Focus: Increase to Representative for San Antonio and South Texas. Focus on collecting materials related to Tex-Mex and Mexican food. Strive to build Selective collections at a broader geographic scope when subject material directly relates to Tex-Mex or Mexican food. Also seek to acquire materials relating to the San Antonio and South Texas restaurant and bar industry, food production and processing, and farm workers. Materials complement the Mexican Cookbook Collection in Special Collections' Rare Books division.

LGBTQ History

Current Collections: Representative for San Antonio, Minimal for South Texas. Strengths include the Lollie Johnson Papers, the Sterling Houston Papers, the Stonewall Democrats of San Antonio Records, and the San Antonio LGBTQ Publications.

Collecting Focus: Increase to Comprehensive for San Antonio and South Texas, but avoid duplicating the efforts of the HAPPY Foundation of San Antonio. Strive for broad representation of all aspects of the regional LGBTQ community with a focus on materials which intersect with other collecting areas, particularly those materials which document LGBTQ persons of color, the transgender community, and LGBTQ persons in the military.

Mexican American History

Current Collections: Representative for San Antonio and Selective for South Texas. Strengths include papers of Mexican American politicians and social activists, such as the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project Records, the José Angel Gutiérrez Papers, the Arcenio Garcia Papers, and the Albert Peña Papers. Selective collections for other areas, such as Women's History and The Arts.

Collecting Focus: Increase to Comprehensive for San Antonio and South Texas, and strive to build Selective collections from other parts of the American Southwest. Focus on regional collections that have national impact, particularly material documenting El Movimiento (the Chicano civil rights movement). Increase to Representative collecting for other areas of Mexican American History, especially those which intersect with other collecting areas.

Photography

Current Collections: Nearly Comprehensive for San Antonio and South Texas, Representative for the state of Texas. Strengths include the General Photograph Collection, the *San Antonio Express-News* Photograph Collection, the *San Antonio Light* Photograph Collection, and the Zintgraff Studio Photograph Collection. The Gil Barrera Photograph Collection depicting UTSA's early years complements these holdings.

Collecting Focus: Comprehensive for San Antonio and South Texas and Representative for the state of Texas. Continue to accept photographs from all time periods, but focus on actively acquiring late 20th century and 21st century photographs that align with the other collecting areas listed in this policy. Photographs should document significant events, persons, and underrepresented cultural groups which make up the history and cultures of Texas, following collecting practice previously established by the Institute of Texan Cultures. Consult the UTSA Special Collections Photograph Collecting Policy and Photograph Acquisition Guidelines for full details on collecting considerations.

San Antonio and South Texas History

Current Collections: Strongly Representative (approaching Comprehensive) for 20th century San Antonio history. Selective for South Texas history and 19th century San Antonio history. Minimal for 18th century San Antonio history and prior. Strengths include the Stewart Title Company Records, the San Antonio Fair, Inc. Records, the Aline B. Carter Family Papers, and the William and Fay Sinkin Papers.

Collecting Focus: Increase to Comprehensive for 20th and 21st century San Antonio history materials. Increase to Representative for South Texas and 19th century San Antonio history. Strive for broad representation of San Antonio and South Texas individuals, families, businesses, urban planning and growth, and the local tourism industry. This area also includes collecting on HemisFair '68. Preference for materials which intersect with other collecting areas. Tourism materials may overlap with Rare Books collecting.

Social Activism and Politics

Current Collections: Selective, approaching Representative. Strengths include collections listed under Mexican American History, the Communities Organized for Public Service/Metro Alliance Records, and the Mario Marcel Salas Papers, and the National Organization for Women Records for the Texas and San Antonio Chapters. Several collections that intersect with LGBTQ are also present.

Collecting Focus: Representative for San Antonio and South Texas, with broader geographic scope for collections that intersect with Mexican American History and Women's History. Continue to actively collect resources documenting LGBTQ activism in San Antonio and South Texas, and increase efforts to collect resources documenting African American activism in San Antonio and South Texas. Focus on collecting material that documents grassroots activism, as well as personal, non-governmental papers of politicians.

Women's History

Current Collections: Representative for San Antonio, Basic for Texas. Strengths include the Cyndi Taylor Krier Papers, Laura Burleson Negley Papers, the National Organization for Women Texas and San Antonio Chapters Records, and the Esther Vexler Papers.

Collecting Focus: Increase to Representative for Texas and Comprehensive for San Antonio. Focus on maintaining additions to current collections and broadening the representation of Mexican American, African American, and LGBTQ women in San Antonio and South Texas.

Secondary Collecting Areas

Special Collections may consider accepting materials in the following subject areas if they are offered to Special Collections, but does not proactively work to acquire collections in these areas (except where noted). Materials should directly relate to San Antonio or South Texas.

Education and Educators

Current Collections: Selective. Strengths include the Ernestine Glossbrenner Papers, the Linda Schott Papers, and the San Antonio Area Retired Teachers Association Records. This area is complemented by the University Archives collections of faculty papers.

Collecting Focus: Personal papers of UTSA Faculty, papers of San Antonio-area educators, or materials relating to bilingual instruction. Prefer material that supports instruction. Materials should complement the University Archives.

German American History

Current Collections: Minimal. Main strength is the San Antonio and Casino Clubs Records.

Collecting Focus: Materials that illustrate the history of German-Americans in San Antonio, particularly 19th century records.

Immigration and Migration

Current Collections: Basic, approaching Selective. Main strengths are the Vertical Files and General Photograph Collection, originally created by the Institute of Texan Cultures to research and document the various cultural groups and ethnicities represented in Texas history. Rare Books holdings complement this subject. Most holdings document European immigration to Texas during the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Collecting Focus: Papers of families or individuals who immigrated or migrated to Texas, especially San Antonio or South Texas. Materials may relate to persons emigrating/migrating from any place or country of origin. Particularly desirable materials include those which document underrepresented cultural groups and ethnicities, materials which fill gaps in existing collections, or materials dating after 1925. Materials that support instruction are preferred.

Military History

Current Collections: Selective. Strengths include women in the military, particularly the Women's Overseas Service League Records and the Air Force Women Officers Associated Records.

Collecting Focus: Military History materials accepted must overlap with another collecting area listed in this policy. Collections relating to major wars after 1960 are desirable, though materials relating to other major wars prior to this date may be considered if they are deemed useful for instruction.

Ranching

Current Collections: Basic. Strengths include the Alfred Giles Family Papers, the Anacacho Rancho Collection, and the Lasater Family Business Records.

Collecting Focus: Ranching materials accepted must overlap strongly with another collecting area listed in this policy.

Water Resources

Current Collections: Basic. Main strength is the San Antonio River Authority Records. Other collections include the San Antonio Water Works Records and the Mitchell Lake Wetlands Society Records.

Collecting Focus: Continue to partner with the San Antonio River Authority and accept regular deposits of permanent records. Consider accepting materials from non-governmental entities that illustrate San Antonio's historic relationship with the San Antonio River and other creeks and waterways in the region.

Writers, Publishers, and Printing

Current Collections: Selective. Strengths include the David Bowen and Corona Publishing Company Collection, the Bryce Milligan Papers, the John Phillip Santos Papers, and the Naomi Shihab Nye Papers. Holdings are complemented by University Archives collections such as the Norma Cantú Papers.

Collecting Focus: Materials must overlap with another collecting area listed in this policy. Actively collect independently published materials (primarily zines), and alternative/underground newsletters and newspapers. Collecting should align with Rare Books holdings, including unpublished papers of authors/writers from San Antonio, and San Antonio small press business records. Collecting may also overlap with University Archives due to UTSA instructors working and teaching in this field. Materials that support instruction are preferable.

Types of Material Collected

Personal Papers from Individuals.

While it is important that Special Collections staff be permitted to survey papers or records in order to determine which materials have enduring historical value, listed below are types of materials that are often valuable to a researcher. This list, which is suggestive and not definitive, illustrates the wide range of documentation sometimes useful for historical and administrative research.

Special Collections generally acquires:

- Personal and professional correspondence
- Diaries, memoirs, or journals
- Research files compiled or created by the donor
- Final drafts of unpublished works

- Personal or professional scrapbooks and memorabilia created by or directly relating to the donor
- Clearly identified photographs taken by or directly relating to the donor
- Clearly identified sound recordings, video tape, or movie film created by or directly relating to the donor
- Clearly identified removable electronic media (e.g. floppy disks, CDs, etc.) and/or clearly identified born-digital files created by or directly relating to the donor (media will be evaluated by Archivists and considered with the whole collection)
- Email (requires discussion and evaluation with Archivist)
- Artistic or other creative materials produced by the donor or which have a correlation to the donor's collection
- Books, articles, scripts, music, pamphlets, or other material written or published by the donor or about the donor
- Maps which depict San Antonio or that are relevant to the work of the donor

Organizations and Institutions.

Many of the records produced by an organization have long-term value. Special Collections is interested in the records that best illustrate the purpose, activities, and policies of an organization. Such documents usually represent an "end product"—a final report, for example, instead of a draft. We are more interested in related groups of materials rather than individual items. Records should be inactive—that is, no longer regularly used for routine business. Before records are transferred, an Archivist should survey the organization's papers or speak with knowledgeable staff to determine which materials have enduring historical value. Listed below are some of the types of documentation that Special Collections often preserves for historical and administrative research.

Special Collections generally acquires:

- Minutes
- Correspondence
- Annual reports
- Articles of incorporation and bylaws
- Financial ledgers up to 1900
- Non-confidential personnel rosters, directories, and similar records
- Annual or semi-annual balance statements
- Subject files
- Printed material including pamphlets, brochures, catalogs, newsletters, periodicals, etc., produced by the organization

Web Archiving

Special Collections also captures web sites and associated digital content (e.g., Facebook pages, Twitter feeds, and YouTube videos) in selective areas related to its overall collecting strategy. Web captures are conducted in partnership with the Internet Archive's Archive-It Program. The majority of the web collections' focus is on UTSA-related web content, including the official web pages of University administration, academic departments, and student organizations. The remaining data and document budget may be used to capture web content related to the Special Collections' Manuscripts and Rare Books collecting areas.

Audio/Visual, Electronic, and Born Digital Material

In addition to considerations outlined in the section “Responsible Collecting,” material that is audio/visual, electronic, or born-digital will be considered if it is accessible for research (it can be rendered to users in a meaningful way), can be migrated and preserved using archival best practices, and includes appropriate metadata. Furthermore, in accordance with considerations outlined in the section “Access, Use, and Preservation,” Special Collections reserves the right to digitally reformat items or migrate existing digital content as needed for preservation and long-term access. Audio/visual, electronic, or born digital material may be added to Special Collections’ online digital collections after Archivist review, but Special Collections cannot guarantee that this material will be made available online.

Materials and Subjects Not Collected

- Large collections unrelated to UTSA’s academic mission
- Copies of materials held in other repositories
- Copies or other reproductions of original material (including donor-digitized content), unless the originals are no longer in existence or are unavailable to the public
- Duplicates of material already held by Special Collections, unless the duplicate is in better condition than Special Collections’ copy
- Images of museum objects
- Three dimensional artifacts, such as sculptures, trophies, or plaques
- Current local, state, and federal government records
- Collections that are primarily in languages other than English or Spanish
- General readership books, periodicals, or other printed materials not created by the donor (exceptions may be made for books, periodicals, or pamphlets of unique historical interest)
- Personal financial records including checks or income tax returns
- Day-to-day financial records of organizations such as bank statements, canceled checks, receipts, daily balances, or invoices
- Personnel time cards, payroll documents, or confidential files
- Medical records
- Galleys, proofs, and final drafts of published works (when published works are readily available)
- Materials with onerous or permanent restrictions on access or use, or for which the restriction cannot be enforced or applied equally to all researchers

Deaccessions

Deaccessioning is the official process of removing items from our collections, which is achieved by returning items to donors, transfer to other historical repositories, or discarding materials. The Manuscripts Archivist will recommend items for deaccessioning to the Head of Special Collections. Special Collections will dispose of materials in accordance with the donor’s instructions in a written agreement accepted by both the donor and Special Collections, if such an agreement exists. Special Collections will make every effort to resolve issues of uncertain ownership and comply with intentions of donors and restrictions on collections before deaccessioning materials.

Items may be deaccessioned when:

- they duplicate other material in the collections which are in equally good or better condition
- they are of marginal use to Special Collections, are outside the scope of our collection policy, or would be more appropriately housed at another institution
- they are in such poor condition as to be virtually unusable or threaten other collections or staff

Related Documents

Digital Curation and Preservation Policy (forthcoming)

Photographs Collecting Policy

Rare Books Collection Development Policy

University Archives Collecting Guidelines and UTSA Records Retention Schedule

[Web Archiving Methods and Collection Guidelines](#)

[UTSA Libraries Strategic Plan](#)