ATS Standards

4 Library and information resources

The library is a central resource for theological scholarship and education. It is integral to the purpose of the school through its contribution to teaching, learning, and research, and it functions collaboratively in curriculum development and implementation. The library’s educational effectiveness depends on the quality of its information resources, staff, and administrative vision. To accomplish its mission, the library requires appropriate financial, technological, and physical resources, as well as a sufficient number of personnel. Its mission and complement of resources should align with the school’s mission and be congruent with the character and composition of the student body.

4.1

Library collections

4.1.1 Theological study requires extensive encounter with historical and contemporary texts. While theological education is informed by many resources, the textual tradition is central to theological inquiry. Texts provide a point of entry to theological subject matter as well as a place of encounter with it. Theological libraries serve the church by preserving its textual tradition for the current and future needs of faculty, students, and researchers.

4.1.2 To ensure effective growth of the collection, schools shall have an appropriate collection development policy. Collections in a theological school shall hold materials of importance for theological study and the practice of ministry, and they shall represent the historical breadth and confessional diversity of Christian thought and life. The collection shall include relevant materials from cognate disciplines and basic texts from other religious traditions and demonstrate sensitivity to issues of diversity, inclusiveness, and globalization to ensure access to the variety of voices that speak to theological subjects.

4.1.3 Because libraries seek to preserve the textual tradition of the church, they may choose to build unique special collections, such as institutional, regional, or denominational archives.

4.1.4 In addition to print materials, collections shall include other media and electronic resources as appropriate to the curriculum and provide access to relevant remote databases.

4.1.5 The library should promote coordinated collection development with other schools to provide stronger overall library collections.

4.2 Contribution to learning, teaching, and research

4.2.1 The library accomplishes its teaching responsibilities by meeting the bibliographic needs of the library’s patrons; offering appropriate reference services; providing assistance and training in using information resources and communication technologies; and teaching information literacy, including
research practices of effectively and ethically accessing, evaluating, and using information. The library should collaborate with faculty to develop reflective research practices throughout the curriculum and help to serve the information needs of faculty, students, and researchers.

4.2.2 The library promotes theological learning by providing instructional programs and resources that encourage students and graduates to develop reflective and critical research and communication practices that prepare them to engage in lifelong learning.

4.2.3 Theological research is supported through collection development and information technology and by helping faculty and students develop research skills.

4.2.4 The library should provide physical and online environments conducive to learning and scholarly interaction.

4.3 Partnership in curriculum development

4.3.1 The library collaborates in the school’s curriculum by providing collections and services that reflect the institution’s educational goals.

4.3.2 Teaching faculty should consult with library staff to ensure that the library supports the current curriculum and the research needs of faculty and students. Library staff should participate in long-range curriculum planning and anticipate future intellectual and technological developments that might affect the library.

4.4 Administration and leadership

4.4.1 In freestanding theological schools, the chief library administrator has overall responsibility for library administration, collection development, and effective educational collaboration. The chief administrator of the library should participate in the formation of institutional policy regarding long-range educational and financial planning and should ordinarily be a voting member of the faculty. Normally, this person should possess graduate degrees in library science and in theological studies or another pertinent discipline.

4.4.2 When a theological library is part of a larger institutional library, a theological librarian should provide leadership in theological collection development, ensure effective educational collaboration with the faculty and students in the institution’s theological school, and ordinarily be a voting member of the theological faculty.

4.4.3 The library administrator should exercise responsibility for regular and ongoing evaluation of the collection, the patterns of use, services provided by the library, and library personnel.

4.4.4 Schools shall provide structured opportunities to theological librarians for professional development and, as appropriate, contribute to the development of theological librarianship.
4.5 Resources

4.5.1 Each school shall have the resources necessary for the operation of an adequate library program. These include financial, technological, and physical resources and sufficient personnel.

4.5.2 The professional and support staff shall be of such number and quality as are needed to provide the necessary services, commensurate with the size and character of the institution. Professional staff shall possess the skills necessary for information technology, collection development and maintenance, and public service. Insofar as possible, staff shall be appointed with a view toward diversity in race, ethnicity, and gender. Where appropriate, other qualified members of the professional staff may also have faculty status. Institutions shall affirm the freedom of inquiry necessary for the role of professional librarians in theological scholarship.

4.5.3 An adequate portion of the annual institutional educational and general budget shall be devoted to the support of the library. Adequacy will be evaluated in comparison with other similar institutions as well as by the library’s achievement of its own objectives as defined by its collection development policy.

4.5.4 Adequate facilities include sufficient space for readers and staff, adequate shelving for the book collection, appropriate space for non-print media, adequate and flexible space for information technology, and climate control for all materials, especially rare books. Collections should be easily accessible and protected from deterioration, theft, and other threats.

4.5.5 Adequacy of library collections may be attained through institutional self-sufficiency or cooperative arrangements. In the latter instance, fully adequate collections or electronic resources are not required of individual member schools, but each school shall demonstrate contracted and reliable availability and actual use.

4.5.6 In its collaborative relationships with other institutions, a school remains accountable for the quality of library resources available to its students and faculty.

NEASC Standards

Standard Seven: Library and Other Information Resources

The institution provides sufficient and appropriate library and information resources. The institution provides adequate access to these resources and demonstrates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The institution provides instructional and information technology sufficient to support its teaching and learning environment.

Resources and Access
7.1 The institution articulates a clear vision of the level and breadth of information resources and services and of instructional and information technology appropriate to support its academic mission and its administrative functions. Through strategic, operational, and financial planning, it works to achieve that vision.

7.2 Institutional planning and resource allocation support the development of library, information resources and technology appropriate to the institution’s mission and academic program. The institution provides sufficient and consistent financial support for the library and the effective maintenance and improvement of the institution’s information resources and instructional and information technology.

7.3 The institution uses instructional technology appropriate to its academic mission and the modes of delivery of its academic program.

7.4 Professionally qualified and numerically adequate staff administer the institution’s library, information resources and services, and instructional and information technology support functions.

7.5 Through ownership or guaranteed access, the institution makes available the library and information resources necessary for the fulfillment of its mission and purposes. These resources are sufficient in quality, level, diversity, quantity, and currency to support and enrich the institution’s academic offerings. They support the academic and research program and the intellectual and cultural development of students, faculty, and staff.

7.6 Faculty, staff, and students are provided appropriate training and support to make effective use of library and information resources, and instructional and information technology.

7.7 The institution ensures appropriate access to library and information resources and services for all students regardless of program location or mode of delivery.

7.8 The institution ensures that students have available and are appropriately directed to sources of information appropriate to support and enrich their academic work.

Information and Technological Literacy

7.9 The institution demonstrates that students use information resources and technology as an integral part of their education, attaining levels of proficiency appropriate to their degree and subject or professional field of study.

7.10 The institution ensures that throughout their program of study students acquire increasingly sophisticated skills in evaluating the quality of information sources appropriate to their field of study and the level of the degree program. (See also 4.7)

Institutional Effectiveness

7.11 The institution regularly and systematically evaluates the adequacy, utilization, and impact of its library, information resources and services, and instructional and information technology and uses the findings to improve and increase the effectiveness of these services.
4 Library and Information Resources
ATS Standard 4; NEASC Standard 7

Established in 1970 and containing a combined total of over 330,000 volumes, the Gordon-Conwell libraries serve students enrolled in academic and professional studies at the four Gordon-Conwell campuses and through several distance programs including Semlink and the Doctor of Ministry programs. Goddard Library in S. Hamilton, Massachusetts functions as the main Gordon-Conwell library. The Jackson Library in Boston and the Lindsell library in Charlotte, N.C. serve their respective campuses, and a new library in Jacksonville, Fla. was established in 2006 and moved to a larger facility in 2013. The campuses share a unified library catalog, a common circulation and cataloging system, and a comprehensive collection of electronic databases. The combined libraries have a current professional staff of ten and are supported by a sizable number of student workers. Goddard Library provides centralized services for technical services, interlibrary loan, and circulation.

1. Library facilities: Gordon-Conwell maintains five distinctive libraries. The Burton Goddard Library on the main campus in S. Hamilton, MA is located adjacent to the academic center on two floors in a building also housing two academic lecture rooms and 21 faculty offices. Library size is approximately 29,000 square feet (main reading room/stacks 14,700 square feet, downstairs reading room/stacks 9,450 square feet, office area 3,850 square feet, rare book room 1,000 square feet). Library space features 140 carrels, each of which is assigned two students. Ample tables are provided for study. Office area includes space for acquisitions, technical services, inter-library loan, and an office for the library director. The rare-book room is climate controlled. Currently, Goddard Library contains over 250,000 total volumes.

In March 2007, the library received a report from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners which focused on the rare-book room and the upper level of the library. Issues noted included temperature and relative humidity abnormalities as well as leaks in the rare book room. Since then, adjustments have been made to temperature and relative humidity, but those measurements remain outside of recommended limits. In April 2007 an environmental manager noted a mold problem in the lower level that has not been rectified. Temperatures on the lower level are often too cold while in the upper level they are too warm.

Library design issues include the distraction for test-takers of noise from the circulation desk, the lack of a large meeting-room space for classes and group learning, the lack of access to the lower level for persons with disabilities, and lack of individual offices for the library professional staff. Previous plans for an entryway from the library lobby into the academic center, facilitating access to elevators and restrooms in the academic center have not been implemented.

The Center for the Study of Global Christianity maintains a 10,000 book collection housed approximately one-half mile from Goddard Library in 1,700 square feet of space that includes desks for cataloging and circulation as well as research. This collection specializes in the study of global trends and demographics in Christianity, and the Seminary acquired ownership of this collection in 2008. Currently, this location is outside of the Seminary computer network making cataloging of this special library more difficult.

The Harold Lindsell Library at the Charlotte, NC campus is located on two floors of the Frank and Morrow Graham academic center. Library space features 20 student carrels, nine tables with seating for up to 50 students, and a large outside viewing area upstairs with comfortable chairs. The collection currently holds over 60,000 volumes and rails have been installed upstairs that will allow for movable
The Bruce Jackson Library at Gordon-Conwell’s Center for Urban Ministerial Education occupies approximately 3,000 square feet on the lower level of the Campus building in Boston’s Roxbury district. The library can seat about 25 students at study desks but the area is cramped. The library stacks can hold approximately 25,000 and are currently full with books in storage in Boston and at the main campus in South Hamilton. The library contains one office behind the circulation desk that serves as the director’s office and library workroom. The elevator poses a security issue when the rest of the campus is open and the library is closed. Jackson library holds the Center for Urban Ministerial Education (CUME) archives and the John Pierce Center for Disciple-Building collection.

The newest campus library is located in Jacksonville, FL. Established in 2005, the library was moved with the entire campus in 2013 to a newly constructed building that the campus shares with other Christian ministries. The library is located on the first floor in the center of campus and contains 3,584 square foot open-plan room which holds collections, study space, and the library office. Doors on three walls allow easy access to surrounding hallways. (This configuration poses a security problem.) The collection currently holds almost 14,000 volumes with capacity to expand the collection to approximately 25,000. The office includes space for the campus librarian as well as room for cataloging, processing, and storage of books and materials. The eight group study tables can be reconfigured into a breakout classroom for twelve students.

**Self-study recommendation one:** That during the 2015-2025 decadal accreditation cycle, the institution prioritizes renovation of Goddard Library with appropriate climate controls, proper wiring for technological applications, and reconfiguration of space to allow for group interaction and stronger interaction between library staff and library users.

**2. Library staffing:** The Seminary currently has a professional staff of ten librarians who serve the four campus libraries. During the past ten years, the staff has become more professional with seven of our ten professional librarians holding the MLS degree and one professional staff member on track to finish his MLS degree in May 2015. This represents significant progress over 2005 when only two of the professional staff possessed graduate library degrees. Professionalization of the staff has been a primary goal of the libraries during this accreditation decadal cycle.

One important characteristic of our professional staff has been length of service. Four of our professional staff have served the school for over fifteen years each. Three have served for over seven years each. This has allowed the library professional staff to develop a strong understanding of the ethos of the Seminary and provide continuity of service, and in our 2011 library qualitative evaluation, the personal and professional service of the staff was not only seen as the most important expectation of the community, but ranked very highly by our faculty, students, and staff. This professionalization of the library staff has addressed an important notation from the 2005 accreditation report which indicated that staffing for Goddard library had been in a long period of flux.

As the Seminary has sought to professionalize its library staff over the past decade, proper levels of compensation (salary and benefits) have been reviewed and several library positions have been reclassified from para-professional (Library Assistant) to professional (Assistant Librarian). Compensation
has been adjusted upward for these positions, although effects of the 2008 recession have limited the number of cost-of-living adjustments that the Seminary has been able to provide. In the 2015-25 accreditation cycle, comparative compensation studies for library professional staff should be conducted in relation to member institutions in the Boston Theological Institute (BTI) and to evangelical seminaries of comparable size.

Goddard Library serves as the main library for the Gordon-Conwell library system so five of the professional staff members are based at Goddard. Goddard library includes a Director with a ThD degree, an Associate Director (with responsibilities in reference services and bibliographic instruction) with advanced degrees in Old Testament, New Testament, and Library Science, and three Assistant Librarians in public services, technical services and cataloging, and acquisitions, each with master level degrees in library science. Ten part-time student workers round out the Goddard Library staff. Because of the size of Goddard library, there is need for a professional position in Archival Management (the public-services librarian has archival management as part of his position title but is unable to devote time to those tasks), and need for a para-professional position to support public services, interlibrary loan, and copy cataloging.

As a result of the 2005 accreditation team visit, the Seminary appointed the director of the Harold Lindsell library in Charlotte as Senior Librarian with responsibility for oversight of the four Gordon-Conwell libraries. In that role, the Senior Librarian reports to the Vice-president for Academic Affairs and oversees all four libraries, the establishment of library policies and staffing, and coordination of their work. The library directors indirectly report to the Senior Librarian and interact with him regarding library staffing and planning. The Senior Librarian continues to serve as director of the Lindsell Library in Charlotte, and possesses the DMin and the MLIS degrees. The Assistant Librarian for Information Management is based in Charlotte and serves the library technology needs of the Gordon-Conwell libraries. He is the primary staff member responsible for interaction with the Seminary IT department and manages all library technology from his location in Charlotte. He also supervises the student worker staff and will finish his library degree in 2015. Lindsell library also has a part time Library Assistant for Public Services (a para-professional position) and six student workers who support reference, reserve, and cataloging functions.

Jackson Library at the Boston campus welcomed a new library director in April 2014. With his arrival, we have expanded the professional staff at Boston to 1.5 FTE. Our new director comes with both theological and library degrees as well as extensive experience in theological librarianship. Our former director has reduced her hours to a part-time status in anticipation of full retirement in the coming years. Jackson Library also maintains one part-time student worker to support library operations.

Our newest library in Jacksonville maintains limited hours and is staffed by a para-professional librarian for 25 hours each week. Our plan during the next accreditation cycle is to expand that position to full time and add staff as the campus grows.

**Self-study recommendation two:** Because Goddard Library provides support for almost all Gordon-Conwell residential and distance students, and for the Lindsell, Jackson, and Jacksonville libraries, a strong Goddard Library professional staff is essential for effective library service to students, faculty, and researchers. We recommend that in the next decadal cycle, the institution adds to the Goddard Library staff a full-time Assistant Librarian for Archival Management and a para-professional position for interlibrary loan, public services, and cataloging support.
3. Evaluation and assessment: In 2005, the visiting team noted that “Goddard Library is not presently engaged in assessment and evaluation” and that “there are no evaluation processes in place to access library services in Hamilton, Charlotte, and Boston.” In response, the Senior Librarian and the library professional staff have initiated evaluation processes in three areas: conduct of physical inventories for each campus library, initiation of a qualitative evaluation program in 2012, and integration of the library into institutional assessment efforts.

Physical inventories have been conducted at Charlotte, Boston, and Jacksonville with the results including weeding of the library collections at those campuses, corrections made to library holdings, and better understanding of collection strengths and weaknesses. Planning is underway for physical inventory of Goddard library to begin in FY2015-16. The Assistant Librarian for Information Management is coordinating the physical inventory process.

Good assessment needs both quantitative and qualitative data. In terms of quantitative data, the annual ATS report provides opportunity to the library professional staff to collect data regarding library transactions (circulation and Inter-Library loan), acquisitions, and financial expenditures. Qualitative data is needed to measure how library users (primarily students and faculty) perceive library services and their effectiveness. In FY2011-12, the Senior Librarian conducted a library qualitative evaluation using focus groups made up of key student and faculty groupings. Several important findings emerged including a high degree of appreciation expressed for the personal and professional quality of the library staff, the need for a major revision of the library collection development policy, and needed attention to physical facilities. Key findings and recommendations were summarized in a 14-page report to the library professional staff and the Seminary administration, and the report was used to establish six three-to-five year goals for the libraries.

One of those goals was major revision of the library collection development policy—a task accomplished by the library professional staff during FY2014-15. After extensive conversation among the staff and interaction with the Seminary faculty through divisional discussion, the Seminary administration formally approved a new Collection Management Policy in April 2014. This will now serve as the framework for budgetary decisions related to future acquisitions, both print and electronic.

The qualitative evaluation also confirmed the importance of professionalization of the library staff. In 2007, when the Senior Librarian began work in that role, he was the only individual on the library professional staff who held a professional degree in library science. Since that time through effective hiring and through current staff members finishing professional library degrees, by the time of the upcoming accrediting team visit in 2015, eight of the ten members of the library professional staff will hold earned professional graduate degrees in library science. This has allowed the Gordon-Conwell libraries to serve the Seminary community in ways that demonstrate both professional competence and personal acumen. In the view of the Senior Librarian, the professional development and growth of the library staff has been perhaps the most important accomplishment of the past ten years.

Work on policy development will continue into the second half of the decade. The library professional staff is now developing assessment criteria for measuring the strengths and weaknesses of subject areas within our collections, both print and electronic. Preliminary work on a major archival policy and strategy has begun. In addition, there is need for proper disaster planning for all four campus libraries with the recognition that this planning must be done in the context of each of the Gordon-Conwell campuses.
Self-study recommendation three: That the seminary budget professional development funds for the library professional staff to attend the American Theological Library Association annual convention or other professional development workshops and seminars relevant to their professional role.

4. Library resources and technology: Since 2009, the libraries have made important advances in expanding library technology and access to electronic resources. In addition, the Library and the Seminary Information Technology (IT) departments have developed a strong cooperative and consultative relationship that has significantly improved collaboration between them since 2005. In 2009 the libraries were able to use a Kern Foundation educational technology grant to initiate a full-time Assistant Librarian for Information Management position based in Charlotte but designed to serve all Gordon-Conwell libraries and students enrolled in various degree programs. Proceeds from the grant also allowed us to integrate our disparate library technology into one manageable interface that has greatly increased our ability to deliver electronic services to students and faculty.

The campus libraries utilize TLC, a fully integrated and automated cataloging and circulation system. During the past two years, that system has been integrated with CAMS, the campus management system used by all of the Seminary offices. This integration has allowed for us to update daily contact information for everyone associated with Gordon-Conwell and has saved significant librarian time that was used for manually upgrading information needed to contact students and faculty.

The Seminary libraries have also dramatically expanded their electronic resource holdings with 62 web based databases available to GCTS students and faculty wherever Internet access is available. Alumni have access to some of these databases through an initiative originally sponsored by the American Theological Library Association. The libraries have also added electronic subscriptions to most major print journal subscriptions (when offered) and have made those available to the Seminary through our EZ Proxy server.

Because Gordon-Conwell is a small institution when compared to most colleges and universities, great care is given to initiation of new technologies and resource platforms. With limited financial resources, the Seminary always seeks out proven technologies that are capable of serving well our students and faculty, and that demonstrate the potential for long term usage. Currently, we are investigating a long-term change in our integrated library system and exploring the addition of electronic books to our collections over the next five years. The challenge for the Gordon-Conwell libraries continues to be assessment of the ongoing balance between print and electronic library resources in a way that provides equality of access to all GCTS students and faculty wherever they may be studying or taking courses.

One important aspect of library technology during the past decadal cycle was the publication of the *Atlas of Global Christianity: 1910-2010* in both print and electronic form, and the *World Christian Database* (Brill, online). Published by the Center for the Study of Global Christianity, the sponsor of the CSGC library on the Hamilton campus, the Atlas was published in commemoration of the 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference and the 2010 Lausanne Conference in Cape Town, SA. The Database provides academic and theological libraries around the world with comprehensive coverage of global Christianity and the many forms of Christian expression around the world.

5. Library cooperation: Internally, the Gordon-Conwell libraries share a common catalog, online journals, and electronic databases. The assistant librarian for information management offers frequent support for library staff at all four campuses and with the assistant librarian for reference and
bibliographic instruction works to coordinate continually with the Seminary’s information technology department.

Internal collaboration is mediated by monthly phone meetings among the library professional staff where internal library cooperation and library policies are regularly discussed. Goddard library functions as the main Gordon-Conwell library with the largest of the five library collections and as such, Goddard regularly serves Boston, Jacksonville, and Charlotte students through mailing books directly to students who request them. Goddard also provided cataloging and acquisitions support for the Boston library during 2012-14 while a search for a new Boston library director was completed. Charlotte library staff provided copy cataloging and acquisitions support for the new Jacksonville campus from 2005-10, support which helped the Jacksonville collection grow to over 10,000 volumes.

More internal collaboration needs to be explored in areas such as cataloging standardization, cooperative acquisitions, and interlibrary loan. The new collection management policy developed in 2014 will guide collaborative efforts among the four campus libraries.

In terms of external cooperation, faculty, staff, and students in South Hamilton and Boston enjoy access to the libraries of the Boston Theological Institute (BTI), an ecumenical association of ten theological schools in the Boston area and one of the oldest, largest, and most denominationally/confessionally diverse consortia in North America. In addition to Gordon-Conwell, the BTI is made up of Andover-Newton Theological Seminary, Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, Boston University School of Theology, Episcopal Divinity School, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, Harvard Divinity School, Hebrew College and Rabbinical School, and Saint John’s Seminary. Together, the BTI has aggregate library holdings of over two million volumes. The BTI library catalog is always assessable, and an internal interlibrary loan between the members is serviced by a courier system. During the 2012-13 academic year, Gordon-Conwell’s Hamilton library lent 122 items and borrowed 131 items from within the BTI system.

Harold Lindsell Library in Charlotte is part of the Carolinas Theological Library Consortium (CTLC), an association similar to the BTI in its makeup and services offered. In addition to Gordon-Conwell, members include Reformed Theological Seminary, Union Presbyterian Seminary, Hood Theological Seminary, Gardner-Webb Divinity School, Southern Evangelical Seminary, New Life Theological Seminary, Laurel University, Shepherds Theological Seminary, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and the Jungle Aviation and Radio Service (JAARS). Joint borrowing privileges are provided for students and faculty, and the consortium has aggregate holdings of over 500,000 volumes.

Jacksonville library is a member of the Florida Theological Library Association and has a reciprocal agreement with the Robert E. Webber Institute for Worship Studies located just south of Jacksonville, and cooperative agreements with the Orlando campus of Reformed Theological Seminary and the Thomas G. Carpenter Library at the University of North Florida.

Gordon-Conwell professional librarians are active in each of these consortia and also in the activities of the American Theological Library Association (ATLA). The Lindsell library in Charlotte served as a co-host for the 2013 ATLA convention held in Charlotte, and the senior librarian served as co-chair of the local host committee for that convention. Two members of the library professional staff were selected as participants in the 2013 theological librarians roundtable sponsored by ATLA and Wabash College, and funded with a grant from the Lilly Foundation. In addition, the assistant librarian for reference and bibliographic instruction was selected to participate in the 2014-15 ATLA library directors of the future
program. Increased involvement in ATLA, the professional association of theological librarians, was an important goal met during the 2005-15 accreditation cycle.

Cooperation with the Seminary faculty has increased significantly since 2007 with the establishment of a library subcommittee to the Educational Policies and Practices Committee. The subcommittee meets four times during each academic year and consists of the four library directors and a faculty representative from each of the three faculty divisions. The subcommittee reviews library policies, provides faculty input into the library acquisitions process, and offers faculty feedback regarding curricular matters that impact library operations and procedures.

6. Financial resources and collection growth: Despite financial challenges, the Gordon-Conwell libraries continue to grow and mature. As of 2012-13 fiscal year, the overall print holdings of the combined libraries is 316,021 printed books, 53,090 bound periodical volumes, 502 current print journal and periodical subscriptions, 47,812 microforms, and 4,919 non-book physical items. These holdings represent a 29% increase in print books and a 52% increase in periodical holdings. In addition, electronic databases have dramatically increased as the institution committed more funding to these resources as a result of both the Kern Family Foundation grant in 2009 and a general fund increase in funds for purchases of electronic databases and resources in FY2010-11.

Generally speaking, collecting areas include philosophy of religion, biblical studies, church history, pastoral theology, world missions, leadership studies, urban and ethnic theology and ministry, counseling/psychology, and evangelical Christianity. During the past ten years the number of degree programs has expanded with degrees and concentrations in new areas such as workplace theology, Chinese Christian history and theology, Islamic studies, and Pentecostal studies. The expansion of degree programs and subject concentrations within degree programs means that the libraries must collect in a broader range of subject areas to serve properly Gordon-Conwell students and faculty.

One major addition to our collections has been the addition of a new library to the Gordon-Conwell library system, the library located at the Center for the Study of Global Christianity (GCSC). This library became part of the GCTS libraries in 2007 and contains over 10,000 volumes related to world missions and global Christianity. In addition the library contains over one million documents, many of which formed the research base for the World Christian Encyclopedia (2000) and the Atlas of Global Christianity (2010). Initial cataloging has been done on this collection, but the records need to be updated into full cataloging records in order to provide the necessary bibliographic data for researchers who use the GCSC library. That will take more cataloging and IT support to accomplish. Ultimately, the GCSC library should be moved from its current location to a redesigned Goddard Library where it can be housed in space that will provide easier access for students, faculty, researchers, and librarians.

Growth in special collections has continued even though facilities at Goddard Library have not been adequate for housing, organizing, cataloging, and managing them. Goddard library holds the Berkshire Adventual, John Bunyan, and Harold John Ockenga collections as well as the library of the Center for the Study of Global Christianity (CSCG). While these collections are recognized to be part of Goddard Library, lack of physical space within the library means that the Ockenga and CSCG collections must be located at other places on the South Hamilton campus. This makes managing those collections more difficult for the library professional staff. Lindsell library holds four special collections—the Robert C. Cooley Collection in Biblical Archaeology and Early Christianity, the Ben Witherington Collection in Biblical Studies, the David A. Dean Collection in Eschatology, and the SIM Collection of World Missions and Intercultural Studies.
Part of the maturation of the Gordon-Conwell libraries’ collections has taken place at the policy level. Since 2010, the Lindsell (Charlotte) and Jackson (Boston) campus libraries have undergone a full physical inventory of their holdings. The Jacksonville library will be inventoried in 2015, and Goddard library will begin a rotating process of inventorying the collection in 2015 as well. The long out-of-date collection development policy (1994) has been replaced with a new collection management policy that takes into account advances in library and educational technology, the increasing globalized nature of theological education, and the growing complexity of Gordon-Conwell as a multi-campus institution with diverse educational programs. With the advent of this new collection management policy (see Appendix), the library professional staff are in process of developing guidelines to assess the strengths and weakness of the collections as well as cull the collection of volumes that are little used. The future emphasis for the libraries will be on supporting the curricular needs of the Seminary as opposed to development of an extensive research library (a change from the older 1994 policy).

Fiscally, the overall spending on the collection has remained relatively flat over the last ten years, and decreased significantly since the 2008 recession in the United States. Moneys spent over the last five years are illustrative of this trend. In 2004-05, $85,000 was spent on the print collection. In response to recommendations from the last accreditation review, the print purchasing budget was increased significantly to $106,562 (a 20% increase). A slight increase was allowed for the next two fiscal years, resulting in an expenditure of $113,160 on print holdings for the 2007-08 fiscal year. With the economic downturn, however, the moneys spent in FY2008-09 decreased dramatically. In FY08-09, we saw an 18% decrease which was compounded in FY09-10 with a 23% decrease in spending at $78,161 on print resources ($6,939 less than what was spent in FY2004-05). At the time of the last ATS annual report in FY12-13, the libraries spent $74,828, which overall equals a 14% decrease from the amount spent in FY2004-05. When this drop in spending is considered in light of the increasing costs of print materials, the potential damage to the collection is compounded. In 2005, the average cost per book according to Yankee Book Peddler (YBP) was $66.11, while in 2013 the reported cost per book was $87.68. Thus, this book costs have raised 24% from FY2004-05 to FY12-13 while at the same time, the libraries expenditures for print books have decreased by 14%.

This decrease has been somewhat offset by increases in moneys allocated for electronic databases and journals/periodicals, although after an initial increase from $32,000 to $60,000 in FY10-11, allocations have slightly increased to approximately $70,000 for FY13-14 although as indicated by Figure 1-2, the calculating those allocations changed slightly as online subscriptions to print journals were reclassified into this category.

[Note: two graphs are being prepared to illustrate print and electronic resource trends from 2007-13.]

7. Archival and Special Collections: Gordon-Conwell has been blessed with a rich collection of rare book and archival resources. Goddard Library is home to several valuable collections that are of significance to the historical and theological study of American Evangelicalism by students, faculty, and researchers. Collections connected with Goddard Library include:

a. Harold John Ockenga collection: Books, papers, sermons, and correspondence from a major mid-twentieth century scholar and leader responsible for the evangelical resurgence in the aftermath of World War II.

b. David Barrett personal papers: Manuscripts and papers from the author and compiler of the World Christian Encyclopedia.

d. Rare book collection: Special collection of rare Bibles, books, and additional items, some dating back several hundred years.


f. Walter C. Kaiser personal papers: Personal papers and manuscripts from the third president of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

f. Richard Lovelace personal papers: Personal papers from the past professor of church history at GCTS.

g. H. Stewart Gray archives:

h. Lamont sermon acquisition: Eight boxes of sermon notes and 18 boxes of books.

i. Baraca Philathea: Assorted boxes of records, books, memorabilia, and assorted boxes of materials.

g. John Bunyan Pilgrim’s Progress collection: Over six hundred published editions of Pilgrim’s Progress, some rare.

h. Gordon-Conwell Institutional Archives: Historical and financial papers and materials from the over 100 year history of Gordon-Conwell before and after the 1969 merger.

Unfortunately these collections remain scattered across the Hamilton campus and have received little attention in the past 10 to 20 years. Faculty, administration, and library staff have had conversation regarding the archival collections during the past two years and there is recognition among the stakeholders that this matter needs to be addressed. The library professional staff has designated as one of its six three-year 2014-17 goals.

Lindsell Library in Charlotte also houses four special collections that include:

1. The Robert C. Cooley Collection in Biblical Archaeology and Early Christianity:

2. The Ben Withering Biblical Studies Collection

3. The SIM Collection in World Missions and Intercultural Studies:

4. The David A. Dean Collection in Eschatological Studies

These collections have come to the Lindsell Library over the past 12 years and almost all books in these four collections have been cataloged and shelved. The Witherington Collection also includes over 20 boxes of biblical and theological journals and two cabinets of papers and manuscripts currently housed in the first floor of the library. Projected building plans provide space for these collections to be located in a single room with ample space for faculty, students, and researchers to use them for research purposes.
Self-study recommendation four: Gordon-Conwell holds valuable archival and special collections especially in the history of American Evangelicalism. We recommend that over the next accreditation decadal cycle, the libraries and the institution arrange for the cataloging, housing, and availability of the Seminary’s archives and special collections so that they are readily available for the research needs of academic researchers, historians, faculty, and students.