

Proposal to Become an ASERL Center of Excellence
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Introduction

Joyner Library, East Carolina University has been a selective federal depository library since 1951. As we approach our 60th anniversary as a depository, the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) is in a state of flux. The combination of online access to federal publications and limited library resources has rendered the future of the FDLP uncertain.

In response to this situation, the federal depository libraries belonging to the Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL) have created the Collaborative Federal Documents Program (CFDP). The goal of the CFDP is to create two complete distributed collections of all print publications made available via the FDLP. The mechanism for doing this is to have individual ASERL depository libraries, both regionals and selectives, agree to serve as Center of Excellence (COE) for a particular agency and/or a particular subject. A COE is required to maintain at least one tangible copy of every publication for the agency or subject in question; all of its materials must be cataloged; it must provide expert reference service for its collection; and it must make its collection available as a resource for the entire region. As of now, there are three Centers of Excellence in ASERL as part of the CFDP: the University of Florida (Panama Canal Commission); University of Kentucky (Works Progress Administration); and University of South Carolina (Dept. of Education).

As an ASERL member with one of the largest depository collections in North Carolina, it is imperative that East Carolina University fully participate in the CFDP. Joyner Library's Federal Documents Stacks currently hold approximately 200,000 volumes. This collection is an invaluable repository of primary source documents on the history of the United States in the second half of the 20th century.

Joyner Library's federal publications holdings include approximately 250 published hearings and committee prints from the House of Representatives' Committee on Unamerican Activities (HUAC). Among these hearings are testimonies of Soviet defectors, contemporary analyses of Communism, and committee hearings on alleged Communist influence in the motion picture industry, and various other industries and geographic locales. Also in the collection are about 60 hearings from HUAC's successor, the House Committee on Internal Security (HCIS), which existed from 1969-1975. These documents are tremendous primary sources on the history of the Cold War and 20th Century

America and tie in perfectly with the library's J. Edgar Hoover Collection on International Communism. They have already been cataloged due to their historical value. Finally, as a retrospective collection, room for growth is not a concern.

For all of the above reasons, it is thus recommended that Joyner Library, East Carolina University agree to become an ASERL Center of Excellence for House Un-American Activities Committee/House Committee on Internal Security publications.

Implementation Needs

1. Filling Gaps in the Collection

As a COE, Joyner Library would be required to eventually have at least one copy of all print publications from HUAC and HCIS. According to the Monthly Catalog of U.S. Government Publications, 1895-1976 (http://media.lib.ecu.edu/erdb/erdb_description.cfm?id=608), there were a total of 452 volumes assigned the HUAC SuDoc stem (Y 4.Un 1/2) and 76 volumes published with the HCIS stem (Y 4.In 8.15). This means we would need to acquire approximately 200 HUAC volumes and 15 HCIS items in order to complete our collection. This would primarily be done by the use of needs and offers lists, either through the FDLP or through ASERL. Once obtained, these items will need to be fully cataloged, housed, and given archival-level preservation work, as needed.

2. Cataloging

As noted above, our current HUAC/HCIS holdings have already been cataloged. However, as we fill the gaps in our collection, newly obtained items will also need to be cataloged. The main cataloging priority, however, will be assigning a special Collection Code and I-Type to the COE collection, because it will likely have a distinct physical location and different circulation policy than does Joyner Documents Stacks.

3. Physical Storage

The proposed COE collection of HUAC should, when complete, amount to less than 1,000 documents. Even if publications from related bodies, such as the Senate Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on Internal Security/Security and Terrorism, are included, this number will not change substantially. This collection will almost certainly need to be separated from the main Documents Stacks

collection. The COE collection may need to be closed stack, due to its status as an archival resource for the entire region.

4. Access

One of the key questions surrounding the proposed HUAC/HCIS COE collection is that of access. As noted above, this collection is designed to serve as an archival resource. At the same time, it must also be available for the use of the ECU, eastern North Carolina and ASERL communities. One main issue is whether or not COE items should circulate. Making HUAC/HCIS volumes non-circulating would help preserve and protect a vital primary source collection. At the same time, it would also limit use of the collection. The same dilemma applies to the question of whether the COE collection should be open or closed stack. One possible compromise would be to make the collection open stack and allow items to circulate to ECU users, but not in response to ILL requests. For the latter, we could rely on digitization on demand instead of shipping the physical item.

5. Digitization & Preservation

Under the terms of the ASERL CFDP, digitization of COE materials is encouraged, but not required. While not an immediate priority, we would almost certainly want to digitize our HUAC/HCIS collection over the long-term. This would help resolve some of the access dilemmas. In the meantime, we could digitize items requested via ILL as an alternative to sending the physical item. All current and future items in the COE collection will need long-term, archival-level preservation work done as needed.

6. Reference Assistance

Standard reference assistance with the COE collection would be performed from the Reference Desk. In-depth inquiries would be referred to the Federal Documents Librarian. The Documents Librarian will be required to have a basic knowledge of the collection, and of HUAC/HCIS, the Cold War and American history from 1930-1990.

Conclusion

By agreeing to become an ASERL Center of Excellence for House Un-American Activities Committee/House Committee on Internal Security publications, East Carolina University can play a major role in an important regional initiative; preserve and promote a vital set of primary source historical materials; and emphasize the importance and continued relevance of its depository library collection.