

## PART 1 – POLICY

### I. Collection Overview

- a. A collection's contents should encourage questioning. At the Global Center for Art Historians (GCAH), promoting academic stimulus and learning is at the heart of our facility and community. Our collection includes artwork of particular historical significance, including; paintings (watercolor, oil, acrylic, etc.), illustrations (ink, pastel, graphite, charcoal, etc.), sculpture (particular focus on limestone and granite), books (original artist notebooks and books published by artists), and inventions (prototypes and mock-ups). Collections are pertinent to each of the 15 facilities' worldwide locations, and each object is intended to preserve local, cultural histories. Due to the nature in variety and size of GCAH's collections, consistent and thorough weeding is performed on an ongoing basis.

### II. Weeding Methods

- a. Citation Analysis
  - i. The GCAH serves a global community of researchers and art history students. A continuing analysis will take place which involves surveying bibliographies and published papers to evaluate the frequency and number of objects which are referenced within the collections. Because the GCAH values physical objects without emphasis on digitizing, those performing weeding cannot rely on transaction log/web log analysis. Instead, weeding staff will compile bibliographies from universities in the area – including undergraduate papers, dissertations, and professor research – as well as bibliographies from published research studies.
  - ii. In addition to studying published and unpublished papers by researchers of all kinds, the GCAH will evaluate the frequency and types of objects that are requested to be seen by local institutions. In the event that students and historians are unable to consult a specific GCAH location, request to view an item digitally can be written and submitted. Requests for viewing are strictly kept in a log – items that have not been requested or visited in-person will be weeded out of the collection every 5 years.
- b. Expert Consultations
  - i. In order to reserve room for the most historically significant objects, a team of experts will be cycled throughout each location. These consultants are hired through a strict evaluation of scholarly knowledge from multiple backgrounds in art history research. With this variety of knowledge, experts are able to note objects and subjects which are underrepresented or missing. Expert consultations are utilized for three important purposes; to fill "gaps" in order to promote well-rounded research, note and address redundancies, and ensure that each collection is the most up-to-date and pertinent.

### III. Process & Procedure

- a. Frequency
  - i. Without proper weeding coordination, collections (and specifically those of the GCAH) run the risk of disposing the last copy held. History – in contrast to more modern and rapidly-progressing areas of study, like computer science – is, by nature, weeded less frequently. The weeding methods listed in Section II will be scheduled and heavily monitored. Citation analysis will be done on an on-going basis by surveying papers and bibliographies. Expert Consultations will occur twice per year, with a team of consultants developed for each location. As mentioned in the GCAH Collection Development Policy (CDP), the COO of

each GCAH location will commiserate quarterly to appraise objects which have been designated as no longer valuable to each collection. During these meetings, analysis from the citations and consultations will be compiled and evaluated for usefulness. Only after this entire process is completed will an object be withdrawn, discarded, or transferred (see subsection c.).

- b. CREW & MUSTIE
  - i. The GCAH collections follow two commonly used methods of weeding: CREW (Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding) and MUSTIE (Misleading, Ugly, Superseded, Trivial, Irrelevant, and Elsewhere). As mentioned above, deaccession of each collection is part of the review which occurs continuously. Expert Consultations will specifically evaluate the Misleading, Superseded, and Irrelevant/Trivial aspects of the collections. With their expertise in various historical research, these consultants maintain knowledge of the most accurate information (e.g. if a translated Greek text has been revised by a linguist) and are able to distinguish an object that is not relevant to empirical research. Though delusive, the “ugly” portion of MUSTIE generally refers to objects which cannot be restored beyond a poor physical condition. A team of conservationists is employed at each location, however an object will be considered for weeding if it does not hold a sentimental value outside of its poor condition. Elsewhere also applies to the GCAH – if an object or one similar is represented at another GCAH location, that object will be considered for transfer.
- c. Withdrawal vs. Transfer
  - i. Withdrawal, transfer, and disposal are the final three considerations once an object is deemed no longer valuable to a location’s collection. Withdrawal and disposal differ in method – withdrawal of an object typically does not mean the object will be disposed of. Instead, items considered for withdrawal will be donated to museums, libraries, charities, universities, and the like. If withdrawn objects are not accepted by any of the designated institutions, they will be disposed of. Disposal of objects follow a strict adherence to legality and discretion. The GCAH understands the importance of preserving history, and simultaneously considers spreading inaccurate, superseded, or unrecoverable information. Additionally, objects will be transferred to another GCAH location if they best fit the area intended. For example, if a sculpture held at a GCAH facility in France is discovered to have actually been Roman, it would be transferred to the Italy location. Transfers will be initiated by Expert Consultations.

#### IV. Criteria & Format

- a. Criteria for all GCAH collections follows the CDP. Material must contain art-historical significance, prove strong academic research quality, align with the GCAH mission, and adhere to provenance. Objects within collections that do not follow these criteria will be considered for weeding.
- b. Although age of materials is typically considered for weeding collections, historical documents and objects held at GCAH locations can date as early as 25,000 B.C.E. Therefore, age of an object will not be a criterion for weeding – it will only serve as a supplement to proving the unrecoverable condition of a deteriorated piece of art.
- c. Expert Consultations and quarterly COO meetings will address redundancies. Because each location is unique, collections both within facilities and throughout all locations must not contain repeated objects or reproduction of originals. The GCAH will not accept and will withdraw objects that are a recreation of an original artwork, unless deemed historically valuable by a consultant.

- d. Physical Condition
  - i. Paintings – must be a complete, whole piece. If partially assembled or not completed, painting must be deemed valuable by Expert Consultations
  - ii. Illustration – does not need to be a clear, legible document only if illustration is part of an artist’s historical life or pertinent to their respective completed artwork (e.g. Leonardo DaVinci’s notebooks)
  - iii. Sculpture – sculpture can and most likely will have missing pieces; however, it must be mostly intact and readable as intended by the artist
  - iv. Books/Documents/Manuscripts – does not need to be fully intact or readable. For the preservation of space, paper materials will be strictly evaluated for historical research and value. Must be related to or created by a well-known artist of the specific GCAH location
  - v. Inventions – includes prototypes and mock-ups. Must contain all pieces original to creation. Item will be considered for weeding if missing components from original
  - vi. Other – GCAH accepts objects outside of those listed above; however, objects must follow the criteria listed in the CDP referenced in subsection a. as well as be recoverable and preservable by conservationists
- V. Staff Responsibilities
  - a. CREW will be performed by all on-floor staff as part of daily duties. On-floor staff excludes conservationists, art handlers, and customer service employees. On-floor staff works closely with collections to ensure proper daily care of objects, collaborate to form a comprehensive and clear exhibit layout, and act as facility managers. Only this designation of employees can perform CREW and note objects for weeding approval. Other staff members are encouraged to bring attention to MUSTIE objects, but cannot make the final weeding decision. Expert Consultants are not considered full-time employees of GCAH locations, but receive data from on-floor staffs’ citation analysis and viewing requests. Consultants take this data and make further decisions, coupled with their own scholarly opinions, outline of weeding criteria, and format of GCAH holdings. Consultants then submit their weeding proposals to the COO of each location for review. The COO receives a summary of citation analysis and viewing requests as well as consultants’ view of the collection to make the next decision. During the quarterly weeding meeting, all data and analysis is compiled for all locations to make final and official decisions for withdrawal, transfer, and disposal.

## PART 2 – STATEMENT

At the Global Center for Art Historians, learning, curiosity, and research are at the forefront. In order to maintain valuable collections for empirical art history research, weeding and deaccessioning is an ongoing process for all GCAH locations. Our weeding policy closely follows the Collection Development Policy, outlining the institution’s mission, values, and goals. Each GCAH location strives to promote the most accurate and culturally significant artwork throughout history, which is why a continuous evaluation of holdings is part of the everyday routine. With GCAH’s 15 unique global locations, weeding processes must be thoroughly coordinated and strictly adhered to. Each location’s on-floor staff performs citation analyses and bibliographical surveys, which are transferred to our Expert Consultants. These consultants – extensively trained in scholarly art historical research – receive such data and consider redundant, irrelevant, outdated, missing, and/or misleading information in each collection. This continuous process ensures that we provide our communities with not only the most significant pieces of art history, but the best and most thorough view of the world’s culture.

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The weeding process is critical to libraries and collections worldwide, yet goes mostly unnoticed. Because the GCAH serves local communities, it is important to educate these communities about the natural deaccession process of library and museum holdings. Though disposal will be done discreetly, withdrawal and transfer will be outlined in a clear, positive manner. Community outreach in the form of social media, workshops, and educational lectures will assist in educating GCAH patrons and viewers in the necessary process of withdrawal. Users will be reminded that once an object leaves a facility, it may still be findable through another GCAH location or separate institution, such as a museum or library. We understand the intrinsic and sentimental value of art and do our best to preserve it. Sometimes, however, we need to get rid of some stuff.