

Guidelines for Curriculum Materials Centers

Approved by ACRL and ALA, January 2003

Revised July 2008 and July 2017

INTRODUCTION

Curriculum materials centers (CMCs) are essential to the instructional and research needs of students and faculty in programs preparing educators for preschool through 12th grade (P-12) schools. These guidelines describe essential elements of administration, services, collections, and access for curriculum materials centers in all university and college settings.

These guidelines are intended for administrators at all levels of post-secondary education, particularly education deans or department chairs; library deans or directors; librarians responsible for curriculum materials centers; and accrediting and licensure agencies.

ABOUT THE GUIDELINES

Curriculum materials centers have been present in libraries and in departments, schools, or colleges of education as resources to support educators since the early part of the twentieth century. Calls for standards for CMCs have been made almost from those beginnings. Since these centers have developed from a variety of origins and may serve many different groups and needs, providing guidelines for such centers has been a challenge.

In 1999, the Education and Behavioral Sciences Section of the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) suggested the formation of an ad hoc committee to develop standards or guidelines for curriculum materials centers. An informal survey of state education agencies and accrediting bodies was conducted by the Curriculum Materials Committee to determine if such standards already existed. None was found. In 2000, the committee was formed and charged with "developing published standards or guidelines for curriculum materials centers in the areas of, but not limited to, collection, services, management, budget, personnel, and facilities."

These guidelines were reviewed by the ACRL Standards and Accreditation Committee and approved by the Board of Directors of ACRL at the 2003 Midwinter Meeting of the American Library Association in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and revised by the Curriculum Materials Committee in 2008.

In 2015-2016, the Curriculum Materials Committee of EBSS revised the Guidelines for Curriculum Materials Centers. The committee membership included Regina Pauly, Faith Steele, Rachel Cannady, V Dozier, Margaret Gregor, Deidra Herring, Sheila Kirven, Lorna Lueck, Amanda Melilli, Karen Reed, James Rosenzweig, Dee Simms, Linda Teel, and Pam Werre.

TERMS USED

1. **Curriculum materials** are educational resources that provide curriculum and instructional experiences for preschool through 12th grade (P-12) students. These materials are used by educators to develop curricula and lesson plans and may also be used in actual instructional situations with P-12 students. These materials also provide information for those conducting research.
2. **Curriculum materials center (CMC)** refers to a physical location of a curriculum materials collection. Curriculum materials centers are often housed in a main campus library, a branch library building, or in an academic building housing the campus education academic programs. Curriculum materials centers (CMCs) may also be referred to as curriculum labs, instructional materials labs, instructional materials centers, etc. Curriculum materials centers will be the official name used in this document.
3. **CMC users** are education students and faculty, and may also include P-12 educators, other students, and community members as defined by the CMC's mission.
4. **Director** refers to the librarian who has primary responsibility for the CMC, including its facilities, administration, collection, personnel, and services.

ADMINISTRATION

Mission/Goals

The CMC should have a written mission statement with articulated goals that reflect these guidelines and accreditation standards. This mission statement should be posted prominently on the CMC website.

1. **COLLABORATION:** The mission statement, goal setting, and planning should be jointly developed by the CMC director, CMC librarians and staff, an administrator from the unit to which the CMC administratively reports, and faculty representatives from the college or department of education.
2. **REVIEW:** The mission statement and goals should be regularly reviewed and updated as needed.
3. **COMPLIANCE:** Goal setting should follow the *Guidelines for Curriculum Materials Centers* and appropriate accreditation standards.
4. **ALIGNMENT:** Values and vision statements should be created to reflect the institutional vision statement and strategic plan.
5. **ASSESSMENT:** The values and vision statement, mission statement, and goals should be assessed on a regular and ongoing basis.

Budget

The CMC should have a budget that adequately supports its mission, the institution's education curricula, and the research needs of education faculty/students, CMC personnel, practicing educators, and members of the community.

1. **FUNDING RESPONSIBILITY:** The CMC director and the administrator(s) responsible for budgeting for the unit to which the CMC administratively reports should jointly plan the CMC budget.
2. **FUNDING LEVEL:** The CMC budget should be adequate to ensure compliance with state department of education and other accrediting bodies' standards, college/department of education program needs, as well as guidelines in this document in the areas of collection, facilities, services, and personnel. It should be reflective of the college of education or department of education enrollment.
3. **FUNDING SOURCE:** The CMC budget should be funded as part of the unit under which the CMC is administered. This budget does not preclude additional funding from other units or sources.
4. **ADMINISTRATION:** The CMC budget should be administered by the CMC director.

Personnel

The CMC staff should include a director and staff sufficient to maintain the CMC and all services.

1. **DIRECTOR:** The CMC director should have a master's degree from an ALA-accredited program or equivalent and have preparation in curriculum development, teaching methodology, media, and technology. The director should be assigned no less than half time to the management of the CMC.
2. **PROFESSIONAL STAFF:** The professional staff may include, but not be limited to, librarians and technology specialists.
3. **SUPPORT STAFF:** The CMC should have sufficient support staff to maintain the CMC and all its functions. The support staff may consist of paraprofessionals, technology specialists, or clerical aides, with at least one being a permanent staff member, and graduate and student assistants. Support staff should have sufficient training to provide a basic level of assistance to CMC users or refer users as appropriate.
4. **CONTINUING EDUCATION:** The CMC director and staff should have regular opportunities for continuing education so that the CMC reflects current trends in curriculum materials and technology. Continuing education opportunities should extend to support staff as needed.

Facilities

The CMC should be a distinct facility that provides for effective use of its resources.

1. **LOCATION:** The CMC should be in proximity to the education holdings of the college or university library, or alternatively it should be in the building that houses the college/department of education. The location should be completely accessible as detailed in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
2. **HOURS:** If housed in the college or university library, The CMC should be open the hours of that facility's operation. If housed separately, or with the college/department of education, it should be open enough hours to meet the needs of its users. Evening and weekend hours should be included if needed.
3. **SIZE:** The size of the public area of the facility should be adequate to comfortably hold all materials, associated equipment, user study areas, and workstations. Room for collection growth should be available. Staff workspace should be adequate to complete work activities efficiently and effectively, including technical library functions, when necessary.

4. **SEATING:** There should be enough seating in the CMC to allow users to work individually or collaboratively. Sufficient seating should be available to accommodate the students in an average-sized class in the teacher education program. A variety of seating types may be available, including, but not limited to study tables, carrels, and lounge seating. If the CMC will be used by small children, appropriately sized seating for them may also be available.
5. **MAINTENANCE:** The facility should be maintained in such a way as to ensure the security and safety of materials, staff, and users. There should be an adequate number of electrical connections and computer ports to meet user and staff needs.
6. **CLASSROOM:** The CMC should have its own classroom or have a convenient space available for formal instruction. This classroom, or its equivalent, should have adequate seating for the average-sized class in the teacher education program. It should be equipped with technology appropriate for demonstration and if possible, hands-on practice of digital and media resources for teaching
7. **TECHNOLOGY:** The CMC should provide access to educational technologies that primarily support the institution's teacher preparation program and certification requirements.

Marketing

The CMC should have a plan for marketing its services and collection. Promotion should be directed toward all CMC user groups and stakeholders and should include both formal and informal means.

1. **WEB PRESENCE:** A Web presence should be used to market the CMC and should be linked to and from the library website and the education college/department website. The website should include, but not be limited to, the values and vision statement, the mission statement and goals of the CMC, the resources and services of the CMC and links to appropriate teaching resources, course guides, databases, and curriculum materials sites to include teaching activities, standards, children's literature, publishers, etc. Social media should be used to promote the services and resources of the CMC.
2. **PRINTED BROCHURES/GUIDES:** CMC brochures/guides should be available in the library publicity area, the college/department of education office area, and appropriate distance locations.
3. **INFORMAL CAMPUS CONTACTS:** The CMC director should make use of faculty liaison activities mentioned in this document to informally promote the CMC.
4. **SCHOOL CONTACTS:** The CMC should be promoted to appropriate personnel in local schools/districts.
5. **PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS:** CMC professional marketing to state, regional, and national associations and accrediting bodies is encouraged.

Assessment

The CMC should have an assessment plan in place for evaluating the achievement of its mission and goals.

1. **PLAN:** The plan should measure how well the CMC is meeting its goals and objectives relative to its collection, administration, facilities, and service.
2. **FREQUENCY:** The evaluation should take place on a periodic basis.

3. **METHODOLOGY:** The method used could be accomplished through data collection and analysis such as focus groups, surveys, questionnaires, and/or other evaluation strategies and should include participation by all user groups. (See Appendix I)
4. **RESULTS:** The results of the evaluation should be recorded and used in reviewing the viability of the current goals and objectives with changes being made where appropriate.

Resources

A variety of published materials related to the management and assessment of CMCs are available and should be consulted regularly. (See Appendix II)

SERVICES

Reference

The CMC staff should provide reference service to its users.

1. **DELIVERY OF SERVICE:** Reference service should be available during all hours the CMC is open, and may include face-to-face, telephone, digital, or other appropriate methods of delivery.
2. **STAFF:** CMC staff should be trained to conduct an effective reference interview. They should also have knowledge of the CMC's collection and of external resources in order to provide both ready-reference and in-depth research assistance. CMC student assistants should be knowledgeable about the CMC collection and be trained to provide basic assistance. A professional librarian located in an adjacent area may be called on if the CMC is not otherwise staffed.

Instruction

The CMC should have a program for instruction in the use of curriculum-related resources.

1. **COLLABORATION:** The instruction program should be developed in collaboration with education faculty, librarians, and others as appropriate.
2. **SETTING:** Instruction may take place within the CMC, in the classroom, or in a virtual environment.
3. **DELIVERY:** Instruction, both in-person and virtual, should include all appropriate techniques such as guides, lectures, web pages, tutorials, bibliographies, workshops, orientations, tours, and point of need instruction.
4. **CONTENT:** Instruction should include research strategies and the selection and evaluation of resources, as well as the use of the CMC collection, services, and instructional technology.
5. **ASSESSMENT:** Formal and informal methods of assessment for instructional effectiveness should be implemented. Consideration should be given to the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) standards, and other related state and national standards as appropriate.

Faculty Liaison

The CMC staff should seek out and maintain professional contact with teacher education instructional units and with individual faculty members.

1. **FACULTY CONTACT:** Faculty contact should be maintained through both formal and informal means, including, but not limited to, telephone, digital communication, attendance at faculty meetings, instruction sessions, and specialized programming.
2. **ACCREDITING BODIES:** CMC staff should prepare documentation for visiting accrediting organizations as needed and requested.
3. **COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT:** In collaboration with faculty, CMC staff should develop the CMC collection to meet instructional and curriculum materials research needs of both faculty and students.

Distance and Virtual Learning

The CMC should have a program for serving distance and virtual learning users.

1. **COLLABORATION:** The distance and virtual learning programs should be developed in collaboration with teaching faculty, librarians, and others as appropriate.
2. **USERS:** Distance and virtual learning users should include distance and/or virtual learning faculty and students, whether courses are offered in an off-campus classroom, teleconferencing, online, or other means.
3. **SERVICES:** Services offered should be equivalent to services at the main campus and should include reference, instruction, and access to CMC materials.
4. **DELIVERY:** Distance learning services should be provided by various means as appropriate. Digital means are particularly well suited to off-campus situations and should be used to their best advantage. Digital delivery options include, but are not limited to: web pages, CMC online catalog, online CMC instruction, email/ mailing lists, online discussion groups, and access/subscriptions to online databases. Other means should be used as appropriate and may include librarian visits to off-campus classrooms, interlibrary loan, document delivery, and agreements with other libraries/CMCs.

Outreach

The CMC may offer outreach services.

1. **USERS:** Users may include students from other universities, P-12 educators, those who homeschool, and other community members.
2. **SERVICES:** Services may include on-site and virtual tours, exhibits, speakers, continuing education opportunities, or other activities that meet the needs of the users.
3. **DELIVERY:** Policies regarding delivery of services and access to resources should be in agreement with the appropriate governing unit(s).

Production

The CMC may provide modern, high quality equipment and supplies to meet user needs for production of instructional materials.

1. **EQUIPMENT:** The equipment provided for production should allow users to create instructional materials like those currently being used in schools, utilizing both traditional and emerging technologies and knowledge creation centers. The equipment should be kept updated, well maintained, and in sufficient quantity to meet typical demand levels.
2. **SUPPLIES:** Supplies necessary for production of instructional materials may be provided to users, either for free or on a cost-recovery basis and in sufficient quantity to meet demands.
3. **SUPPORT:** CMC staff should provide ideas and basic assistance to users, although the responsibility for creating materials remains with the users.

Collection

General Characteristics

The CMC collection supports the institution's teacher education curriculum with an organized collection of current and high quality educational materials created for use with P-12 students and adult education materials that should include content for diverse populations and/or multilingual speakers when appropriate.

1. **SELECTION:** The selection of curriculum materials should be the responsibility of a professional librarian specifically charged with building the curriculum materials collection.
2. **COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY:** The CMC should have a written collection development policy, as described in the policy section of these guidelines.
3. **ORGANIZATION:** The CMC collection should be organized in accordance with current national standards and practices, as described in the access section of these guidelines.
4. **LOCATION:** All of the collection should be available in the CMC and online when appropriate.
5. **SIZE:** The size of the CMC collection should be sufficient to meet the needs of its users, as well as to ensure compliance with state department of education standards.
6. **FORMAT:** These resources should represent a variety of formats including print, non-print, and digital. The CMC should consider current practices of purchasing e-content (i.e. e-books, databases, e-book readers, etc.) to maximize access to the collection in support of users.
7. **FUNDING LEVEL:** Funding level for collection materials should reflect the enrollment of education majors and pre-service teachers in comparison to other majors within the institution.

Collection Categories

The CMC should collect materials in both print and digital formats, including, but not limited to, textbooks, curriculum guides, children's literature, professional literature, reference materials, education periodicals, media materials, educational tests and measures, and digital content including linkage to open access materials.

1. **TEXTBOOKS:** Current textbooks in all major P-12 curricular subjects should be collected. Several publishers should be represented for each grade level in major curriculum areas. This collection may reflect the texts used in the public schools in the region, and schools in which the teacher education students receive field placements. The scope and depth of each subject area should depend upon each institution's needs.
2. **CURRICULUM GUIDES/COURSES OF STUDY:** P-12 curriculum guides should be collected annually on the local, state, and national levels. All major curriculum areas should be represented, with emphasis on the certification programs of the college/department of education of the institution.
3. **CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE:** This collection should include fiction, nonfiction, picture books, folk and fairy tales, plays, poetry, and graphic novels appropriate for preschool through grade twelve. The collection should be consistent with the recommendations of standard reviewing tools and include annual acquisition of award books and books from various notable book lists.
4. **PROFESSIONAL MATERIALS:** Professional teaching materials that provide ideas and activities for lesson planning and curricular development should be collected. All major curriculum areas and grade levels should be represented in accordance with the needs of the college/department of education. The CMC should consider acquiring materials that support state policies or institutions participating in the building of portfolios for teacher assessment and evaluation.
5. **REFERENCE MATERIALS:** Current reference materials, in print and digital formats, should be acquired. These include materials related to other resources in the CMC (children's literature indexes and bibliographies, educational software directories, etc.), as well as reference works intended for use by children and young adults.
6. **P-12 AND PROFESSIONAL PERIODICALS:** Periodicals including digital formats, intended for use by children and young adults should be included. Professional education periodicals that provide teaching ideas and review curriculum materials should also be represented.
7. **MEDIA MATERIALS:** A variety of formats, such as video and sound recordings streaming media and other digital content, should be acquired.
8. **INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS:** A range of curriculum concepts, skills, topics, and trends in P-12 curricula should be represented. Materials collected may include instructional games, posters, kits, models, maps, puppets, manipulatives, etc.
9. **TESTS:** Educational tests and measures that support education courses may be collected.
10. **WEB RESOURCES:** The CMC website should include links to the vast array of online resources available to teaching professionals for lesson planning and curricular development.

Collection Development Policy

The CMC should provide a written collection development policy that guides the selection and acquisition of materials.

1. **MISSION STATEMENT:** The policy should reflect and support the mission of the CMC.

2. **USERS:** The policy should include a statement concerning those served by the CMC and the extent of that service.
3. **COLLABORATION:** The policy should be developed in collaboration with the education faculty.
4. **OBJECTIVES:** The policy should identify the scope and objectives of the collection.
5. **FORMAT:** The policy should identify the formats in which materials are to be collected.
6. **TOOLS AND CRITERIA:** The policy should identify selection tools, criteria, and processes to be used in choosing materials.
7. **CATEGORIES AND BALANCE:** The policy should set forth the categories in which materials will be collected, such as textbooks, media materials, digital and print periodicals, etc., and give guidance for allocating budget resources among the categories.
8. **COMPLIANCE:** The policy should address compliance with state standards and appropriate treatment of gender, racial, ethnic, and cultural issues. The policy should address maintenance of a collection of historical or niche materials for research and teaching purposes.

9. **MAINTENANCE AND WEEDING:** The policy should address regular maintenance of the collection and weeding as appropriate.

ACCESS

Access concerns the preparation, organization, retrieval, and circulation of CMC resources. These resources may be accessed physically or digitally. The cataloging and processing functions can be considered technical services work, while the retrieval and circulation functions may be considered under the public services domain.

Preparation

The CMC collection will be cataloged and processed to promote easy access to its resources.

Cataloging

Cataloging of CMC collections observes standards and guidelines that are unique to that setting, to reflect the ways in which CMC collections are expected to be used.

1. **DESCRIPTION AND SUBJECTS:** The physical description of items should follow currently accepted models, including uniform information (title, author, etc.) and subject headings.
2. **CLASSIFICATION:** The call numbers used for the arrangement of materials should follow the latest, most current edition of a nationally accepted classification scheme (e.g. Dewey Decimal or Library of Congress). The call numbers can be adapted to suit the local needs of the CMC.
3. **PROFESSIONAL STAFF:** Materials processed in-house should be cataloged by a professional librarian.

Processing

Processing for CMC materials, especially for unique items (kits, oversized materials, etc.), often requires repackaging, to maintain the utility and durability of the materials.

1. **PRESERVATION:** Resources should be processed with the appropriate reinforcement to maximize the amount of circulation transactions possible for the life of the items.
2. **ITEM LABELING:** Collection items should be clearly and consistently labeled to promote easy retrieval from item locations.
3. **SECURITY:** Theft detection devices should be used whenever possible. The cost of security devices should be included in the CMC budget.
4. **INTEGRITY OF UNIT:** Packaging of multiple-piece units (i.e. kits) should be packaged with user access in mind. Multiple-piece containers should include a list of the numbers and types of pieces contained in the unit. When possible, individual items should be marked with identifying call numbers so that separated items can be returned to their appropriate containers.

Organization

The CMC collection should be displayed in an organized manner that is easily accessible to users.

1. **ARRANGEMENT:** The collection should be arranged with consideration to the classification scheme used to catalog the materials. Sections of the collection may be shelved separately as distinct collections within the CMC.
2. **STORAGE:** The shelving/storage unit should be appropriate for the various types, sizes, and shapes of materials to be arranged.
3. **SIGNAGE:** Adequate signage for the different collection locations should be clearly posted and visible to CMC users.

Retrieval

Users should be able to locate and access the materials in the CMC.

Access

1. **CATALOG:** CMC users need to be able to effectively search the catalog of CMC resources. Additional tools, such as LibGuides, bibliographies and web resources may be provided to assist users in locating materials.
2. **AVAILABILITY:** Collection materials should be readily available, rather than remotely stored.
3. **ADA COMPLIANCE:** The collection should be arranged in such a way as to enable access to all users and follow ADA guidelines. The concept of universal design should be incorporated into CMC facility planning to facilitate access to resources. Also, the CMC staff need to consider compliance issues for users accessing digital resources.

Equipment

1. **LOCATION:** Any technology needed to locate and access materials in the CMC should be located as close as possible to where it is needed by the user.
2. **QUANTITY:** A sufficient quantity of equipment should be maintained to meet typical user demands, as well as providing access to the full range of media available in the collection.
3. **MAINTENANCE:** All equipment should be regularly maintained. The funds to support this maintenance should be included in the CMC budget. The periodic upgrade of technology should be considered in long-range technology planning for the CMC. Also, the CMC needs to preserve access to legacy systems needed for archival materials still in the collection.

4. TRAINING: The CMC staff will provide training in the use of available equipment. This training may be offered in person or virtually i.e. webinars, tutorials, course management systems and etc.

Circulation

The CMC will establish procedures that enable the circulation of materials by users.

Users

1. USER GROUPS: The CMC staff will identify the various user groups served by the CMC, noting restrictions and privileges for each group.
2. IDENTIFICATION: The method for identifying users should correspond when possible to the method used by the institution governing the CMC.

Materials

1. CIRCULATION PERIODS: CMC policy should identify types of materials offered for circulation, along with their circulation periods and user restrictions.
2. PENALTIES: The penalties for user violations of circulation policies should be published.

Policies

1. CIRCULATION POLICY: The CMC will make available its circulation policy for users.
2. OTHER POLICIES: Any other policies affecting users will be made available, such as interlibrary loan policies or distance education policies.

Appendix I

Adequate and appropriate documentation is vitally important to evaluation of the CMC. Following are examples of types of documentation that may be gathered to show compliance with the guidelines.

1. Budget reports
2. Calendars
3. Collection development policy
4. Floor plans
5. Inventories
6. Policies and procedures
7. Publication examples (handouts/bibliographies/websites)
8. Publicity materials
9. Schedules
10. Statistics
 - a. Reference statistics
 - b. User statistics
 - c. Usage statistics
 - d. Instruction statistics
11. Websites

Appendix II

Bibliography of resources that are recommended for consultation by CMC directors.

Carr, J. (Ed.). (2001). *A guide to the management of curriculum materials centers for the 21st century: The promise and the challenge*. Chicago: IL: Association of College and Research Libraries, American Library Association.

Catalano, A. (2016). *Collecting for the curriculum: The Common Core and beyond*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation. (2015). Retrieved from <http://www.caepnet.org/>

Curriculum Materials Committee of the Education and Behavioral Sciences Section. (2007). *A guide to writing CMC collection development policies*. Chicago, IL: Association of College and Research Libraries, American Library Association. Retrieved from: <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/acrlpubs/downloadables/guidetowritingcmc.pdf>.

Lare, G. (2004). *Acquiring and organizing curriculum materials: A guide and directory of resources*. (2nd Ed.). Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Association of College and Research Libraries, Curriculum Materials Centers Directory Ad Hoc Committee, Education and Behavioral Sciences Section (2015). *Directory of curriculum materials centers and collections*, 7th edition. <http://libres.uncg.edu/ir/uncc/listing.aspx?styp=ti&id=18079>