Effective Reading Lists: Guidelines for Course Convenors, Teaching and Administrative Staff

The Social Science Library is pleased to support more than 40 taught degree programmes and over 250 individual courses, modules and options. Working from reading lists supplied, library staff check the existing resources (print and electronic) and ensure that additional resources are made available and with sufficient copies/access for the number of students enrolled on that course.

How can Course Convenors, Teaching and Administrative staff help the Library to support taught courses?

1) **Make reading lists available to the library in good time:** The library needs at least 6 weeks to process reading lists and ensure, where possible, that items are available to meet demand. We cannot guarantee that reading list items will be available for the start of a course if lists are received later than this. Teaching staff are welcome to send a draft version of a reading list, and contact the library with any amendments at a later date.

2) **Present reading lists in a format which will accelerate the library processes:**
   a. Provide the precise name of the course (and previous name, if applicable), name of the degree course, and the number of students likely to take part.
   b. If your department is not using ORLO [Oxford Reading Lists Online], provide lists in Word format. If minimal changes have been made since the preceding year please highlight new items.
   c. Clarify when each item is to be read, e.g. term and week. Also distinguish essential (core) reading from further (optional) reading.

3) **Specify a chapter, if students are required to read one chapter of a book.** The library can scan and upload single chapters to ORLO reading lists. Note that for copyright reasons, one chapter per book per course can be scanned.

4) **Cite the latest edition of a text**, or alert the library to the reason for recommending an older edition. The Library would normally purchase the newest available edition of all works.

Frequently Asked Questions:

How Many Copies of a Book are 'Adequate'?

As a minimum the Library usually provides two print copies (one 'Library Use Only' and one lending) OR a multi-user e-book for every core text cited on a supported reading list. Additional lending copies of core texts are purchased at a ratio of 1 copy for every 10 students taking the course. The Library maximises usage in the following ways:

- Some copies are designated 'Short Loan' to enable more than one student to access the same book during a given week
- Additional copies are purchased to respond to areas of high demand, as recorded by the management system
- E-Books are purchased, where versions with licences for multiple simultaneous users are available.
- Scanned copies of specific book chapters can be added to ORLO reading lists.

How Long Does it take for Material to Arrive?

- Textbooks and monographs usually take 4-6 weeks to arrive after the order has been placed;
- E-books can take 1-2 weeks, if available with the correct institutional licence;
- Journal subscriptions can take up to three months to activate.

Why Doesn't the Library Just Order Direct from Amazon?

The Library purchases print books from Amazon if it is particularly urgent. However, it is far more cost effective and beneficial to use the preferred suppliers. These suppliers provide a 20% discount on every book purchased, with delivery included in the cost price. Books are also supplied 'shelf-ready' (laminated, stamped, labelled, barcoded), and orders can be placed and invoiced in batches. The Library cannot purchase e-books from Amazon, as these are licenced for individual use only.

Craig Finlay, Reader Services Librarian, Bodleian Social Science Library
Jo Gardner, Bodleian Social Science Librarian
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