

Collection Subject Statement: Chinese Studies

Last reviewed: April 2025

Collection Overview

The East Asian Library (EAL) was established in 1965 when the university was selected as one of twenty National Defense Education Act Centers for Chinese Studies. The Chinese collection itself began in 1960, and with the addition of a Title VI grant, it has since grown to support both undergraduate and graduate education, research, and learning. The collection primarily supports programs leading to Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degrees, especially in Asian Studies, and serves a range of departments including Anthropology, Classics, East Asian Languages and Literatures, Economics, Fine Arts, History, Music, Political Science, Sociology, and more. Over time, the collection has expanded to cover a wide array of disciplines within the social sciences, humanities, and beyond, establishing itself as a crucial resource for both historical and contemporary Chinese studies.

Collection Location(s)

The collection is in the East Asian Library of the Hillman Library, the Archives and Special Collections, and Thomas Blvd. Library.

Collection Purpose/Audiences

University Programs, Departments, Disciplines, Centers, and Curricula Supported The collection supports the Chinese Studies Program at the University of Pittsburgh and is essential for various academic departments, including:

- Anthropology
- Classics
- East Asian Languages and Literatures
- Economics
- Fine Arts (Department of History of Art and Architecture)
- History
- Music
- Political Science
- Sociology
- Other related departments within the university

Guiding Principles and Areas of Focus

The Chinese collection development strategy emphasizes the acquisition of diverse and high-quality materials, including a balanced mix of primary sources, scholarly secondary research, and essential reference works to support advanced studies. Special attention is given to acquiring archival materials and electronic resources to enhance access to critical academic content, especially for research in Chinese Studies.

The collection is designed to meet the needs of both current research and ongoing teaching initiatives, with a focused commitment to contemporary scholarship in Chinese literature, history, economics, sociology, and political science. This approach ensures that the collection remains dynamic and relevant, supporting cutting-edge research and providing a robust academic foundation for students and faculty engaged in Chinese Studies.

Collection Scope

Formats and Languages Included:

- Primary formats: monograph, series, periodicals, archives;
- Additional formats: e-books, databases, newspapers archives etc.
- Predominantly in Chinese, bilingual works and minority languages, such as Tibetan, Uighur, Mongolian, Manchu and a limited number of works in English

Chronological and Geographical Focus

- Chronological focus: ancient time to present day, focus more on 18th – 20th century.
- Geographical focus: Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Chinese communities overseas.

Library of Congress Classification and Collection Level

Library of Congress Classification: The collection generally follows the Library of Congress Classification (LCC) system, with an emphasis on:

- **Call Number Ranges:**

- BL; BQ, BV;
- DS;
- HA; HC, HD; HQ;
- KNN,
- JQ;
- G;
- N;
- PL;
- RC;
- Q;
- Z; etc

- **Collection Level:**

The collection is maintained at a Research Level (4) for the core areas of Chinese Studies, particularly for historical, religion, literature, and social science topics.

- **Collection levels**

- Level 0: out of scope: the Library does not collect in this area.
- Level 1: minimal: a collection for which only few selections are made beyond introductory/very basic material

- Level 2: basic information: a collection of up-to-date materials which serves to introduce and define a subject; a basic information collection can support general enquiries, school and some undergraduate instruction, but is not sufficient to support advanced undergraduate courses.
- Level 3: intermediate: a collection containing a broad range of resources adequate to support undergraduate instruction and work at less than research intensity.
- Level 4: research: a collection containing current and retrospective resources which can support postgraduate and independent academic research; the collection will provide materials in all appropriate formats and languages.
- Level 5: comprehensive: a collection which includes, as far as is reasonably possible, all significant works of recorded knowledge in all applicable languages for a defined and limited field; the aim, if not the achievement, is comprehensiveness.

Subjects Excluded

- Collections related to areas outside the scope of Chinese Studies, such as comparative Asian studies or unrelated fields of modern or popular culture, are excluded unless they have a direct relationship to the study of Chinese culture or society.
- Modern popular works, children's literature, textbooks except Chinese language textbooks from 80s, 90s, works on science in general.

Connections & Collaborations

Other Relevant Subject Areas or ULS Collections/Locations:

- East Asian Collections (Japan, Korea, etc.)
- South and Southeast Asian Studies
- International Studies and Political Science collections
- Ethnic Studies collections
- Asian American Collections

Subject Expert: Runxiao Zhu (zhu117@pitt.edu)

Sources of Information

The collection's development is informed by the needs of the Chinese Studies Program, as well as by consultation with faculty across the departments involved. Primary goals include supporting undergraduate and graduate research in various fields such as literature, history, anthropology, sociology, and political science, with a strong focus on acquiring Chinese classics, contemporary scholarship, and important electronic resources.