1. MUSEUM MISSION STATEMENT

The Museum of Anthropology at Wake Forest University creates awareness of global cultures by collecting, protecting, managing, and exhibiting archaeological artifacts, ethnographic objects, and visual arts of past and present peoples, and providing opportunities for intercultural learning.

2. STATEMENT OF COLLECTIONS POLICY PURPOSE

Outline priorities for adding new objects to the collections.

Provide direction for acquisition of collections by the Museum or by members of the Advisory Board on behalf of the Museum.

Affirm that the highest ethical standards will be met by the Museum staff and members of the Advisory Board in all transactions, including avoidance of conflicts of interest.

Affirm that the Museum staff and members of the Advisory Board will comply with all domestic and foreign laws and regulations governing the collecting of objects, the transfer of ownership of those objects, and the movement of objects and collections across political boundaries.

Assure that the standards of documentation for acquisitions shall equal or exceed those current under American Association of Museums standards.

Define the conditions of acceptance that may be placed upon objects to be acquired by the Museum or on its behalf.
Define the conditions and procedures for permanent removal of objects from the Museum collection.

The following definitions apply:

‘Collection’ is an assemblage of anthropological (archaeological, ethnographical, zoological and archival) objects acquired, accessioned, and conserved because of their cultural value, historic significance and/or educational value. Objects acquired for hands-on teaching purposes and considered expendable are referred to as Education Department Collections.

‘Object(s)’ encompasses all collection materials, including, but not limited to, artifacts, photographs, archival and library materials, records and exhibits.

‘Acquisition’ involves all transactions by which title to incoming objects is transferred to the Museum of Anthropology and includes gifts, bequests, purchases, exchanges, and other transfers, in addition to collection by Museum staff.

‘Deaccession’ refers to the specific procedures that are followed in removing objects from the Museum’s collections in preparation for disposition.

‘Curation’ embraces all aspects of professionally caring for the collections and the objects they contain, including, but not limited to, acquiring, accessioning, cataloguing, maintaining, preserving, restoring, deaccessioning, and disposition of the collections, objects, field notes, databases, and other associated records and documentation.

Note that acquisitions and dispositions do not include “loans” which are the temporary transfer of collection objects to and from the museum without a change of ownership. (See section 4.B. Incoming Loans and section 4.C. Outgoing Loans below.)

3. ACQUISITIONS

A. General Criteria: Items accessioned by the Museum are intended to remain in its collections for the long term, and are considered with the following general criteria in mind:

1. The object should be of high quality, relative to its type and purpose (use).

2. The object must have some clear relation to the collections as they now exist; filling gaps, providing context, and/or opening related areas of interest, or any new area highlighted in the Collection Plan.

3. The object shall possess potential for research and/or be useful for exhibition purposes.

4. Is/are the objects(s) encumbered:
by conditions imposed by a donor?
by cultural property rights?
by its nature (hazardous or dangerous to Museum staff.)

5. Can costs for purchase, transport, cataloging, conservation, and/or storage be met?

B: Gifts and Bequests (Gifts include transfers from other institutions):
Accepting gifts will be left to the discretion of the director and curator. When any of the following conditions prevail, the director shall notify the Collections Committee at its next meeting of the proposed acquisition. He will explain how it meets or does not meet the general criteria for acquisitions, thereby enabling the Collections Committee to have an understanding of all Museum acquisitions:

- When an object has an estimated value of $1,000 or more,
- When an extensive collection is offered (over 25 objects)
- When a gift is offered by a MOA staff member, spouse or relative or Advisory Board member.
- When a gift is offered with restrictions.

The acceptance of all gifts and bequests shall be unrestricted. No commitment shall be made as to exhibition, attribution, use or placement of the gift. While it is the Museum’s intention to accession for long-term use and preservation, no guarantee shall be made that the gift or bequest be retained by the Museum in perpetuity. There shall be no exceptions to this policy unless any such restrictions or special provisions are considered by the Collections Committee and approved by the director, and a signed statement of approval is filed with the registrar. The MOA Deed of Gift is mandatory and shall be signed by the legal owner(s) or his/her/their duly authorized agent as soon as possible. For bequests, a copy of the portion of the will designating the bequest should be obtained. The Museum is not obliged to accept items bequeathed to it that are not appropriate for the collections.

All gifts and bequests shall be acknowledged by a thank-you letter from the curator or director.

Under no circumstances will Museum staff give an appraisal of objects except for internal University use. MOA will not normally pay for an appraisal. However, when it is clearly in the best interests of the Museum to do so, the director’s approval will be sought in advance of making such a commitment. Where appropriate, the Museum will assist owners in finding qualified professionals who can provide appraisals.
C. Purchases: Purchases of objects for the collection are with the director’s approval only.

D. Education Department Collection: The objects in the MOA’s Education Department Collection are primarily used as auxiliary, supporting material to the permanent collection and for education programs. Such objects may be handled, exhibited and stored under less rigorous standards than those applied to the permanent collection. Staff may identify an object for education purposes. Objects may come into this collection as gifts designated for education, purchases or transfers of deaccessioned items from the permanent collection. These objects may be used for exhibit props, educational outreach programs, and supplementary research material. The Education Collection shall be housed in a storage area under the Education Department’s control. The registrar shall maintain accession records. Objects may be removed from the Education Collection if they are damaged, lost or are no longer relevant to the collection’s purposes. In such cases the museum educator shall make the decision and shall notify the registrar, who shall note the reason and date of removal in the object’s file.

4. LOANS

The Museum is encouraged to participate in loan programs to provide public access to objects that are not in the Museum’s collections and to extend the availability of the Museum’s collections to others.

A. General Criteria: Each loan shall be for a specified period of time. Each loan must be secured by a written loan agreement between the Museum and its borrowers/lenders prior to receipt of the object. A written condition report shall be made for each loan entering or leaving the Museum. The advice of a conservator shall be obtained if there is any question regarding the condition of the object or its ability to withstand the stress of transportation, handling, or changed environmental conditions.

B. Incoming Loans: As a general practice, incoming loans shall be insured by WFU or the lender. Insurance values shall be consistent with fair market value whenever possible. Insurance shall be arranged by the registrar.

C. Outgoing Loans: Loans from the Museum collection shall be properly acknowledged as the lender of the item on loan. Objects shall not be lent to individuals for personal use. Outgoing loans shall be insured by the borrower or by WFU at the borrower’s expense. Loans shall be made for use in appropriately climate-controlled and secure environments. Any and all objects may be withdrawn from loan if for any reason the borrower does not comply with all policies and procedures set forth by the MOA regarding outgoing loans.

5. DEACCESSIONING

In considering deaccessioning objects or groups of objects the Museum must be
aware of its role as trustee of the collections for the benefit of the public. Objects are acquired for permanent retention in the collections and not with the thought of quick disposal. However, when it is deemed prudent to do so, deaccessioning can be considered. Deaccessioning is the formal adjustment of records to reflect the removal of an object from the Museum’s permanent collection. Disposition is the manner in which ownership is transferred from the Museum to another entity (i.e. by sale, transfer, or exchange) or from destruction and results from periodic reviews of the collection, the desire to upgrade certain holdings, or re-evaluation of particular objects in the light of new research, vastly superior new acquisitions, or redundancy. The approval of the director and the Collections Committee is required to deaccession and dispose of objects.

A. General Criteria

1. Deaccessioning of objects shall be considered with serious deliberation. The impetus to deaccession shall originate with the curator, in consultation with the director.

2. Deaccession and disposition may be considered in instances where objects are duplicated in the collection, where the type of object is not within the scope of the Museum’s mission statement and collections goals, where, in the opinion of the curatorial staff, the object is not of sufficient cultural merit to be retained in the collection or the object does not meet the criteria of the Collection Plan.

3. The Museum shall consider the intrinsic cultural and historical value of each proposed object, acknowledging that such value reveals information about a culture not completely defined by a single object, but rather by its relationship to a body of objects. The historical identification of each object with the Museum and the community shall also be considered.

4. Objects that are lost or stolen from the collection or destroyed accidentally shall not be deaccessioned. Rather, the registrar’s files on such objects shall be maintained within the permanent collection system, with appropriate comment as to the status of the object.

5. The Museum shall prepare a concise statement of its deaccession policy and procedure to be made available, if deemed proper by the director and the Advisory Board, to donors or to the local press. As a non-profit, tax-free entity of Wake Forest University, the Museum recognizes that the practice of deaccessioning may come under public scrutiny. The director shall (may) inform the University’s News Service of the status of the deaccession program in an effort to ensure, as fully as possible, that the Museum’s goals and intentions will not be misconstrued, should there be a challenge from sources outside the Museum or University.

B. Reasons for Deaccession: The following criteria shall be used to determine whether an object should be removed from the Museum’s permanent collection:

1. Care: It is determined that the Museum is unable to care properly for the object or there is found to be a marked discrepancy between the cost of conservation and the cultural value of the object.

2. Quality: It is determined that an object is of markedly inferior quality in comparison with other objects of the same type in the relevant collection.
3. Redundancy: It is determined that the object is a duplicate of another object in the collection and has less value or is of less quality than the other example in the collection.

4. Inappropriateness: It is determined that the object lacks a demonstrable relevance to the mission of the Museum and the Collection Plan.

5. Illegitimate Possession: It is proven that an object in the collection was stolen, illegally removed from a foreign country, is in violation of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), was crafted from materials protected by the Endangered Species Act (CITES), or was imported into the United States in violation of the UNESCO Convention or applicable state or federal laws. Disposal of such objects shall be determined on a case-by-case basis.

6. Transfer: It is determined that an object is inappropriate for the existing permanent collection but meets the criteria for inclusion in another museum’s collection. Rather than be subject to normal disposal, the object shall be transferred by donation, sale, or exchange to the other museum.

C. Procedures: The registrar shall periodically review the collection and make recommendations for deaccessioning to the director. A written report of the reasons for the proposed deaccession shall be prepared by the registrar and submitted by the director to the Collections Committee. No object shall be deaccessioned if there is any question of clear title or restrictive conditions.

The deaccession report shall contain a recommendation for the method of disposal. The written deaccession report shall include information on attempts made to contact donors or their legal heirs if appropriate. Outside expert opinions may be solicited before reaching a decision. New objects purchased with proceeds from the sale of donated or bequeathed works shall bear a credit to the original donor(s).

A written appraisal is required for objects to be sold. It shall be performed by a qualified, disinterested appraiser chosen by the Museum.

In all actions related to its deaccession policy the Museum shall comply with state and federal laws, with particular regard for those laws governing cultural property and property deemed within the public domain.

Objects deaccessioned from the collection may not be acquired by any Museum employee (or active Advisory Board member), nor may the sale or disposal of any object be to the personal benefit of an employee (or Advisory Board member.) Records on all deaccessioned objects shall be maintained by the registrar.

D. Methods of Disposition: When recommending any method of disposition, the director shall address in writing the reasons for the selection of such method. The following are approved methods of disposition:

1. Transfer to use in the education collection.
2. Exchange with another museum or educational institution.
3. Donation to another museum or educational institution that intends to make the object generally accessible to the public.
4. Public sale, preferably at auction.
5. Witnessed destruction certified by at least two of the following: the chair of the Collections Committee, the director, the educator, or the registrar.

E. Compliance with National and International Regulations:
The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act: The Museum, as a museum holding Native American materials and which has received funding, direct and indirect, from the federal government, willingly recognizes its responsibility to comply with Public Law 101-601, The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), passed by Congress on November 16, 1990. Under this law, museums are obligated to inventory and summarize all human remains, “associated funerary objects, unassociated funerary objects, sacred objects, and cultural patrimony.” Should the Museum be the recipient of the gift of a protected object in the future, it shall comply with all requirements of disclosure, consultation with Native American groups, and if necessary, repatriation.


The Museum also recognizes the Treaty of Cooperation between the United States of America and the United Mexican States Providing for the Recovery and Return of Stolen Archaeological, Historical, and Cultural Properties and will not accept Pre-Columbian objects exported after December 2, 1985 without valid export permits from the country of origin. Neither will it accept Pre-Columbian monumental or architectural sculpture or murals as regulated under Title II of Public Law 92-587, Regulation of Importation of Pre-Columbian Monumental or Architectural Sculpture or Murals.

6. CARE OF THE COLLECTIONS

The Museum of Anthropology recognizes its responsibility for its permanent and loan collections. The permanent collection is intended to be preserved for future generations, and will receive care designed to further that goal. Incoming loans will receive care comparable to that of the permanent collection.

A. Staff Responsibilities: Overall responsibility for the management of the collection is vested in the director by Wake Forest University. Immediate responsibility for the physical care of all collections lies with the registrar, who balances the need for conservation and maintenance of each object with the need for public access, research, exhibition needs, staff resources and funding.

B. Conservation Treatment: The decision to provide conservation treatment for an object in the permanent collection is made by the director upon recommendation of the registrar. The registrar shall make arrangements with an outside conservator chosen by these staff members.
C. Handling and Transport: All staff must be constantly vigilant to the security of objects in storage, on exhibit or in transit. Responsibility for the handling, storage, display, packing, and transport of objects in the permanent or loan collections lies with the registrar who ensures that proper methods are used at all times to safeguard the objects. The registrar shall be responsible for teaching proper handling techniques to all staff who may be required to handle objects. All packing and transportation of objects must be monitored by the registrar. In the event that Museum staff are transporting any object by private, Museum, or rental vehicle or on foot, at least two staff-persons must be present at all times. Under no circumstance will an object be left unattended during transport. The Museum applies the same standard to objects accompanied and transported by commercial art/artifact shippers. Any exceptions to the above policy must be approved in writing by the registrar.

D. Collections Storage: Collection storage areas are the responsibility of the registrar, who attends to their upkeep, improvement, and the effective use of facilities and equipment. Storage areas shall be kept clean and free of such dangers as pests, mold, and other deteriorative agents, and a stable environment shall be maintained. No one shall be permitted to use these areas for any unrelated purpose.

E. Inventory of the Collections: It is the registrar’s responsibility to conduct an ongoing comprehensive inventory of the entire collection to be completed every five years. Objects must be reconciled with existing records at inventory completion. If an object appears to be missing, the registrar will attempt to locate it, and if it cannot be found the director shall be notified. If the object remains unfound after subsequent searches, the matter will be referred to the Collections Committee for a decision about appropriate action. In the case of apparent thefts, University Police and the director, and registrar must be notified at once. They shall assess the situation and notify the insurance contact in Financial and Accounting Services. In such situations all insurance claims will be handled by the registrar in accordance with the policies of Wake Forest University and its insurance company. Significant losses may be reported to a museum theft directory upon the director’s request. As noted above in the Deaccessions section, lost or stolen objects are designated as such, and are not deaccessioned.

7. COLLECTIONS RECORDS
The Museum maintains permanent, written and computerized records of all objects which are or have been in its care. These records consist of an accession ledger, loan files containing legally binding forms and pertinent information, donor files, and a card and computer catalog. The registrar is responsible for maintaining and making available up-to-date records documenting the history of all activities affecting the objects in the Museum’s custody, along with their status (i.e. Permanent Collection, loan, deaccessioned, Education Collection, etc.) All records shall be safeguarded against such hazards as loss, fire, water, and theft with fire rated cabinets and regular database backup.

A. Documentary (Accession and Catalogue) Records: Each object given to or purchased by the Museum and which is intended to become part of the permanent
collection shall be assigned an accession/catalogue number which reflects the year, acquisition source, archaeological or ethnographic collection, and sequence of objects. The registrar’s records reflect:

1. The legal status of an object
2. Its source
3. Date of receipt
4. Accession/catalogue number
5. Provenance
6. Donor and/or memorial attribution
7. Description

and should include:

1. A shipping/entry receipt made upon the object’s arrival at the Museum
2. A Deed-of-Gift and/or Proof of Purchase transferring legal title from the vendor or donor to the Museum

Records maintained by the registrar shall be in the form of a donor file containing the above-mentioned forms, pertinent written documentation, conservation and outgoing loan forms, photographic documentation and a card and computer catalogue containing basic identifying data including object location, research, information related to interpreting objects, and a thumbnail photograph of the object.

Accession records shall be made by the registrar in a timely manner with the co-operation of director, and are housed in secure, locked cabinets in a controlled-access registrarial file area. The registrar shall keep each object’s status current with appropriate documents signed by all pertinent parties.

B. Loan Records: The registrar shall maintain a computer record with hard copies of all incoming and outgoing loans which record the object, purpose for loan, dates of arrival and departure, insurance value, and method and provider of transportation. The registrar shall record all loans from the permanent collection on each object’s computer and card record, with all loan forms and other pertinent information kept in a temporary loan file for the duration of the loan. Upon the object’s return to the Museum, the temporary file shall be incorporated into the documentary donor file.

C. Receipt Forms: Every object which for any purpose and time span leaves the Museum’s care shall be accompanied by an appropriate outgoing and return receipt forms. Each object arriving in the Museum’s care shall be immediately tagged and the appropriate incoming loan receipt issued as soon as possible.

8. INSURANCE

Insurance is a further dimension of object care, providing for appropriate compensation to the Museum or a lender in the event of loss or damage. All objects are insured through the Wake Forest University policy at fair market value.

A. Documentation: The registrar shall keep records of the objects in the collection and their locations. Current market values for outgoing and incoming loans
shall be recorded by the registrar in complete accessions or loan files, as shall records of any insurance claims.

B. Loss or Damage: Loss or damage of an object must be immediately reported to the registrar and director, and in the case of an incoming loan, the lender. Should the loss or damage be the result of theft or vandalism University Police shall be notified. The registrar is responsible for documenting the incident. If the director or lender decides an insurance claim should be filed, the registrar shall contact the insurance contact in Financial and Accounting Services. The registrar shall process all documentation necessary in filing the claim, and keep records in the object’s file.

9. ACCESS TO THE COLLECTIONS AND RECORDS

The Museum recognizes a responsibility to give free access to objects and records in every way consistent with the safety and security of the collections and in accordance with the policies of the Museum.

A. Public Access: During regular open hours, the public has viewing access to objects exhibited in open galleries. During closed hours, no non-staff person shall be allowed unattended into galleries or storage areas. Objects in storage may only be viewed by appointment with the registrar during regular business hours. Anyone viewing objects in storage must be accompanied by the director or registrar. Persons studying objects may not handle any object without the consent and supervision of the person accompanying them.

B. Staff Access: Access to collections storage is limited to the director, registrar, and PR, Marketing and Membership Coordinator. All other staff must be accompanied by one of those persons. All persons going into storage must sign in and out. Keys/combinations to storage shall be issued by the registrar upon the director’s request. No object may be placed in, removed from, or moved within collections storage or the galleries without the prior consent of the registrar, except by the director, who shall subsequently notify the registrar. Access to galleries during exhibit installation shall be restricted to the director and registrar. All other staff must receive permission from one of the aforementioned staff to enter such galleries and must be accompanied by him or her.

C. Maintenance and Security Access: It is recognized that in order to carry out their tasks, members of the University’s maintenance and security staffs may need access to any area of the building at any time. However, maintenance staff must be accompanied by a Museum staff member. Efforts shall be made to limit maintenance activities in the galleries or collections storage, entering storage only when necessary.

D. Use of the Collection: The Museum recognizes its responsibility to display the collections for normal viewing in normal gallery spaces. Objects may occasionally be placed in other settings (i.e. classroom, lecture hall, library, etc.) for study or other educational purposes with the knowledge and consent of the registrar. In such situations
the objects shall be accompanied by a staff member. Objects from the collections shall not be used for decorative purposes to enhance staff or University offices.

E. Photography of the Collections: Generally visitors may take photographs without flash of objects in the permanent collection located within galleries. Video cameras are not allowed in the galleries without prior permission of the director or curator. No photographic images of the Museum or its collections may be used on a website or publication without the permission of the director. Permission to photograph for commercial use must be given by the director. Photography of loan collections for visitors’ personal or commercial use is dependent on the prior written consent of lenders. The Museum may photograph loans for “fair use” purposes (i.e. education, exhibition promotion, and exhibition or condition documentation). Requests to reproduce and publish the Museum’s photographs of its collection must be received (in writing) and approved by the registrar, who shall be responsible for making any necessary arrangements and maintaining records of all such transactions.

F. Use of Gallery Space: Use of gallery space for non-Museum functions in connection with lectures, dinners, receptions or other special events must be approved in advance by the director. No smoking is permitted in the Museum. Plans for special events shall be discussed with and approved by the director and registrar, who may make changes to maintain safety and security of both collections and visitors. Social functions must be supervised by at least one museum staff member. Museum sponsored events will be arranged by and/or with the approval of the director. The Museum will honor lenders’ wishes as to their objects’ exposure during special events.

G. Access to Collections Records: Staff access to the collections records is monitored by the registrar. Accession files are to remain in the file area except to be photocopied and then are to be returned. In unusual circumstances a file may be used in another office upon notification of the registrar. All files must be properly re-filed by the end of each workday. Access to collections records by scholars/researchers is available by prior appointment with the registrar during regular business hours. Public access to edited collections records is through the online database. Information about lenders, donors, and object values shall only be released with the registrar’s or director’s, or lender’s consent.

10. APPENDIX: FORMS
   A. Memorandum of Gift
   B. Deed of Gift
   C. Outgoing Loan Agreement
   D. Receipt of Entry Loan