



Central University Libraries
Government Information Resources Department
Southern Methodist University

Edwin J. Foscue Map Library

Overview

Named in honor Dr. Edwin J. Foscue (1900 - 1972), distinguished veteran of the Second World War and chairman of the SMU Department of Geography, the Foscue Map Library is one of the preeminent collections of cartographic resources in the American Southwest. The library's current holdings include: nearly 260,000 individual maps, nautical charts, and aeronautical charts; approximately 3,000 aerial photographs and remote sensing images; more than 1,200 Soil Survey publications; several globes, including one of the moon; and over 1,250 atlases. The map collections have primarily been built through SMU's depository agreements with several federal agencies over the past 75 years, including the United States Geological Survey (USGS), the National Imaging and Mapping Agency (NIMA) and the Government Printing Office (GPO). The collection continues to grow in support of key disciplines such as geology, archaeology and anthropology, sociology, political science, history, and environmental science, as well as to be enhanced via major acquisitions such as the ARCO Petroleum Collection (over 3,000 maps and LANDSAT images, chiefly international in coverage) and departmental initiatives to develop digital mapping tools via Geographic Information System (GIS) software.

History

As a geographic expert with the Army Map Service (a sub-agency under the Corps of Engineers) during World War II, Dr. Edwin J. Foscue participated in one of the most significant intelligence campaigns of that conflict – namely, the production of state-of-the-art mapping for nearly every region of the world, the almost constant revision of existing mapping, and the rapid deployment of these maps to the our military forces abroad. The sheer number of maps produced for the war effort, coupled with the large quantity of cartographic information captured by advancing Allied Forces, presented the Army Map Service with a problem of surplus by the war's end. Dr. Foscue and several of his colleagues successfully lobbied the Army not only to donate these maps to academic institutions at strategic locations throughout the United States, but also to establish a depository program in order to best maintain these collections. Thus, Southern Methodist University was able to acquire approximately 27,000 captured German and Japanese maps, and, until the end of the Army Map Service's depository program in 1954, to accrue over 54,000 maps. In 1948, the University hired its first map librarian, Dorothy Bruton, succeeded by Eleanor Maclay, author of the first official history of the collection itself ("Southern Methodist University Map Library", 1957).

Collection Organization

The library's sheet maps are filed in flat storage in more than 700 map case drawers and are arranged by Library of Congress classification number. A large percentage of the library's map holdings are in special series dictated by scale, for example, the 7.5 minute series of topographic maps published by the USGS. Paper indexes, both in graphical and in card-file form, are available for map holdings, and efforts to enter electronic cataloging records in CUL's automation system – PONI – for the entirety of map library holdings are continuing. More than 6,000 records have been created for single-sheet maps from the collection, and records for new government mapping acquisitions are entered on a consistent basis.

Collection Policies

The Foscue Map Library holdings are freely accessible on-site, but circulation of maps is limited to SMU faculty, students and staff.

Location and Hours

The Edwin J. Foscue Map Library is located in the ground level in the far northeast corner of Southern Methodist University's Fondren Library Center, Science and Engineering Information Center.

Hours of Operation

Monday - Thursday: 8 AM to 7 PM

Friday: 8 AM to 5 PM

Weekends: By appointment only

Contact Us

Edwin J. Foscue Map Library: 214-768-2285

Government Information And Map Resources Department: 214-768-2331

Fax: 214-768-4236

Mailing address:

Edwin J. Foscue Map Library

Central University Libraries

6425 North Ownby Dr.

PO Box 750135

Dallas, TX 75275-0135