

Western Kentucky University
Special Collections Reading Room Policies & Procedures

The following are policies related to the use of the Special Collections Reading Room at Cravens Library at Western Kentucky University. All researchers and users of the space are expected to have read and acknowledged these policies prior to use of the Reading Room and materials therein.

- All users will be required to register each day upon entering the Special Collections Library. Individuals must sign in electronically at the Reference Desk using the tablet where you will be required to scan your identification and acknowledge acceptance of the procedures and usage agreements of the space. IDs will be kept at the desk by the staff throughout the duration of your visit.
- Please know that we ask all researchers to schedule appointments in advance of their visit to the Special Collections Library. All researchers are asked to fill out this [form](#) which will provide our librarians and staff with information related to your research project. This will allow us to pull materials in advance of your arrival and have them available for your use to optimize your visit. Other materials may be requested during your visit if needed.
- Walk-in usage is permissible but know that confirmed appointments are preferred for viewing materials. Those individuals with appointments will be serviced first by Special Collections staff.

User Agreements

- Special Collections asks researchers to limit their personal items to laptops, tablets, pencils, and paper.
- Lockers are available for secure storage of all other personal items not permitted in the Reading Room. Items prohibited outside of lockers include:
 - o Pens
 - o Food, drinks, candy, or gum of any kind
 - o Backpacks, briefcases, laptop cases, purses, or handbags
 - o Coats, hats, gloves, scarves, or umbrellas
 - o Large binders or notebooks
 - o A staff member may ask that you store or discard any other items they deem a potential risk to the collections. Please consult with the Special Collections librarians and staff regarding outside books, notes, or other materials you would like to use while conducting research or utilizing the room for quiet study.

Technology Use

- Researchers cannot bring their own personal scanners or professional cameras into the Special Collections Library.
- Non-flash phone cameras are permitted.

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Andrew Adler, Department Chair
Library Collections & Discovery

- All cell phones must be silent and their use must be limited. Phone conversations in the Special Collections Library are prohibited.
- We ask all users to mute laptops and tablets. If you wish to play audio, you must wear headphones and keep the volume low so as not to disturb other patrons.

Materials Use

- The Special Collections Library is a closed stack facility. This means that the collection is a **non-circulating collection, and no items may be checked out**. Access to the collections is gained through a variety of computerized and hard copy finding aids. Research materials are obtained through advanced request by completing online request forms or at the reference desk.
- Many of our materials are very fragile. To ensure their long-term preservation and capacity for re-use, we ask that you follow these material use guidelines.
- *Accessing and Arranging Materials*
 - o The staff on duty will check out and check items in for you. We will be happy to assist you with large or heavy items.
 - o Documents must remain flat on the table while being examined. Items should never be placed on the floor or a chair.
 - o Do not lean on items or place paper or note pads on top of documents.
 - o Researchers must use a pencil only. Do not make marks or erasures on materials. Post-It notes are not allowed to mark materials.
 - o Researchers **must wear gloves** when handling photos, artifacts, and items in fragile condition. Gloves will be provided by the staff.
 - o Researchers may only have one box of material at a time at their table. Other boxes requested will be kept behind the reference desk. When a researcher finishes with one box, they may return it to the desk and retrieve another box.
 - o Please arrange boxes and materials on the table to allow for a clear line of sight between yourself and the staff on duty. We ask that you do this for security purposes and so that we may ensure proper handling of materials and optimal service for our researchers.
 - o The reference collection is browsable, but all books should only be reshelved by Special Collections staff.
 - o Patrons may retrieve items from the reference collection or microfilm in the reading room themselves. Please ask staff for assistance in looking up microfilm reel numbers. Use one reel at a time and do not refile them yourself. Place microfilm reels on top of the microfilm cabinets for refile by staff.
 - o The restricted collection area is denoted using stanchions and barriers. **Patrons are not allowed to cross these barriers**. For assistance with items in the restricted area, please ask a staff member.

- *Viewing and Handling Materials*
 - o Please view only one item at a time.
 - o Retrieve material from one folder at a time, using a placeholder to indicate where a folder was removed from the box. The documents in the collection have been arranged in an order that must be maintained. If materials seem out of order, please notify the staff.
 - o Please turn pages one at a time.
 - o If you are looking at a rare or older book, you will be provided with a book stand for viewing. You are required to keep that item in the stand until you are finished with it.
- Be aware that at any time, a staff member may approach you with a friendly reminder regarding these policies, or to adjust the use of materials to better accommodate the condition of a fragile item. This is a normal part of research with original or fragile materials.
- *Photocopies*
 - o Photocopies of items may be made, condition dependent, by a staff member. The cost to copy an item ranges between \$.10 to \$.20 per page. Staff limitations do not permit the copying of large quantities of material. Furthermore, collection policy prohibits the copying of restricted materials, entire collections, complete oral histories, or fragile materials. Please consult with staff regarding procedures for identifying items to be photocopied.
 - o Microfilm photocopies cost \$.25 per page. Please pay for those copies prior to leaving the library.
 - o Because of limited resources, it may be necessary to mail photocopies later.

Use of Space for General Study

- The Special Collections Library is available to all registered users for use as a quiet study space. No appointment is necessary to access the room for general study, though you will be required to abide by all user agreements and sign in when you arrive.

Usage of materials

- In citing these materials, please include the full name of the collection, Western Kentucky University Special Collections. Examples of citations are available at the reference desk.
- Patrons are responsible for obtaining permission to publish, in part or whole, from any collection. Western Kentucky University Special Collections is not responsible for any copyright infringement.

Historical Language and Imagery

- In using these collections and online resources, you may come across language and imagery that you find harmful or offensive. In the interest of preserving and presenting the historical record,

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WKU Special Collections collects materials from all cultures and time periods. These materials document the time period in which they were created and demonstrate the views of their creator. As a result, some may contain oppressive, biased, and marginalizing language or imagery that does not reflect the values of WKU Libraries. They are presented here for research purposes only.

Disclaimer

- **Researchers who fail to abide by these policies may be denied access to the collections. Theft and mutilation of documents are crimes that will be prosecuted by the appropriate law enforcement agency.**
- Policies subject to change without notice