

Special Collections Volunteer Policy [Draft Version 2]

Volunteers provide a valuable service, allowing regular staff members to dedicate their time to other projects, and volunteer programs provide an opportunity for community engagement. Volunteering in archives may serve as both an advocacy tool and as a potential means of recruitment to the profession. With this in mind, tasks assigned to volunteers should, whenever possible, reflect the volunteer's interests, and supervising staff should be as accommodating and flexible as possible in order to make the volunteer experience mutually beneficial. Volunteers should not be used as a substitute for paid professional staff or for work-study students, but as a supplement. Their labor should not be built into goals statements. While Special Collections is unable to provide monetary or fringe benefits (including insurance, University email, parking, or University ID) to volunteers, volunteers should be invited to participate in any Departmental social gatherings that overlap with their work hours

Supervision

- All volunteers will have a staff member designated as their supervisor.
 - Staff supervisors may, if they determine that they no longer have the time to commit to supervision, or that the volunteer arrangement is not beneficial to the project, request that the Head of Special Collections transfer a volunteer to a new supervisor.
 - Due to the unique materials held in Special Collections, and the presence of confidential and sensitive information the future Head of Special Collections will work with HR to implement a background check policy that would be mandatory for all prospective volunteers.
 - Volunteers may be required to pass a background check and must sign a confidentiality agreement in order to be permitted in closed stacks unsupervised, or left in processing areas without supervision.
 - When a supervising staff member is out of the office, arrangements will be made depending on the volunteer's experience level, the project type, and the degree of advance notice that is known.
 - For last-minute absences (i.e., illness): The absent staff member will, when notifying their supervisor of their absence, request that the supervisor make arrangements to check in on the volunteer or to have the volunteer work in a supervised area.
 - For pre-scheduled absences: The absent staff member will notify the volunteer of the planned absence, and request the volunteer not come in that time period; or, for more established volunteers, have them come in as usual but have another staff member check in on the volunteer.
 - Supervisors should be able to commit at least 1 hour at the beginning of a volunteer's first day to orientation and training; thereafter supervisors should meet weekly with the volunteer.
 - Volunteers will not supervise staff or work-study students.
- **HR**
- Before or on the first day of work, each volunteer will meet with HR to sign all necessary paperwork. A supervisor must be assigned in advance of the volunteers arrival. The volunteer will need to bring a form of photo ID. If necessary, this paperwork should include the form for computer directory registration so they can log onto computers at

the Library. As part of this process, the HR Representative will have the volunteer read and sign the Code of Computing Practices.

- **Work hours**

- Volunteers will sign in and out in the same area in the Special Collections office where work-study students sign in and out. These hours will be totaled at the end of each semester and sent to HR for its recordkeeping and statistics.
- Volunteers will have regular work schedules.
- All on-site volunteer work should occur during Special Collections' standard work hours of 8-5, M-F

- **Appropriate activities for volunteers**

- Volunteers should not be involved in donor negotiations
- Volunteers should not be assigned to work on collections (save their own) with substantial donor restrictions
- Volunteers should not work directly with accessions databases or accession files.
- Volunteer projects should be appropriate not only in content but also in scope; large projects requiring continuity in management and/or execution should not be assigned solely to volunteers.
- Volunteers may only work on-site at Mullins Library and may not work at Special Collections' off-site storage facility. Volunteers will not be given keys to facilities.
- Volunteers will not be given authority to drive Library vehicles, and will not transport Special Collections materials in their private vehicles
- Volunteers will not work with Library financial or purchasing accounts

- **Confidentiality**

- Prior to the implementation of such a document, supervisors should be particularly cautious in the types of assignments given to volunteers and in their speech around volunteers.
- Special Collections staff should not discuss personnel issues, donor relations issues, or confidential collections materials in the presence of volunteers.
- At the beginning of their work, all volunteers should be given an orientation that includes a brief discussion of the confidentiality expected of those working in Special Collections.

- **Recruitment/selection**

- No volunteers should be recruited without the involvement of the Head of Special Collections.
- Persons wishing to volunteer in Special Collections will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to evaluate:
- All volunteers should be at least 18 years of age
- Current University of Arkansas employees may not serve as volunteers (per federal law)