

Statement on Access to Original Research Materials in Libraries, Archives, and Manuscript Repositories: Proposed Revisions

The ACRL "Statement on Access to Original Research Materials in Libraries, Archives, and Manuscript Repositories" was approved as policy by the ACRL Board of Directors in January 1974 and was published in the May 1974 issue of *College & Research Libraries News*. At the 1976 Midwinter Meeting revisions in the statement were proposed by the ACRL Rare Books and Manuscripts Section Committee on Manuscripts Collections, which developed the original statement. Material to be deleted is in brackets, while material to be added is in italics.

The revisions proposed here will be considered for approval as policy by the ACRL Board of Directors at the 1976 ALA Annual Conference. All comments concerning the statement and the proposed revisions should be sent to the chairman of the RBMS Committee on Manuscripts Collections: Clyde C. Walton, Director of Libraries, Northern Illinois University, De Kalb, IL 60115.

1. It is the responsibility of a library, archives, or manuscript repository to make available to qualified researchers, as defined by the respective institutions, on equal terms of access, research materials in its possession, *unless prohibited by the regulations of the institution*. Because the accessibility of material depends on knowing of its existence, it is the responsibility of a repository to inform researchers of the collections in its custody [This may be accomplished through] *by means of a public [card] catalog, inventories, [and other internal] other finding aids, [a] published guides, and reports to the National Union Catalog where appropriate. [and the freely offered assistance of staff members.] Staff members should assist researchers as freely as possible but should not be expected to engage in extended research.*
2. To protect and insure the continued accessibility of the material in its custody, the repository may impose several conditions, *which it should publish or otherwise make available to users.*
 - a. The repository may [limit] *restrict* the use of fragile or unusually valuable materials. [so long as suitable reproductions are made available for the use of all researchers.] *In such cases it should make available suitable reproductions whenever possible.*
3. Each repository should [publish] *make available to researchers* a suggested form of citation crediting the repository and identifying items within the collection for later reference. Citations to copies of [materials] *the originals which are* in other repositories should include the location of the originals, *if known.*
4. A repository should advise the researcher that he and his publisher have the sole responsibility for securing permission to publish from unpublished manuscripts in which literary property rights are retained or to publish any extensive quotation from copy-
 - b. All materials must be used in accordance with the [rules] *regulations* of and under the supervision of the repository. Each repository should publish and furnish to potential researchers its [rules] *regulations* governing access and use. Such [rules] *regulations* must be equally applied and enforced.
 - c. The repository may refuse access to unprocessed materials, so long as such refusal is [applied to all researchers] *equally applied and enforced.*
 - d. Normally, a repository will not send research materials for use outside its building or jurisdiction. Under special circumstances a collection or a portion of it may be loaned or placed on deposit with another institution.
 - e. The repository may refuse access to an individual researcher who *in the opinion of the staff* has demonstrated such carelessness or deliberate destructiveness as to endanger the safety of the material, *or who has refused to comply with the regulations of the repository.*
 - f. *As a protection to the collections, a repository may reasonably require acceptable identification of persons wishing to use its materials, as well as a signature indicating they have read a statement defining the policies and regulations of the repository.*

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righted works. Manuscripts cannot be used for publication without due regard for common law rights, literary rights, property rights, and libel laws. The user assumes legal responsibility for observing these rights. A repository should, to the best of its ability, inform the researcher about known retention of literary rights.

5. A repository should not [grant exclusive use of] *deny access to materials* to any person or persons, or conceal the existence of any body of material from any researchers, unless required to do so by law, donor, or purchase stipulations.
6. *A repository should not charge fees for the noncommercial use of its collection.*
7. A repository should, whenever possible, inform a researcher of parallel research by other individuals using the same papers. It may supply names upon request.
8. Repositories are committed to preserving manuscript and archival materials and to making them available for research as soon as possible. At the same time, it is recog-

nized that every repository has certain obligations to protect confidentiality in its records in accordance with law and that every private donor has the right to impose reasonable restrictions upon his papers to protect confidentiality for a reasonable period of time.

- a. It is the responsibility of the repository to inform researchers of the restrictions which apply to individual collections or record groups.
- b. The repository should discourage donors from imposing unreasonable restrictions *and should encourage a specific time limitation on such restrictions as are imposed.*
- [c. The repository should, whenever possible, require a specific time limit on all restrictions.]
- [d.]c. The repository should periodically reevaluate restricted records and work toward providing *free* access to material [no longer harmful to individuals or to national interest].

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