

**WESTERN LIBRARIES  
ARCHIVES & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS  
COLLECTION MANAGEMENT POLICY**

**REVISED 2022**

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## **Mission Statement**

Western Libraries, Archives & Special Collections provides for the responsible stewardship of unique and archival resources in support of teaching, learning, and research. The Center for Pacific Northwest Studies, Special Collections, and University Archives work together to document the culture and history of Western, our community, state, region, and world.

## **Center for Pacific Northwest Studies**

The Center for Pacific Northwest Studies seeks to foster greater understanding of the region's past and present through the preservation and management of and access to archival collections, and the development of public and instructional programming. In its development of archival collections, the Center seeks those materials that document significant developments in the region stretching from Alaska to Northern California, and from the Pacific to the Rocky Mountains, with a particular focus on northwest Washington, the Olympic Peninsula, British Columbia, and Alaska.

## **Special Collections**

Special Collections is committed to providing access to cultural heritage materials that support original research, active learning, and public dialogue around issues and ideas that have shaped our world.

## **University Archives & Records Management**

University Archives & Records Management serves a cultural, memory, and business function for Western Washington University. As the official repository for the institutional archives of Western Washington University, the University Archives compiles a record of the significant activities carried out in the fulfillment of Western's mission. The Archives preserves records as a resource for the university community and promotes use of the collection by faculty, staff, students, alumni and the general public. Records Management supports the integrity of record-keeping at Western, affecting both current and long-term documentation, and in this capacity supports and enhances development of the University Archives.

## **Authority Statement**

Archives & Special Collections exists as a division within Western Libraries. The Director acts as chief administrative officer and reports to the Dean of Libraries who authorizes the operating budget. Staff include library faculty, professional exempt and classified personnel, volunteers, students, and interns. Each unit within Archives & Special Collections is managed by qualified

archival or special collections professionals. Specialized advisory boards consisting of representatives from the university and the community may be appointed, in consultation with the Dean of Libraries, to provide guidance and advice on matters of development and mission. Oversight of collection guidelines, the designation of staff and resources for collection development and maintenance, and review and revision of the collection policy resides with the Director. The Director, in coordination with the head of each unit, determines policy regarding the acquisition and disposition of collections. Certain functions of University Archives & Records Management are authorized through separate university policy (see [POL-U4910.01 Managing University Archival Records](#) and [POL-U4910.03 Managing University Records](#)).

## **Collection Scope and Strategy Statement**

The three units within Archives & Special Collections have unique but mutually supportive collecting strategies, and work cooperatively in pursuance of their individual missions. Archives & Special Collections will only collect unique material that can be responsibly maintained and preserved within the constraints of allocated resources.

The **Center for Pacific Northwest Studies** collects material that represents significant developments in the region stretching from Alaska to Northern California, and from the Pacific to the Rocky Mountains, with a particular focus on northwest Washington, the Olympic Peninsula, British Columbia, and Alaska. In support of this effort, the Center seeks a wide array of material, including private papers, organizational, business and institutional records, correspondence, photographs, printed material, scrapbooks, maps and architectural drawings, diaries, audio and video resources, electronic records, artwork and ephemera which describe the region from pre-European contact to the present. Particular emphasis is given to the collection of materials which document economic development, cultural and social history, environmental history, and other historically significant trends in the region.

**Special Collections** acquires published and archival materials that support teaching, research, and exhibitions on a wide range of topics. Holdings are organized into four main collections. Strengths of the Rare Book Collection include European and American exploration narratives of the Pacific Northwest, early histories of the region, the art and history of the book, Judaica and Holocaust Studies, and mountaineering. The Children's Collections contain mostly nineteenth- and twentieth-century works of English-language fiction and poetry as well as historical readers and primers, materials used in WWU's Campus School, pop-up books and books with moveable parts, and several archival collections. The Campus History Collection comprises sources on the history of WWU, primarily books, periodicals, and photographs but also archival materials created by faculty, staff, alumni, and campus organizations whose records fall outside the collecting scope of University Archives & Records Management. The Fly Fishing Collections date back to the seventeenth century and provide material for studying not only the development of this sport, but also its relationship to nature writing, ecology, conservation, and the Pacific Northwest.

**University Archives** is the official repository for the institutional archives of Western Washington University and collects university records in all formats and from all parts of the institution. The Archives seeks records that provide a continuity of evidence of official acts and decisions; that ensure Western's accountability to itself and to its stakeholders; that document the events and people that impact the university's history; and that document the scholarly, academic, and cultural life of the university community. Together, the Archives and Records Management functions are mandated by [Chapter 40.14 RCW](#) and [by university policy](#) to provide oversight over all university record-keeping; to ensure the preservation and accessibility of meaningful records for as long as they are needed; to guarantee the authenticity, reliability, integrity, and usability of records; and to establish effective record-keeping practices in compliance with legal requirements, institutional policy, business needs, and community expectations.

Archives & Special Collections acknowledges that problematic content exists in our collections, collection descriptions, and teaching tools. We recognize the harm that comes from engaging with these culturally sensitive materials and we aim to collect and describe archival and special collections in a manner that is respectful to the individuals and communities who create, use, and are represented in the resources we manage.

## **Collection Management Policy**

Archives & Special Collections has developed a series of policies for the acquisition and management of its collections. These policies are designed to provide for proper documentation, identification, security, physical care and preservation, and maximum accessibility to collections. In some instances, the material represented in our collections belongs to the communities that created the resources and with whom we have a responsibility for shared and respectful stewardship of the material in our care.

### **Acquisition**

Donation of material is essential to the ongoing mission of Archives & Special Collections. Archival and special collections are acquired by a variety of methods including gift, bequest, purchase, deposit, exchange, transfer, loan and through reciprocal relationships involving shared stewardship of some culturally sensitive materials.

The Director, the UARM and CPNWS archivists, the Special Collections Librarian, and the Special Collections Manager have the authority to seek and accept collections. Advisory groups may assist collection development and identification of collections for potential acquisition. All acquisitions, regardless of source, must be approved by the Director.

All collections must undergo a rigorous selection and review process. New acquisitions must be consistent with the mission statement and collecting philosophy of Archives & Special Collections; they must enhance objectives in research or public programs and be of appropriate size and condition to receive proper care and management.

All collections must be acquired with proper authorization and be consistent with applicable laws and professional ethics. Ownership, legal title, and copyright must be established at the time a collection is accepted.

All acquisitions are accepted with the good faith intention to retain the collection in its entirety for an indefinite period of time or as prescribed by the law, with the understanding that non-archival, culturally sensitive, superfluous, or duplicate material may be removed or repatriated in accordance with standard archival practices and legal authority.

Due to ethical and legal constraints, Archives & Special Collections staff are not permitted to offer monetary appraisals to donors or potential donors of material gifts. Staff are permitted to provide recommendations in the private sector for this purpose.

## **Restrictions**

Archives & Special Collections does not restrict research access to or use of its donated collections unless a special exception has been granted, which may include the following:

- **Publication Restriction:** The researcher must receive written permission from the donor or individual authorized by the donor before quotation or reproduction of the papers for publication. Archives & Special Collections will notify the researcher of this stipulation and provide contact information for permission.
- **Access Restriction:** The researcher must receive written permission from the donor or individual authorized by the donor before the materials will be made available for viewing. Archives & Special Collections will notify the researcher of this stipulation and provide contact information for permission.
- **Sealed Access Restriction:** The researcher may not access a designated portion of a collection for a clearly specified duration.

Archives & Special Collections will honor the imposed restrictions to the extent permitted by law. A termination date is required for all restrictions to be valid.

All restrictions must be documented with appendices to the deed of gift and approved by the Director. The Dean of Libraries will jointly approve sealed or access restrictions extending beyond fifty years.

## **Culturally Sensitive Material**

Culturally sensitive materials are items that are considered sacred or hold power for their originating communities. Archives & Special Collections respects the values, beliefs and history represented in these materials and recognizes that the originating communities retain cultural, spiritual, and ritual rights to these resources. To respect and acknowledge these rights, Archives & Special Collections will follow the Protocols for Native American Archival Material and internal policies developed in partnership with relevant cultural groups. These policies supplement this collections management policy and guide access, reproduction and publication of indigenous and other cultural resources that have been classified as either culturally sensitive or whose classification is undetermined. Additionally, Archives & Special Collections will engage in discussions and written understandings and/or agreements with relevant communities regarding culturally sensitive material identified in the collections. These agreements acknowledge the nature of the cultural expression, the importance of traditional knowledge when classifying these materials as culturally sensitive, and the potential harm that comes from engaging with these resources for the communities of origin. These communities are invited to offer guidance regarding restriction or removal of sensitive materials from physical or online collections and/or agreements for limiting access or use, and any special care and handling.

A [“Statement About Potentially Harmful Language and Content”](#) will accompany relevant online research and teaching tools when staff identifies culturally sensitive, offensive or triggering material that can negatively impact the individuals and communities who create, use and are represented in the resources managed by Archives & Special Collections.

## **Privacy**

Archives & Special Collections provides stewardship, preservation, and access to its archives and manuscript collections for educational and scholarly purposes. Access to archives or special collections may include content that, if disclosed, could harm individuals or groups represented in the collections, including personally identifiable information or other privacy matters as identified by the donor or Archives & Special Collections staff. Some materials in Archives & Special Collections may also contain sensitive or confidential information protected under federal and/or state privacy laws and regulations. The division takes steps to identify and remove this information. Information may include but is not limited to educational, medical, financial, and personnel records (e.g. Social Security numbers, banking information, credit card numbers, driver’s licenses, student transcripts, and health records).

Users are advised that the disclosure of certain information may have legal implications. Users who find sensitive or confidential information in any collection agree to immediately notify the Archives and Special Collections staff. Users also agree to make no notes or other record of privacy protected information if found within the collections and further agree not to publish, publicize, or disclose such information to any other party. Users assume responsibility for

infringement of right to privacy in use of these materials and agree to indemnify and hold harmless Archives & Special Collections, Western Washington University, its employees and agents against all claims, demands, costs and expenses arising from the use of sensitive or confidential information found in its collections.

## **Documentation for Book and Archival Collections**

Accessioning is the formal process for recording an addition to the archival collections. This procedure provides for the official acceptance of material into custody of Archives & Special Collections and establishes the basis of legal title and possession. All acquisitions of archival materials must be documented at the departmental level through the creation of an accession record. This record captures basic information regarding the creation, content and condition of materials, as a means to support their long-term management, preservation and access. Minimum documentation should adhere to professional best practices and standards (see Appendix A: Archival Accession Guidelines).

A deed of gift for archival material is required to transfer legal title of donated material to Archives & Special Collections. Other instruments of transfer include wills, loan agreements, and transfer of custody agreements. Transfer of official university records is managed through disposition statements, records retention schedules, and legal documentation of transfer or exchange.

A preservation appraisal and inventory of the contents of each collection should be initiated within two weeks of acquisition. Boxes should be labeled with the title of the collection.

All book and archival acquisitions should be acknowledged by a letter to the donor or transmittal form within 30 days of receipt.

Records pertaining to the collection of archival records shall be filed according to collection title and maintained in an acquisition control file. The file will include any documentation relating to the acquisition, including correspondence, deeds, legal documentation, biographical or historical information, research or exhibition activity, the catalog record, processing information, and/or transfer agreements. These files are to be maintained in perpetuity and are not available for public access except as allowed by law. Applicable laws that may affect disclosure of any transfer record include RCW 42.56, FERPA and/or HIPAA.

Book donations shall be documented by forms and other paperwork to establish ownership and legal title, including a complete/signed Gift Acknowledgment form, a copy of donor letter, current and complete donor contact information.

## **Transfer, Deaccession, Repatriation and Disposal**

Archives & Special Collections permits the transfer of material across divisional units as appropriate to collecting mission and scope. Material that falls outside of the collection scope may be transferred elsewhere within the Western Libraries or to other institutions.

Deaccession and disposal of material are legitimate aspects of collection management and are intended to refine and improve the quality and appropriateness of the collection with respect to the Archives & Special Collections mission and public trust responsibilities.

In coordination with the Dean of Libraries, the Director or designee has the authority to approve the transfer, deaccession or disposal of collection material. In some instances, in accordance with special requests, the advice or approval of a donor or office of record may be sought for final disposition.

Criteria for deaccession or disposal include:

- The item does not contribute to the collecting mission of Archives & Special Collections.
- The item is not unique, rare, or archival in nature.
- The authenticity, attribution, or legal title of the item is in question.
- The item is more appropriate to the mission of another institution.
- Archives & Special Collections cannot properly house, preserve or care for the item.
- The item has deteriorated beyond repair and use.
- The item duplicates other collection material.
- Exchange or sale of the item could refine and improve the collection.

Methods of disposal include return to donor, donation, transfer, exchange, repatriation, sale, and destruction.

Repatriation is the return of cultural materials to the country or people who created them. Repatriation criteria is based on the nature of the material and negotiated through agreements with the relevant communities. All repatriation requests must be approved in coordination with the director and dean of libraries. Methods of repatriation include:

- Return of physical material.
- Sharing digital copies and facsimiles.
- Access to specialized tools for resource sharing.

University records may not be transferred to another entity except as prescribed by law.

In consultation with the Dean of Libraries, proceeds from the sale or exchange of collection items meeting the above criteria should be returned to the Archives & Special Collections for use in further collection development as designated by the Director.

## Access

Access is the opportunity for Western students and faculty, the general public, scholars, and others to utilize the diverse collections maintained by Archives & Special Collections. There are no fees associated with access to the holdings of the Archives & Special Collections. User fees may apply for duplication.

Archives & Special Collections encourages the free use of its collections by all individuals wishing to contribute to the advancement of knowledge and scholarship. Archives & Special Collections strives to provide reasonable open and equal access to the resources in its holdings on a nondiscriminatory basis while balancing preservation and security concerns for the collections in its care.

Access to collection material can be physical or intellectual. Physical access refers to actual contact with collection material for the purposes of teaching, research or exhibition. Intellectual access is the transmission of information describing the holding of Archives & Special Collections or digital facsimiles of collection resources. Such information may take the form of data or images transmitted via electronic media and will be based on archival and library standards and best practices.

Archives & Special Collections staff have the authority to grant public access to collections. Staff are responsible for evaluating requests, providing access and monitoring access, and ensuring proper handling of archival material (see Appendix A: “Usage Guidelines”).

Archives & Special Collection may place restrictions on the access and use of materials that are classified culturally sensitive, as determined by either the donor, Archives & Special Collections staff, or a specific tribe or community. These restrictions are designed to protect the physical and cultural integrity of the materials and may include prohibiting photographing, the duplication of certain materials, or limited access and use.

All requests for physical access to collections must be documented through a research application form which specifies the following information:

- Patron name and contact information
- Nature and topic of research
- Title and specific section of collection(s) accessed
- Duplication requests and cost

All research transactions will be documented in an electronic database for statistical purposes.

Researchers publishing information based on Archives & Special Collections holdings are required to provide proper citations and to adhere to permission to publish requirements (see Appendix B: “Permission to Publish or Display”).

Resource limitations; collection condition and availability; preservation and security concerns; and/or privacy, intellectual property, or other legal restrictions may impact access to collections. Denial of access may be appealed to the Director.

## **Digital Collections**

Archives & Special Collections is committed to providing its users with access to innovative digital resources for teaching, learning and research. In pursuit of this mission, Archives & Special Collections collects and provides stewardship for born digital materials in all supportable formats and creates digital resources from its physical holdings. Acquisition, selection, and creation of digital resources is based on research interest; anticipated use in teaching, learning, and research; condition of originals; nature of materials; legal mandate; and/or available resources.

Archives & Special Collections seeks collaborations with faculty and staff, university departments, allied institutions, and potentially impacted communities in the development of its digital collections. Proposed partnerships might include the sharing of staff expertise, technical resources, and hosting arrangements. All collaborative relationships require adherence to specific minimum-level standards for digital content and the agreement that digital resources will be made available online through Western Libraries Digital Collections.

## **Preservation**

Preservation is a critical and integral component of professional archival management. The primary goal of preservation is to maximize the life of collection items and to prevent a loss in value. Archives & Special Collections seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for all collections in its custody. To the extent possible with available resources, the units comprising Archives & Special Collections will each provide appropriate housing, climate control, processing, maintenance, reformatting and conservation for the collections in its care.

## **Risk Management and Security**

Archives & Special Collections operates in compliance with the Risk Management and Disaster Preparedness Plans in place for the Goltz-Murray Archives Building and Western Libraries. Building security is provided by Western Washington University Police in coordination with the Northwest Regional Branch of the Washington State Archives.

Archives & Special Collections makes every effort to ensure the safety and security of its collections by observing the following practices in a respectful manner:

- All collections must be secured in controlled areas dedicated for collection storage.
- Access to collection storage areas is limited to staff and/or authorized building personnel. With prior arrangements, staff may lead tours of secure areas for teaching purposes.
- Researchers are monitored and collections examined after use.
- Movement of collection items is tracked and documented by staff.
- All collections are returned to the storage area at the end of each business day.

## **Physical Control**

Archives & Special Collections units shall provide for inventory control over individual collections and a process for physically locating individual items or collections within that listing.

To maintain physical control, staff will accession and/or catalog each new acquisition into a designated collections management system and create a control file for each accession (see Appendix A: “Accession Guidelines”).

Any changes in collection status or location will be recorded in the database and noted in the control file.

Archives & Special Collections staff will conduct a complete inventory of unit holdings on a regular basis to ensure that all collections are accounted for and residing at their designated locations.

Significant, valuable, or sensitive collections are to be identified and examined periodically. All discrepancies in the inventory are to be documented and reconciled promptly. Lost or misplaced material is to be noted in the collections management database and collection file.

Only Archives & Special Collections staff are allowed to remove items from archival collections. Staff must complete a removal notice when removing any archival item from its designated location (see Appendix B: “Removal Notice”). One copy of the form will be placed in the collection to mark where the item was removed, and the removal will also be tracked with either a copy of the form on file or a database entry noting the removal. The head of each department will monitor the return of items.

No item is allowed to leave the Libraries or Archives Building without the permission of the Director or his/her designee. All removals will be documented. Long-term removals will be insured to their full value through the Risk Management Administration of Western Washington University.

## Loans

Archives & Special Collections will consider loan requests for educational purposes from institutions whose missions and activities are consistent with Western's mission.

Archives & Special Collections materials will be loaned solely for educational, not-for-profit purposes, except as stipulated in a formal agreement with Western and/or by written approval of the Director.

All requests to borrow Archives & Special Collections material must be made in writing at least one month prior to the anticipated date of shipment. All requests should include the project or exhibition title and description, dates, loan period, specific venue(s), and complete citations for the requested item(s).

The borrowing organization must submit an institutional background report and a standard facilities report (specifying environmental controls, safety, security, staffing, storage, and exhibition space capabilities) to demonstrate that it is a viable institution, capable of preserving, protecting, and exhibiting collections.

All incoming and outgoing loans are subject to written loan agreements signed by both the borrower and the lender prior to shipment or receipt of material (see Appendix A: "Conditions Governing Loans and Exhibitions").

The Director must approve all incoming or outgoing loans. The Director or his/her designee is responsible for documenting, monitoring, returning, and retrieving loans.

The loan agreement must establish the rights and responsibilities of each party, and include the following information:

- Purpose of loan
- List of loaned objects
- Duration of loan
- Reproduction rights
- Credit line
- Insurance coverage
- Initiation and termination dates
- Shipping and handling requirements
- Valuation
- Name and address of contact

All costs of the affiliation will be borne by the borrowing institution including: insurance; packing; shipping and crating; appraisals; photography; framing; copyright clearances; installation and de-installation; security; and transportation, unless waived by Director.

A condition report specifying the item, format, physical condition, and dimensions must be completed prior to shipment of any loaned item.

Collection items may not be cleaned, repaired, or altered in any way without the written permission of the Director.

As specified in Appendix A: “Conditions Governing Loans and Exhibitions,” borrowed items may not be reproduced without prior permission.

All loans are for a specified period of time with renewal options. All requests for renewal must be in writing.

Archives & Special Collections reserves the right to deny any loan request based on the nature of the request or borrowing institution; the object’s condition, rarity, or ability to withstand the rigors of exhibition; any restriction which may impede the loan; and/or the impact of the absence of the object to the collection.

Archives & Special Collections reserves the right to recall loaned items within 5 business days.

## **Exhibitions**

On a regular basis, Archives & Special Collections will prepare and present physical or virtual exhibitions singly or jointly with other campus units and/or outside institutions. These exhibitions will be of the highest quality and will be based on the holdings of Archives & Special Collections.

The Director must approve all proposals for exhibitions as well as all items selected for exhibition or display.

Only Archives & Special Collections staff or designated “guest curators” are allowed to plan and mount exhibitions.

Exhibitions must be installed under appropriate environmental conditions (see Appendix A: “Conditions Governing Loans and Exhibitions”).

## **Intellectual Property and Duplication Requests**

Archives & Special Collections acquires basic rights, such as copyright to collections, through the deed of gift and other forms of legal documentation.

Intellectual property rights to the holdings of Archives & Special Collections are governed primarily by the U.S. Copyright law, which defines intellectual property principles for primary source material.

Archives & Special Collections does not, in many cases, have intellectual property rights to the content in its holdings. The doctrine of “fair use” allows libraries, archives, and their patrons to reproduce copyrighted and unpublished materials for purposes such as criticism, news reporting, education, scholarship, and research.

The use of photocopying machines and other devices to reproduce collection objects or images will be permitted in accordance with factors designated by the “fair use” exception in the U.S. Copyright law.

A fee to defray the cost of duplication will be assessed for scholarly, not-for-profit requests (see Appendix A: “Duplication Guidelines”).

Material may be reproduced for the purpose of commercial publication or display. Based upon an established fee structure, fees will be charged for duplication requests for material used in profit-based publishing ventures, providing the proper conditions are met (see Appendix A: “Duplication Guidelines” and Appendix B: “Permission to Publish or Display”).

As part of the agreement allowing duplication of Archives & Special Collections material, staff may request additional copies in support of the digital or physical collections.

On a discretionary basis, staff may waive any fees.

## **Citation**

All items reproduced from Archives & Special Collections holdings must be given proper citation as follows:

Collection Title  
Department Name  
Western Libraries Archives & Special Collections  
Western Washington University

## **Amendment Provision**

These provisions may be amended at any time. All changes or amendments to the Archives & Special Collections, Collections Management Policy or its mission must be approved by the Director, upon consultation with the Dean of Libraries.