

# Texas Woman's University

## Library Policy Manual

**Policy Name:** Special Collections Room Usage Policy

**Last Library Review:** September 2022

**Next Library Review:** September 2023

### **Purpose:**

To establish guidelines for using/reserving the Catherine Merchant Reading Room and Special Collections Instruction Room in the Blagg-Huey Library of Texas Woman's University. This policy covers only these spaces.

***Note:** Access, availability, usage, and occupancy limits may be changed in accordance with University guidelines regarding health and safety.*

### **Definitions: For the purpose of this policy**

***Catherine Merchant Reading Room-*** a small open research area located inside of Special Collections and monitored by staff to safeguard Special Collections materials.

***Instruction Room-*** the area inside of Special Collections used for instruction, donor meetings, and programming

### **Library Guidelines**

#### **Catherine Merchant Reading Room**

1. The Catherine Merchant Reading Room is reserved for those using special collections and University archival materials and records. These materials do not circulate because of their rarity, fragility, value, intrinsic historical significance, unusual format, and confidential and sensitive content.
2. The Reading Room is not available for general study.
3. Users must register by signing in and out at the Reception desk. By signing the Guest Register, users are acknowledging that they have agreed to the Special Collections *Access, Usage, and Handling Policies* (see separate policy). Notify staff when you leave.
4. Materials cannot be removed from the Reading Room and are only used at the designated tables.
5. Only materials needed for research may be brought into the Reading Room such as a notebook, note cards, pencil, and laptop computer.
6. Cell phones are not permitted; if a call needs to be made, users must go to the reception area.
7. All personal items (books, notebooks, purses, coats, backpacks, bags, laptop cases, knapsacks, packages, briefcases, portfolios, hats, umbrellas) and other possessions that are not essential to your work should be placed in the lockers in the reception area. Large items may be placed in the Processing Room. All items must be retrieved by 5 pm.

8. Loud talking and other distractions likely to disturb researchers are not allowed. Conversation should be limited and extended conferences with others should be moved outside of the Reading Room.
9. Food and drink (including covered beverages), chewing gum, and smoking are not permitted.
10. Because personal scanning devices are not allowed in the Reading Room, users needing to scan or copy should consult with staff. If materials are in a condition to be scanned staff will do the task.
11. For security purposes, Special Collections staff reserve the right to review any materials brought into or out of the Reading Room.
12. Staff will instruct users on the proper use and handling of materials.
13. In accordance with TWU Policy URP: 01.245 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), service animals are allowed in all Special Collections spaces.
14. The Reading Room is reserved by the Special Collections staff.

### **Instruction Room**

1. Priority usage of the Instruction Room is given to Special Collections staff for the purpose of instruction, programming, events, and to those users who need access to vault materials due to overflow and lack of availability of the Catherine Merchant Reading Room.
2. The Instruction Room is open during Special Collections & University Archives [hours](#). After hours the room is used for studying unless an event is scheduled.
3. The Library reserves the right to deny scheduling events during peak study (midterms and finals) and instruction times.
4. Maximum room capacity is limited to 50.
5. Reserving space in this area reserves only the Instruction space.
6. Because Special Collections is a working area, events cannot interfere or disrupt normal operations.
7. The reception area and desk cannot be used and the furniture in this area cannot be moved.
8. After hours events needing technology must request entrance to the server room from the library security guard.
9. Food and drink (including covered drinks) are not allowed, unless authorized by the Library Dean in advance for special events. Because there is no access to a nearby kitchen, groups need to plan accordingly.
10. Patrons needing scanning and copying services for Special Collections materials should consult with staff.
11. Groups using the area for events are required to set up the room according to their needs. Special Collections staff are not responsible for setting up the room prior to instruction or events by others.
12. Groups using the room need to reset the room to its original order and remove any trash in the event that food has been served. Tables must be wiped down following events with food and drink.

13. Technology support is provided by the Library Systems Engineer and is coordinated through the Library Administrative Office.
14. Display cases are not available for use to outside groups; only the moveable wall sections can be used to cover them up.
15. Use of the Instruction Room by non-library staff must be pre-arranged through the Library Administrative Office.
16. The Instruction Room is a collaborative space and therefore not a quiet area.
17. Noncompliance in following these procedures will result in denied use of the room by the organization in the future.
18. All applicable TWU policies must be followed while using Library space.

**Review:**

The Library's Policy Work Group will review this policy with recommendations forwarded through normal administrative channels to the Dean of Libraries.

## SPECIAL COLLECTIONS ROOM LAYOUT



