

## **Smith College Special Collections Research Guidelines and Expectations**

Special Collections is open to the public. We welcome anyone, and everyone, to use our collections, regardless of background, age, affiliation, or the nature of your research. Below are some guidelines to help make your visit comfortable and a success.

### **How the Room works**

- First-time users must complete a registration form
- Check in with reference desk staff upon arrival and check out before departure each visit
- Staff reserve the right to inspect any researcher's papers and personal belongings in order to prevent the accidental or intentional removal of material from the room.
- Some materials are restricted due to issues of privacy, state and federal regulations, and issues of fragility and preservation. These restrictions are noted when possible
- A small minority of our materials are located off site and require 48 hour notice for retrieval. Finding aids and other discovery tools will indicate when materials are offsite; it is always prudent to contact us at [specialcollections@smith.edu](mailto:specialcollections@smith.edu) before your research visit to determine if the records you need require advance retrieval.
- Some audiovisual materials also require advance notice to access due to specialty equipment. Some audiovisual materials may require reproduction before viewing/listening, which may cause a delay in your research
- Lockers and coat storage are available, free of charge, for storing personal belongings (backpacks, bags, laptop cases, umbrellas) that are not allowed at the research tables
- All devices should be muted when in the reading room. Phone calls must be managed outside of the reading room
- Food and drink is available in the Campus Center cafe and there is a place outside of the reading room to store bottles or snacks that you may have brought with you. No drinks or food are allowed in the reading room area

### **Use of materials**

- Materials cannot be checked out, but are available for use in the reading room
- All materials must be handled respectfully and with care -- for example, use of book cradles, specialty lighting, gloves if necessary, and gentle handling. Researchers will be guided by the staff
- Non-flash photography of materials is encouraged during your research. Special Collections has two document cameras (see [Document Camera Instructions](#) for more information), two iPads, and speciality lighting available for researchers on a first come basis. Please speak to a staff member for more information
- Please only use pencils or electronic devices for your own note taking
- Materials must remain in open view, without other items placed on top
- Use one box and folder at a time. Use a placeholder card to keep track of the sequence of the folder you are using within the box. Maintain archival materials in the order that you receive them. Keep the folder and materials flat on the table

- If you would like to request materials for reproduction, leave them within the order you found them in folders and boxes; staff will provide flags for you to mark which materials you would like to request
- When handling photographs, gloves are required and will be provided to you by staff