



XAVIER UNIVERSITY

University Archives and Special Collections Access Policy

Effective: March 19, 2021

Last updated: January 2025

Last reviewed: January 2025

Responsible University Office: University Archives and Special Collections,
University Library

Responsible Executive: Provost

Scope: Xavier University faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community donors

A. REASON FOR POLICY

University Archives and Special Collections Vision

To transform student, faculty, and community relationships with the past by

- Providing access to resources in University Archives and Special Collections' care in accordance with the parameters set by the University Archives and Special Collections Access Policy, which outlines issues of privacy, confidentiality, legal restrictions, university transmittal agreements, or donor restrictions that may affect access;
- Facilitating effective research, teaching, and community outreach;
- Supporting innovative scholarship and research projects; and
- Stewarding University Archives and Special Collections' assets into the future for discovery and re-use.

University Archives and Special Collections Mission

University Archives serves as the chief resource for historical materials about Xavier University. It identifies, acquires, maintains, and makes accessible records of enduring value that document the development of Xavier University since its founding in 1831 in support of the University's administrative, teaching, research, and service goals. Special Collections collects, arranges, describes, preserves, and provides access to selected rare books and manuscripts that reflect the broad intellectual interests and work of the faculty, staff, and students of the University in support of the University's teaching, research, and service goals.

University Archives and Special Collections serves both the Xavier University community and researchers from the public. This policy establishes criteria and procedures to govern access to collections held in University Archives and Special Collections, Xavier University Library.

B. POLICY

General Access Provisions

Access to materials within University Archives and Special Collections (UASC) is open to all research inquiries within the parameters set by issues of privacy, confidentiality, legal restrictions, or university restrictions. Individuals or organizations donating materials to UASC may set conditions on access and use.

UASC staff facilitate access to collection materials. All patrons wishing to use the collections must make an appointment with UASC staff and fill out a [patron registration form](#). Researchers are required to follow [usage guidelines and access requirements](#). Collection materials are housed in closed stacks and are not available for browsing. Collection materials must be viewed in the UASC Research Room and they do not circulate.

UASC staff reserves the right to limit use of collection materials upon consideration of physical condition, privacy, copyright, processing status, or the availability of staff. While UASC provides reference assistance to all users, we are not able to provide in-depth research services. UASC staff are able to provide up to thirty minutes of staff time for response to remote and onsite reference questions. Response time will vary depending on volume, scope, and availability.

Access Policies

Published Materials are open to any member of the Xavier community or external researchers. Examples of published materials include rare books, yearbooks, magazines, newspapers, newsletters, brochures, public web sites, and more.

Unpublished and Manuscript Materials:

- University Administrative Records
 - Items created more than 40 years ago may be used by any internal office, or by external researchers, with the permission of UASC staff or the creating office (or the creating office's divisional leader), unless specifically restricted;
 - Items created within the last 40 years may be used only with the permission of the creating office (or the creating office's divisional leader). Researchers requesting permission to restricted materials should contact UASC staff to facilitate access.
 - Examples of unpublished administrative records include meeting minutes, correspondence, memoranda, reports, and more.
- Board of Trustees records
 - Board of Trustees records created within the last 40 years are closed except to the Board of Trustees and the Office of the President. Records that have been in existence for at least 40 years are available for research with the permission of the University Archivist. Research requests for closed records will be reviewed by the University Archivist in consultation with the Secretary to the Board of Trustees.

- Student Records:
 - UASC does not knowingly accept student records. Student records found while processing collections, including transcripts, research papers, and student files, are immediately restricted.
 - Published records containing student information will be made available to researchers. Such records include alumni directories, student directories, yearbooks, student newspapers, college magazines, etc.
 - UASC abides by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974/1976 (FERPA) as set forth in [Xavier University's Policy and Procedures under FERPA](#).
- Personnel Records
 - UASC does not knowingly accept personnel records. Personnel records found while processing collections, including records such as hiring, evaluation, or search committee records, are immediately restricted.
 - Unpublished personnel records shall be restricted for a period of 70 years from date of the origin of the records.
- Faculty, staff, student and alumni papers will be made available for research. They may be subject to access restrictions set by individual donors.

C. DEFINITIONS

Access: the permission to locate and retrieve information for use (consultation or reference) within legally established restrictions of privacy, confidentiality, and security clearance. (Society of American Archivists, *Dictionary of Archives Terminology*, accessed August 2020).

Access restrictions: Access restrictions may be defined by a period of time or by a class of individual allowed or denied access. They may be designed to protect national security (classification³), personal privacy, or to preserve materials. (Society of American Archivists, *Dictionary of Archives Terminology*, accessed August 2020).

Donor restrictions: A limitation placed on access to or use of materials that has been stipulated by the individual or organization that donated the materials. (Society of American Archivists, *Dictionary of Archives Terminology*, accessed August 2020).

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act: A law (20 USC 1232g) protecting student and parent rights to access their own student records kept by the school, and restricting access to those records by others without the permission of the student or parents. (Society of American Archivists, *Dictionary of Archives Terminology*, accessed August 2020).

Use restriction: Use restrictions may limit what can be done with materials, or they may place qualifications on use. For example, an individual may be allowed access to materials but may not have permission or right to copy, quote, or publish those materials, or conditions may be imposed on such use. In addition to legal use restrictions, such as privacy and copyright, donor agreements often contain use restrictions. (Society of American Archivists, *Dictionary of Archives Terminology*, accessed August 2020).

D. PROCEDURES

The Office of the President may access any internal documentation without seeking permission of the originating office. The Office of the President may also approve complete research projects as a whole, so researchers would not have to request additional approvals from each creating office.

University personnel or external researchers who need access to archival records should contact the University Archivist, who will consider the request in accordance with this policy, and then either grant access or coordinate with the appropriate granting office for consideration and approval.

E. EXHIBITS (if applicable)

N/A

F. HISTORY

This policy replaces the University Library department Archives Access Policy, last updated October 29, 2012.

Other applicable policies and/or resources:

[Office of the Registrar. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Education Records and Student Records Policy](#)

[Special Collections Collection Development Policy](#) (2019)

[University Archives Collection Development Policy](#) (2020)

[University Archives and Special Collections Deed of Gift](#)

[University Archives and Special Collections Patron Registration Form](#)

[University Archives and Special Collections Reproduce Materials Request Form](#)

[University Archives and Special Collections Guidelines for Use](#)