



# ALAMO COLLEGES DISTRICT St. Philip's College

## ST. PHILIP'S COLLEGE ARCHIVES REFERENCE AND ACCESS PROCEDURES

### Procedure for Application to Consult Private Document Collections

The final decision regarding access to a private document collection is the prerogative of the Unit Head. Even though the donor may give permission to a researcher to consult his or her collection, Archives is still entitled to refuse or reserve such access until the collection concerned has been properly arranged and described.

There are certain collections which are subject to specific donor stipulations. Applications for the viewing of these collections must be made in advance.

Since the process of determining access could take some time, researchers are requested to complete their application forms at the commencement of their studies to avoid disappointment and inconvenience.

### Photocopies, Scans and Photograph Reproductions

The right to make photocopies, scans and photograph reproductions of materials from Archives collections is reserved. Researchers should be aware that all photocopies and scans will be made by Archives staff. St. Philip's College Media Services will handle all photograph reproductions.

Photocopies, scans and photograph reproductions will be furnished at the current rate of charge. Please ask an Archives staff member for a list of current charges. Permission must be requested on the prescribed form and the requested photocopies, scans and/or photograph reproductions will only be released to the researcher upon receipt of payment. Archives cannot, however, undertake to furnish such copies or scans within a specified period of time.

Photocopies, scans or photograph reproductions of materials in closed collections may only be made with the approval of the Unit Head.

The Archives Reproduction Request Form can be picked up in the Center for Learning Resources, Room 303 or 314B or accessed on our website (<http://www.alamo.edu/spc/archives/>).

## **Rules in the Reading Room**

### General

Reading Room Hours: Mondays to Fridays, 7:00am– 4:00pm and by appointment (Hours may vary during semester breaks.)

All patrons must fill out a Researcher Registration Form before being granted access to any archival materials.

Patrons will conduct research in the Archives Reading Room, Center for Learning Resources Room 303. A staff member will be on hand to retrieve materials and answer questions.

Archival documents may be consulted until 3:30pm. Archives staff will be on hand until 4:00pm to answer any questions.

Archival documents shall not as a rule be reserved. Archives staff may set aside materials for a researcher, but if another patron wishes to consult the materials, he or she will be allowed access.

All coats, parcels, briefcases, books, handbags or any such containers shall be left in a place indicated by the Reading Room Officer. The researcher is permitted to have only a paper notebook and pencil with him or her while consulting archival materials.

Researchers are required to use only a pencil when taking notes during consultation of documents. No pens, markers or writing implements other than pencils will be allowed in the Reading Room. Laptops may be used at the discretion of the Reading Room Officer.

Smoking, eating and drinking are prohibited in Archives.

All archival materials must be handled carefully: use only one folder at a time and keep the papers in their existing order. Do not place books or volumes face-down. Do not lean or press on archival materials. Do not trace maps or other records.

Researchers must leave their student/employee ID or valid/current driver license with the Reading Room Officer in order to gain access to materials in Archives. Once the Reading Room Officer is satisfied that all materials have been returned in good condition, the student/employee ID or valid/current driver license will be returned to the researcher along with all of his or her possessions.

Cotton gloves, supplied by the Reading Room Officer, must be used at all times when handling photographs or fragile materials.

Access may be denied if materials are too fragile to withstand use by researchers. The Unit Head will make the final decision on which documents can or cannot be used due to preservation concerns. The Reading Room Officer should consult the Unit Head if he or she feels that a document may be too fragile for public use.

Silence must be maintained at all times.

The researcher may wish to contact Archives beforehand in order to determine whether staff will be able to assist him or her. Archives staff may be under time constraints that restrict the ability to have a collection ready for research use.

No material in the archives may be removed from the research area.

Persons requesting access to restricted materials must contact the person or agency imposing the restrictions. The archives cannot permit access to these materials without written authority.

Researchers are advised that it is their responsibility, not Archives, to obtain copyright clearance to publish or otherwise reproduce or distribute archival material. Whenever possible, the archivist will provide the names and addresses of copyright holders.

#### Admission to the Reading Room

The right of admission to and use of the Reading Room will be reserved.

A researcher shall record the purpose and subject of his or her research in the research register.

#### Access to Archival Documents

Finding aids for collections are available in the Reading Room. These finding aids are used for the selection of specific files in a collection which the researcher wishes to consult. After selection of the required files, the researcher will be asked to complete a form with the information necessary for the retrieval of the desired files. At this time, the finding must be returned to the Reading Room Officer.

Requests for archival documents will be made on the prescribed form. On receipt of such archival documents, the researcher shall sign a receipt and the documents must be returned to the Reading Room Officer after consultation. The Reading Room Officer will record such return and furnish the researcher with a receipt.

Only one item or folder may be consulted at a time. Once the researcher is finished with the item or folder, he or she may return it and will be provided with the next item or folder.

### Consultation of Closed Collections

Collections that have not yet been processed are considered closed collections. The Unit Head must grant approval for the use of these collections.

Every application shall be treated on merit and it should not be taken for granted that access to a collection can be obtained because such permission had been granted previously to other researchers. Researchers should therefore ascertain when selecting their subjects whether the collections in which they are interested are available in order to avoid disappointment.

All applications for consultation of closed collections must be made on the prescribed form. The Unit Head need not give an explanation for the refusal of an application. However, every effort will be made to accommodate researchers and explain why a collection may not be consulted.

Permission for access to a closed collection shall only be valid for the period specified on the application form. After expiration of such period, application should be made anew.

A researcher can be requested to conclude consultation of a collection before starting on the next collection.

Archives may at any time, without supplying any reasons whatsoever, close an open collection.

### Handling of Archival Documents

All archival documents must be handled with the utmost care. Any researcher found guilty of damaging archival material through negligent or irresponsible conduct will be asked to leave the Reading Room and shall be held responsible for any damage done.

The pages of archival documents may not be folded and no marks may be made on or removed from such documents.

No tracings of archival documents are permitted.

Under no circumstances may archival documents be handled in such a way as to cause the order to be disturbed. No archival documents may be removed from files or from the Reading Room by researchers.

In the event of a researcher staining or damaging a page whilst consulting an archival document, he or she shall immediately report such damage to the Reading Room Officer. In the event of him or her noticing any such stain or damage of any kind on any page, he or she shall likewise report it.

### **Staffing of the Reading Room**

At least one staff member will be in the Reading Room at all times during the consultation of Archives materials. This Reading Room Officer will answer reference questions, explain and enforce all Reading Room rules, explain all forms and check them for accuracy and completeness, have the authority to remove researchers from the Reading Room and follow all procedures for the opening and closing of the Reading Room. Staff will sit at the Reading Room desk while observing researchers and may work on other projects if, and only if, they are not needed to help a researcher. The Reading Room Officer must constantly observe the behavior in the Reading Room and take any steps necessary to ensure the security of materials being used by researchers.

### **Opening Procedures for the Reading Room**

Unlock and prop open the door.

Turn on all lights.

Turn on computer for public use.

Sign in and prepare Reference Statistics Form for the day.

Retrieve any materials requested for the day.

### **Closing Procedures for the Reading Room**

Shut down public use computer.

Sign off on the Reference Statistics Form.

Ensure all personal items belonging to patrons have been picked up. If an item has been left behind, take it to the Library lost and found.

Turn off all lights.

Close and lock the door.

### **Reading Room Statistics**

The Reading Room Officer on duty shall record the number of patrons as well as the specific materials consulted by each patron. In addition, the number of reference questions answered and the amount of time served in the Reading Room shall also be documented. The Archives Reference Statistics Form will record this information.