Special Collections
Conditions of Use

The Special Collections area in the Mitchell Library Reading Room is a space reserved for the use of original material and rare printed items. This includes manuscripts, pictures, oral history, maps, rare printed items and realia. These collections are irreplaceable heritage material which is unique, significant, but also often fragile.

The Conditions of Use ensure that our collection items are preserved appropriately and available for future generations.

You will need a Special Collections Library card to access this material. Other published material from our collections may be requested for use but no other material may be used in this area without the permission of the Special Collections librarian.

Requesting material
- Please present your Special Collections Library card when requesting material.
- For original material and rare printed items fill in a stack slip for each item you require. If you require a number of manuscript boxes or pictorial albums, fill in a stack slip for each box or album. There is a limit of five items at a time.
- For most other printed items you can request via the catalogue.
- Some material has conditions of use and some requires permission to access. Please contact the Library via the Ask a Librarian (via the Library website) service before your visit.
- If the item you want is located in offsite storage, you may request in advance via the Ask a Librarian service or request a number of boxes / albums on one offsite request slip. It takes at least 24 hours to retrieve items.

Issuing Special Collections material
- Material will generally be issued one box, folder or item at a time. Keep material in the same order and in the same folder as it is issued.
- If microfilm and digital copies of material are available, these will be issued in order to preserve the original.

Security of the collection
- Original material will be weighed in your presence before it is issued to you. The weight will be recorded. You must return the material to the Special Collections desk and wait while the material is weighed again and the weight recorded.
- The following material will be weighed: all manuscript material, albums and boxes of pictorial material, boxed printed material.
- Staff may direct you to use a particular table, to change seats or to move material for collection security reasons.
- Material must not be removed from the Special Collections area.
- Material issued to you must not be used by another client without consultation with staff at the Special Collections desk.
- Material must be returned to staff at the Special Collections desk after use.

Care of Special Collections material
- No food or drink is permitted within the Special Collections area
- No bags of any sort are permitted within the Special Collections area (including handbags, camera bags, laptop bags etc)
• Please use clean dry hands (alcohol hand wipes are available on the Special Collections desk). In some instances you will be asked to use gloves to handle the collection for its protection. Gloves will be provided.
• Only pencils may be used in the Special Collections area. Ink, pens and highlighters are not permitted.
• Do not make marks on documents or take notes on top of materials.
• Do not use post-it notes to mark pages. Acid-free paper markers are available for use.
• All documents must rest on the table when being examined. Staff can supply book rests, cushions or supports to safely support items while being viewed.
• If you need any help handling the material due to size, weight or fragility please ask staff for assistance.
• The following items are supplied for your use to protect the collection so please ask staff for access to: weights, item supports, cushions, gloves, alcohol hand wipes, and acid free paper markers.

Copying material including use of cameras and phones
• If you would like to make or request copies of material, please speak to the librarian at the Special Collections desk. It may not be possible within current copyright legislation and / or restrictions placed on the material.
• You are required to fill in a “Copying by readers using their own equipment” form before any copying can be commenced.

Once the Librarian has agreed that copying can take place
• Flash must be switched off on all devices.
• Tripods may be used after checking with staff. Tripods must not be placed on or directly over an item.
• Hand-held scanners and flat-bed scanners are not permitted.

If you have any questions regarding the collections or appropriate use of the collections, please ask staff for assistance.