Reference and research services are available to library users who come to the Library and to those who request assistance over the telephone, via e-mail, or through written correspondence. Although telephone and correspondence reference services are an integral part of reference and research services, priority is always given to users who come to the Library.

**Types of Reference Service**

- Assistance in finding the answer to specific reference questions.
- Assistance in developing research strategies for reports, research paper, theses, and dissertations.
- Instruction in the use of the Library and its resources.
- Verification of Library holdings and referral to institutions which have materials that the Library lacks.
- Orientation to the Library through tours, tutorial sessions, course-related sessions, etc.
- In-depth reference appointments for patrons engaged in research based endeavors.

**Telephone Reference**

If the search for an answer will take longer than the Reference Librarian is able to devote at that time, arrangements will be made to call the person back if the call is local. If the call is long distance, the caller should call back at a specific time. The information will be retrieved and left with whoever is the person then on duty.

**Interpretation of Material**

Reference staff does not interpret information, such as legal, medical, financial, statistical information or class assignments. Library staff may not give to patrons any interpretation or advice regarding legal, medical, financial, or “how to” information.
Appraisal of Books and Artifacts
Reference staff does not appraise the private property of patrons. Patrons are advised to consult a professional appraiser, but specific appraisers are not recommended.

Genealogical Questions
Genealogical searches are not undertaken by reference staff. Catalogue assistance and help locating standard reference sources are offered. Genealogical questions generally are referred to the State Library of North Carolina and the Public Library.

Services for Persons with Disabilities
It is the mission of the G. R. Little Library to provide equal access to information to all who request it. For persons who are disabled, the Library will make special provisions, and provide assistance to permit the patrons to examine sources and conduct research.

The Reference Collection
The reference collection is designed to meet the basic research, and information needs of the University community in all subject fields. Reference books are consulted to obtain certain information and are not designed to be read in their entirety. They are generally comprehensive, condensed and arranged to facilitate easy and accurate retrieval of information.

Reference materials of all types (including electronic products) are selected in accordance with the criteria established for the selection of library materials. The works chosen for the reference collection supply as much reliable information as possible with a minimum of duplication. Reference books may not be taken from the library.
Selection Procedures

(See G. R. Little Collection Development Policy on the Acquisitions Department webpage)

Collection Organization

The reference collection is arranged according to the Library of Congress classification and is distinguished from the main collection by an “REF” above the classification number and “Reference” bookplates just inside the front covers of the books. All stacks in the general reference collection are “open” stacks. Bound periodicals are integrated with the reference collection.

Types of Materials Included in the Collection

Encyclopedias
The collection contains appropriate general encyclopedias and Subject encyclopedias, which are updated as new editions, become available. Some encyclopedias may be purchased in electronic format. New purchases are made in accordance with the library collection development policy.

Dictionaries
English language, foreign language and subject dictionaries are purchased in accordance with collection development policies. They are updated if they become obsolete and a new edition is available.

Indexes and Abstracts (Print/On-line)
Subscriptions to general and subject indexes/abstracts, indexes to book reviews and works in collections are acquired to provide access to periodicals, newspapers and some books. New indexes/abstracts are acquired to support curriculum, teaching, and research needs.
**Bibliographies**
Standard bibliographic works, general bibliographies and specialized subject bibliographies, that can be used for general reference purposes are acquired for the reference collection.

**Legal Collection**
In addition to basic legal reference sources, the legal collection contains North Carolina and Federal law sources which support the criminal justice program and other discipline based Law classes. New acquisitions follow general policies.

**Annual Reports**
Annual Reports from the Fortune 500 corporations are collected to support both specific courses in the School of Business and Economics and general business and economics research. Additionally, the library subscribes to the database Hoover’s Company Records with company, industry and executive profiles as well as an array of online business databases.

**Vertical File**
The Information File consists of pamphlets, clippings, and photocopied materials from books, magazines or newspapers on a variety of subjects.

**Atlases**
A representative collection of general and specialized atlases both old and new are available.

**Online Resources**
The Library provides access to a wide variety of databases and other online resources to support the University’s education and research needs. These include electronic databases of indexes and abstracts, full text journals, and newspapers, as well as online encyclopedias, reference books, full text reports and other reference information.
The online resources are accessed on the libraries Online Resources webpage and are arranged according to subject area and in alphabetical order. All of the online resources are accessible to ECSU students, faculty, and staff in the Library and campus wide.
Many of the library’s electronic resources are also available to them from off campus. Those that are not available off campus are so labeled. Off campus access instructions are detailed on the library’s Reference and Online Resources web pages.

**Location of Reference Tools**

**Ready Reference Collection**
The Ready Reference Collection is located at the Reference Desk, consists of materials which need to be consulted on a frequent and regular basis. The Reference Librarian, in consultation with the reference staff, selects materials for placement in the Ready Reference Collection. These materials may be used in the library and must be signed out by a librarian.

**Periodical Indexes**
The periodical indexes are located in the periodical area on tables specially designed for these volumes. The Reference staff finds it necessary to make frequent use of these volumes since the bound periodicals are shelved together with the general reference collection.

**Reference Reserve**
Reference materials in high demand for a specific class may be temporarily transferred to special reserve at the reference desk, or they may be placed on regular reserve at the circulation desk.

**Circulation of Reference Materials**
Reference materials are non-circulating. Exceptions may be made depending on the nature of the materials, the projected need, and the prospective period of circulation. The Reference Librarian or the reference staff member on duty may give permission for reference materials to circulate.

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