SECURITY PROCEDURES

All library staff are committed to providing the best possible service to our patrons. Most transactions with patrons are pleasant and rewarding. Occasionally, patrons may have questions or complaints which challenge even the best public service skills. Your greatest tools for meeting such challenges are courtesy, common sense, even-temperedness, and a sense of humor.

Keep in mind that patrons should always leave the Library feeling that their reasonable requests and/or complaints were taken into consideration and handled effectively. There may be times when you cannot help the patron; however, if you offer alternatives or refer them to the appropriate person, then you have been helpful.

1. Guidelines for Library Personnel Response to Patrons with Complaints:

A. Remain calm, receptive, and nonjudgmental, but be aware of your surroundings!

B. Listen carefully to the patron’s question, request, or complaint by practicing active listening.

C. Pause, breathe deeply, and think before responding.

D. Speak in a relaxed and low tone. Repeat and paraphrase what the patron has said as concisely as possible. If the request or complaint is reasonable or legitimate, attempt to resolve the problem, but only if you have the authority to do so. If you do not have the authority, offer to refer the patron to your supervisor. If the complaint is against another staff member, state sympathetically that there may have been a misunderstanding and attempt to resolve the problem.

E. If there is a justifiable need to make an exception and you have the proper authority, make one. Please note that abusive, demanding behavior on the patron is not appropriate justification to make an exception.

F. If the request or complaint is against Library policy, thereby making an exception impossible, explain the policy clearly by giving a succinct explanation of its rationale. Then, if available, show a written copy of the policy to the patron.

G. Be pleasantly calm and firm. Do not argue. Stick to the issue and do not get sidetracked by peripheral arguments.

H. If possible, offer alternatives that do not violate policy and outline the choices.

I. If necessary, ask another staff member to corroborate your explanation and be prepared to act in support of your colleagues. If necessary or possible, refer the patron immediately to your supervisor. Keep in mind that personal styles may vary and one
staff member may be able to resolve a situation that another staff member could not. This should not be taken personally.

J. If your supervisor or the appropriate library administrator is not available, you may suggest that the complaint be made in writing or by telephone. If the patron wishes to make a complaint in writing or by telephone, direct the patron to the relevant person. Should the patron ask for your name to be included in the complaint, tell the patron. Be sure to inform your supervisor about these incidents so that the supervisor will have the necessary details when the patron calls or writes.

K. If you work weekends or evenings and your supervisor is not available, give the patron the supervisor’s name, office phone number, and the hours when he or she can be reached.

L. If the patron’s behavior becomes disruptive and interferes with the ability of others to use the Library or with library operations, follow the procedures outlined in the applicable sections of this manual.

2. Guidelines for Library Personnel Response to Patrons Detected by the Electronic Security System:

A. When the alarm goes off, staff on duty should immediately ask the individual concerned to stop and return to the Circulation Desk. In the infrequent case when the patron refuses to stop, the staff member should NOT attempt to restrain the individual, but should report the incident to the University Police with a description of the person.

B. As the patron returns to the desk, the staff member should suggest that he/she “may have forgotten to check something out.” The staff member should request that the individual check through his or her belongings (most patrons will cooperate in this, even if reluctantly).

i. If no library materials are found, the staff member should apologize for the inconvenience, but suggest that the individual might be carrying something other than library material, which has triggered the system. No mention should be made of false alarms, malfunctions, or anything else which would indicate a lack of trust in the efficiency of the system. The person should be requested to pass through the system again.

ii. On the second attempted exit, there may well be no alarm and the person will depart. If there is a second alarm, the individual should be asked again in a courteous manner about the possible presence of library materials. Concealed items or non-library “activating” items may well be surrendered voluntarily at this point. If no library materials are forthcoming, the individual should be allowed to pass the exit. At no time should library staff attempt to restrain physically or search any individual.
iii. If library materials are found, the first responsibility of the library staff is to retrieve the material, after which the usual charge procedure may take place provided that the material is circulating and the person has legitimate identification. If the individual was attempting to deliberately remove the material, the simple fact of having been caught may well serve as an effective deterrent.

iv. The individual may be carrying uncharged library material, which has been deliberately concealed (e.g., wrapped in a newspaper, stuffed in a notebook, or inside a garment, etc.) For this purpose “deliberate concealment” should not include library materials in a briefcase unless there has been an additional attempt to hide the library material. In such cases the staff member should:

a) Retrieve the material and call his/her supervisor.

b) The supervisor should request an authorized form of identification from the individual and note their name, as well as any pertinent information (e.g. student ID number, driver’s license number, phone number, etc.) If the patron is uncooperative in refusing to provide the requested identification, call the University Police at ext. 5050.

c) The supervisor should inform the individual that the incident will be reported to the Dean of Library Services, who will review the incident and, if necessary, inform the appropriate University official.

d) As soon as possible, the incident should be reported to the Dean of Library Services. All incident reports should include: the date and time of the incident, the name, status, and identification number of the individual involved, the nature of the incident (including call number and title of the library materials taken); the names of the library staff who witnessed the incident; and the name of the library staff reporting the incident. *(Library staff should complete the Library Incident Report form.)*

v. Individuals attempting to unlawfully remove materials from the Library will have notes added to their patron records in the Library’s circulation system. *(Library staff should complete the Library Incident Report form.)*

vi. As mentioned previously, no staff member should restrain physically or touch (i.e., search) an individual. If a patron makes a disturbance, confronts staff in a belligerent manner, or does any damage to the materials, the University Police should be called immediately (ext. 5050). *(Library staff should complete the Library Incident Report form.)*
1. Guidelines for Library Personnel Response to Patrons Detected Mutilating Library Materials:

   A. Since most cases of mutilation are discovered after the fact, there is little library staff can do to identify specific offenders. However, when a staff member suspects that a person is mutilating library material, the staff member should identify himself or herself to that person and request that the mutilation desist. The individual should then be escorted together with the mutilated materials to the Circulation Desk where the staff will contact University Police (ext. 5050). *Library staff should complete the Library Incident Report form.*

   B. Some cases of mutilation are directly tied in with class assignments. When a librarian observes that this is the case, he or she should immediately notify the professor in question so that appropriate remedies may be taken. These may include the substitution of other reading materials, a change in the nature of the assignment, or special methods to replace (if possible) the damaged item. *Library staff should complete the Library Incident Report form.*

2. Guidelines for Library Personnel Response to Patrons Vandalizing Library Building, Property, or Equipment:

   A. As with cases of mutilation, most acts of vandalism are done with an attempt at secrecy. If a staff member has been informed, observes, or suspects that a person has committed an act of vandalism, that staff member should identify himself or herself to the person and escort that person to the Circulation Desk where the staff will contact the University Police (ext. 5050) *Library staff should complete the Library Incident Report form.*

   B. If the act of vandalism was observed and reported by a third party, it will be necessary to obtain the name and address of the person witnessing the event and, if possible, to have them await the arrival of University Police. Notes concerning the incident should be recorded in the patron’s record. *Library staff should complete the Library Incident Report form.*

3. Guidelines for Library Personnel Response to Personal Security of Library Patrons and Library Personnel:

   A. Theft

      i. Personal items (books, coats, purses, etc.) should not be left unattended. Visitors should be encouraged to secure personal possessions.

      ii. If something is stolen, report the theft immediately to the supervisor and to the University Police (ext. 5050).
iii. Complete the *Library Incident Report Form*.

B. Fire

In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation, the building should be emptied of people as quickly as possible, without panic, and in an orderly manner. Appropriate signage and evacuation route markings will be provided and all fire equipment will be maintained in working order. The University Police Department will monitor the condition of equipment. The Dean of Library Services should ensure that floor personnel learn building and department emergency procedures as a part of staff orientation. The following procedures should be followed:

i. If fire or smoke is discovered, activate the fire alarm. Alarms are located on the walls next to the stairwell entrances on each floor. To activate the alarm, pull the white lever inside the red box.

ii. Fire extinguishers are also located on the walls next to the fire alarms.

iii. Phone the University Police (ext. 6000) to report the alarm. Give your name and the nature and location of the problem.

iv. ALL TRIGGERING OF ALARMS WILL BE TREATED AS EMERGENCIES UNLESS INFORMATION ABOUT TESTING HAS BEEN PROVIDED BEFOREHAND.

v. Elevators must not be used in evacuating buildings. If fire or smoke blocks an exit, use an alternate emergency exit.

vi. In the event of an emergency evacuation, library staff members should not return to their work area but should begin evacuating people in the area in which they are located immediately.

vii. If a fire alarm sounds in the Library, each Public Services librarian is responsible for making sure that everyone on the floor has been evacuated, including occupants of carrels, rest rooms, and other enclosed areas. If a floor is without supervision, it will be the responsibility of the librarian assigned to the floor above, Dean of Library Services or senior staff member to make sure the unattended floor is evacuated. Before leaving, the senior staff member in charge should ensure that all persons on the floor are gone.

viii. Disabled persons in the Library must be aided in evacuating the building. The staff of each floor must be sure that all disabled individuals in the area for which the librarian is responsible are assisted from the Library, or assisted to a safe area for emergency personnel to rescue, should an emergency occur.
ix. Library staff should meet at the designated staging area (Church Street [East] entrance steps) and report to the Dean of Library Services or senior staff member when they have cleared the building. The Dean of Library Services or senior staff member will be on the Church Street (East) entrance steps and will have a check-off sheet for all areas (the Emergency Evacuation Check List [Appendix E] will be kept on a clipboard at the Circulation Desk). Staff should check-in with the person with the clipboard. They should report as to the status of their areas and any pertinent information about unchecked areas, individuals in the building, or other problems.

x. Upon exiting the building in an emergency, staff should go to the staging area (Church Street [East] entrance steps) and then remain far enough away from the building to allow emergency personnel unimpeded access to the building. **AT NO TIME SHOULD LIBRARY STAFF REENTER THE BUILDING WHILE THE ALARM IS STILL SOUNDING. STAFF MAY ONLY REENTER THE BUILDING WHEN AUTHORIZED TO DO SO BY THE APPROPRIATE INDIVIDUAL.** For the Library this individual is the Dean of Library Services or the senior staff member. **DO NOT REENTER THE BUILDING UNLESS THIS INDIVIDUAL HAS INDICATED PERMISSION TO DO SO.**

xi. When the building has been cleared for reentry, all emergency exits must be checked to make sure that they are closed and operational.

C. **Complete the Library Incident Report Form. Violent or Disruptive Persons**
   
i. Remain calm.

   ii. Call the University Police (ext. 6000) for help.

   iii. Give your name and location and describe the nature of problem, how many people are involved, whether they are armed, and whether they are injured.

   iv. Complete the Library Incident Report Form.

D. **Personal Injury or Sudden Illness**

   i. Call the University Police (ext. 6000). Per **Jacksonville State University Safety and Environmental Health Guidelines and Procedures Manual:**

   Traffic-related injuries, incidents and accidents should be reported to the University Department of Public Safety. All other injuries, illnesses and incidents, which occur on University property, or affect University personnel or equipment, shall be reported on the SEH Form 101 (see Appendix F) or other designated form. Copies shall be distributed to the following: the original to the Office of Safety and Environmental Health, and copies to the unit head, and the Risk Manager.
All job-related injuries and illnesses are included in this reporting system. Additionally, any near-injuries, accidents resulting in loss or damage, near-accidents or other incidents which in themselves resulted in no loss or injury but had significant accidental loss potential, should also be reported using this system.

ii. Complete the Library Incident Report Form.

4. Guidelines for Library Personnel Response to Other Library Security Problems:

A. Food and Drink

Consumption of food and drink by library users is limited exclusively to the lobby. Patrons should be advised of the policy and asked to relocate to the lobby area. If they are uncooperative, they should be asked to leave the building. If they refuse, they should be treated as a disruptive patron.

B. Tobacco Use

It is the policy of the Library to prohibit smoking within the building. Patrons should be advised of the policy and asked to relocate to the outside of the building. If they are uncooperative, they should be asked to leave the building. If they refuse, they should be treated as a disruptive patron.

C. Elevators

Daytime: Telephone ext. 5255.
Nights and weekends: Telephone ext. 5050 (University Police).
Do NOT attempt to remove people from a stalled elevator. Tell them they are safe and help is on the way.

There are three public elevators for the use of library patrons; the service elevator is reserved for authorized persons with library-related business. If unauthorized persons are making regular use of the service elevator, ask them to use the public elevators. If they are uncooperative, they should be asked to leave the building. If they refuse, they should be treated as a disruptive patron.

D. Doors

i. Emergency Doors

When the exterior Emergency Exit Door is activated, Circulation personnel should go to the basement to investigate the problem. The University Police should be notified (ext. 5050).

ii. Receiving Door
It is the responsibility of all library personnel to insure the integrity of the Receiving Room. If a library faculty or staff member notices anyone in the area who does not have official business, they should identify themselves and request that the person leave the area. If the person fails to comply, the staff member should notify Circulation personnel, who will call the University Police (ext.5050).