SERVICE GUIDELINES

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES

Purpose of Virtual Reference

University of California Davis
University Library
Davis, California

UC Davis General Library Policy on Electronic Reference Service

Through e-mail reference, UC Davis General Library provides prompt assistance with a variety of types of inquiries, such as library holdings information, search strategy in the use of the Melvyl Catalog or CDL-hosted databases, factual questions, statistical data, or questions about UCD General Library's unique resources, services and facilities. E-mail reference may not be appropriate for questions which are more complex in nature or require more research time. The library does not provide financial, legal, medical, or veterinary advice. Requests to check citations or holdings will be limited to no more than five. Interlibrary loan requests should be forwarded to the appropriate ILL unit.

For questions requiring more research time to resolve, individuals are advised to come to the library for onsite consultation. UC faculty, students or staff, or outside scholars or researchers needing information on UCD unique collections may be referred to a Librarian Subject Specialist for further consultation by phone or e-mail.

The UCD electronic reference service is intended to support the learning, research and continuing education needs of UC Davis faculty, students and staff. Queries from individuals not affiliated with UC must be limited to the unique collections and resources of the UCD General Library. Some electronic information sources are limited to use by faculty, staff and students of the University of California, Davis.

The library will provide a response to electronic reference queries as soon as possible, with a goal of no more than two working days (holidays excepted).

If you have any comments on this service, please contact us at [contact information].

Service Definition

University of Maine Off Campus Library Services
University College
Augusta, Maine

Ask a Librarian Live

This service is similar to a chat session which allows a patron and librarian to "talk" live via a computer. This is especially helpful to patrons who wish to get instruction on how to use library services and only have one telephone line. We are able to instruct the patron while he/she is still connected to the Internet.

Ask a Librarian E-Mail

This service allows patrons to send us their questions via e-mail. The patron will receive a reply within 24 hours (except for weekends and holidays). This service is helpful to patrons when the live mode is unavail-

able or if the question is a more lengthy research question. A reply may only acknowledge receipt of your email. A full answer to your question may be sent later.

University of Pittsburgh
Pitt Digital Library
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

About Ask-A-Librarian Live

Ask-a-Librarian Live is the interactive Digital Reference Service offered by the University Library System at the University of Pittsburgh. Ask-a-Librarian Live offers online, real time research assistance to University of Pittsburgh students, faculty, and staff. This service complements other reference service points throughout the ULS (consultation, email, and telephone reference services) that have been traditionally available.

About Ask-A-Librarian

Ask-a-Librarian is the email version of the Digital Reference Service offered by the University Library System at the University of Pittsburgh. This service is open to anyone with a question concerning the research and teaching mission of the University of Pittsburgh. In responding to these requests, priority will be given to University of Pittsburgh affiliated students, faculty and staff. You must have a valid email address to receive a response. If you are a University of Pittsburgh student, faculty or staff you can also receive reference assistance using the Ask-a-Librarian Live service, in person at any ULS library reference desk, by telephone, or through reference consultation.

Response Time

University of Pittsburgh
Pitt Digital Library
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

When will I receive an answer?

Typically, you will be contacted within 24 hours, excluding holidays and term breaks. At that point we may provide you with an answer, ask for more information, or let you know when you may expect to hear from us again.

University of Texas at Austin
University of Texas Libraries
Austin, Texas

How long will it take a librarian to answer my question?

Email is checked several times a day, Monday–Friday, 8am–5pm. Responses are usually sent within two business days, excluding weekends and University holidays.

Questions are answered in priority order:
- Questions from currently enrolled UT students, faculty, and staff
- Requests for information about UT Austin libraries and special collections holdings and services
- Requests for information about the University
- Request for information about Texas
- Requests for other information

Chat requests will be answered during service hours. At peak times, users may have to wait in a patron queue for the next available librarian. Chat sessions typically take 15 minutes or less. If your question requires more time, the librarian may ask if they can research your question and send a response to your e-mail address.

Terms and Conditions of Service

University of Maine Off Campus Library Services
University College
Augusta, Maine

Terms and Conditions

Before using our services you need to read the applicable rules and policies pertaining to the Live and E-mail modes of Ask-A-Librarian. By using these services, we understand you have read the applicable rules and policies regarding the Live and E-mail modes of Ask-A-Librarian and have agreed to these rules and policies.

Rules pertaining to the questions submitted to our services:

1. We may refuse to answer questions.
2. We may refuse services to you if we determine you are not using our services in the way in which they were meant to be used. This includes, but not limited to, questions that are: illegal, harassing, libelous, threatening, harmful, obscene or objectionable, or that violates any applicable local, state, national, or international law or regulations.
3. You agree that your question will enter the public domain, and you will retain no ownership rights to your question.

University of Southern California
University Libraries
Los Angeles, California

Terms & Conditions

The following terms and conditions apply to USC's Ask-A-Librarian services. At our discretion, we may refuse to answer any question. In using our E-mail and chat services, users agree to send only questions that meet ordinary standards of decency and legality.

Ownership of Materials

E-mail questions sent to us are in the public domain. This means that anyone, including the library, can freely reproduce, copy, modify or otherwise use an E-mail question without permission. For example, questions asked and answered will be saved and will be accessible in our local Knowledge Base within the QuestionPoint database. As part of its public service mission, the University Libraries provide and use information for non-commercial, educational or research use only.

Excerpts of materials provided in answer to E-mail questions may be subject to copyright restrictions. It is the responsibility of the user to determine the existence of such rights and to obtain any permissions, and to pay any associated fees, which may be necessary for any proposed use. The library may also provide links to non-USC Web sites and is not responsible for that content, for changes in content of the sources to which the library pages link, or for the content of sources accessed through secondary links.

Disclaimer

Please note the following disclaimer: While every effort is made to provide accurate information, the University of Southern California Libraries shall have no liability for any damages arising out of or relating to use of this Web site or the information and materials provided herein.

ASK A LIBRARIAN REFERENCE SERVICE

Eligible Users

Auburn University
Auburn University Libraries
Auburn University, Alabama

Who may use this service?

This service is intended for the faculty, students, and staff of Auburn University. These requests will be handled first within 48 hours. Requests from those not affiliated with Auburn University will be handled in a timely manner.

University of Idaho
University of Idaho Libraries
Moscow, Idaho

Who may use this service?

E-mail reference service is provided primarily for current students, faculty and staff to the University of Idaho, including those students who are currently enrolled in a distance education class or off-campus course offered by this university. Questions about unique resources or collections of the University of Idaho Library are welcome from the general public.

Guidelines for Determining Acceptable Questions

University of Maine Off Campus Library Services
University College
Augusta, Maine

Which kinds of questions we answer:

The types of questions best handled in Live Mode are ready reference (quick research and answer) and instruction in the use of our URSUS book catalog, the Mariner indexes and databases, and other resources. For reference questions that take a longer time to research and cannot be answered during a chat session, we will either reply through e-mail or call you, providing you leave us a daytime phone number where you can be reached.

The types of questions we handle in e-mail mode are the same for live mode. In addition, we can answer more extensive reference questions.

Examples of the types of questions we cannot answer but may be able to provide a source:

    Medical or law-related advice

    Product evaluations, appraisals

    Legal questions, tax questions

University of Pittsburgh
Pitt Digital Library
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

What sort of questions can I ask Ask-a-Librarian?

Any question you'd ask at a physical reference desk. In some cases we might give you the answer. In other cases, we'll direct you to a source, or suggest that you come into the library. We will not, however, respond to medical, legal, tax-related or genealogical questions, as we do not have extensive resources in these areas.

Auburn University
Auburn University Libraries
Auburn University, Alabama

What can it be used for?

Use this service to ask any question you might ask at the AU Libraries' Reference Desks: help with an incomplete citation, identification of a historical fact, biographical information, a quotation, or a suggestions for a source to use. Inappropriate requests include asking the librarian to research topics, forward messages to other staff members, interlibrary loan requests, or obtain books for patrons.

Staff Responsibility for Answering Questions

University of Pittsburgh
Pitt Digital Library
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Who answers the questions?

A University of Pittsburgh librarian will answer your question.

University of Scranton
Weinberg Memorial Library
Scranton, Pennsylvania

The University of Scranton's Web site is changing, and policies will be separated from information on the updated sites.

Who answers the questions?

Reference staff of the Weinberg Library at the University of Scranton will answer all phone and e-mail reference questions. Virtual live chat will be monitored by the librarians of the American Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU) and Tutor.com librarians to provide 24/7 virtual chat reference.

Anonymous Questions

University of Texas at Austin
University of Texas Libraries
Austin, Texas

Can I ask a question anonymously? Who else sees my question?

Questions can be submitted anonymously. It is not necessary to include a name in the question or chat request form. However, an email address is required. Answers to email questions will be sent to the email address you provided in the question form. After your chat session, a transcript of your chat will be sent to your email address.

This service will make every attempt to respect and preserve your privacy. Only library staff members have access to questions submitted to this service. Questions will be retained for 90 days. After that time, any identifying information, such as names and e-mail addresses, will be edited from questions and deleted. Questions may be added to a database of frequently asked questions accessible to librarians for training and evaluation purposes.

FORMS

E-Mail Query Forms

Xavier University
Xavier University Library
Cincinnati, Ohio

Reference Services: Email Request Form   Monday, June 12, 2006

Hours Today: 8am to 10pm

Use the request form below for assistance any time of the day or night. For more information see email reference policies and procedures.

Name: [   ]

Email: [   ]
if different

Phone: [   ]

Course: [   ]

Status: Undergraduate ○   Faculty/Staff ○
            Graduate ○   Other ○

Course
Department: [   ]

Assignment
Type: [   ]

Assignment
Description: [   ]

What You
Have Done
Already [   ]

[Submit]
[Clear]

Policies and Procedures

During fall and spring semesters questions are downloaded at 9am, 12pm, 3pm, 6pm, and 9pm. Times may vary during weekends, breaks, and summer sessions.

Professional librarians will respond to questions on a "first come, first served" basis, with precedence given to patrons actually visiting the library.

Responses are returned via e-mail within 1 working day.

Although the librarians will not do your research for you, they will suggest resources, search strategies, and subject headings.

LaGuardia Community College
LaGuardia Community College Library Media Resources Center
Long Island City, New York

Ask a Librarian by Email

The more information you provide on this form, the better we can serve you.

* Required field

* Name: [   ]

* Your Affiliation: ○ Student ○ Faculty ○ Staff

Faculty/Staff only: Department: [   ]

Phone: [   ]

* Email address: [   ]

Your email address MUST be accurate for us to deliver information to you.

Information to be   ○ Research paper
used for: ○ Classroom assignment
                         ○ Oral presentation / speech
                         ○ Thesis / dissertation
                         ○ Personal interest
                         ○ Other: [   ]

* Ask your brief reference question here (in 50 to 75 words or less):

[   ]

We will make every attempt to respond to your inquiry within 72 hours.

(Responses will take longer over weekends and holidays)

Questions are answered in the order in which they're received.

Reference Consultation Form

* Required field

* Name: [   ]

* Your Affiliation: ○ Student ○ Faculty ○ Staff

Faculty/Staff only: Department: [   ]

* Email address: [   ]

Your email address MUST be accurate for us to deliver information to you.

*Phone number: [   ]

*Best time to call: [   ]

*Dates available: [   ]

*Times available: [   ]

*For students—Class assignment is for:
(for example, ENG101, HUS200) [   ]

*For students—Professor assigning this project: [   ]

*Your research topic (please be as specific as possible):

[   ]

Monroe County Community College
Monroe County Community College Library
Monroe, Michigan

Ask a Librarian

Reference desk

E-mail

Fill out the form below

Please note that we cannot provide answers to all questions via e-mail. We will do our best to respond to every question in the most timely manner, and we encourage you to come into our campus facility for full service.

Student Name	Telephone
Email Address	Are you enrolled this semester? ○ Yes ○ No

Course (include name and number)

Instructor's Name

Assistance with this question is need no later than

○ Today
○ Tomorrow
○ This week
○ Specific date this semester

Please explain your question in as much detail as possible:

Have you discussed this question with any of the MCCC librarians?

○ Yes ○ No

Have you tried finding information on our databases?

○ Yes ○ No

Specifically, which databases have you tried?

○ FirstSearch   ○ EBSCO
○ InfoTrac   ○ JSTOR
○ Hoovers   ○ Facts.com
○ NetLibrary   ○ SIRS Discoverer
○ Oxford Reference Online ○ eLibrary Elementary
○ Harper's Weekly   ○ Ulrich's
○ LearnATest   ○ Books In Print
○ Newsbank   ○ All of the above
                         ○ None of the above

When is the best time to contact you? _____

Is there any other information related to your question?

[Submit Form]   [Reset Form]

Please note: If you experience any difficulties using this form, email your questions directly to Ask a Librarian or call [contact info].