

 **GRACE HAUENSTEIN LIBRARY**
AQUINAS COLLEGE

5. Library Policy on the Privacy of Library Records

Guiding Principles

We abide by the American Library Associations Code of Ethics, which states: "We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted."

We are also governed by the Michigan Library Privacy Act (amended 1998), which states that library employees shall not disclose a patron's library record to any person without the written consent of the patron, unless ordered by a court.

The USA-PATRIOT Act expands the scope of inquiries by law enforcement into library records, but student, faculty, and staff rights to privacy and confidentiality remain unchanged.

Patrons are expected to abide by the Aquinas College acceptable use policy (AUP) and existing library policies.

Limits and Scope of this Policy

This policy is intended to extend to physical records generated in the information seeking behaviors of all library patrons. Such physical records include written Interlibrary Loan requests, notifications of overdue items, and notifications concerning the availability of requested items.

This policy is also intended to extend to electronic or digital records generated by the use of library resources and resources provided by but not belonging to the library. Such digital records include search strategies on the library catalog, databases, and search engines; digital requests for materials; electronic requests for information such as emails requesting reference help; and data collected by library web sites either explicitly (as when forms request information) or implicitly (as when our server requests information from your web browser).

Records that identify patrons without respect to their use of library resources, materials or services are not protected under the law. Information about the identity of persons whose behavior in or about the library violates the law or library policies is not inherently protected or confidential.

Notice/Awareness

The **library** collects information about patrons in several ways.

In order to obtain a library card for checking out books and other materials, patrons must supply the library with their name, address, and phone number. Patron records also contain the patron's ID barcode, ID number, and e-mail address, but this information is not displayed. The patron's status (staff, undergraduate, etc.) is also included in the record.

- While materials are checked out to patrons, the materials are included in the patron's circulation record. When the materials are returned, however, this information is deleted.
- Interlibrary loan requests -- requests for materials not owned by the library -- require patron information (name, address, and phone number). Records of ILL requests are maintained for two years but are regarded as confidential. This information can be accessed only by ILL staff and the patron who made the request.
- Patrons using the library's online databases from off campus are asked to supply their username and ID numbers. The IP address number of the computer used to connect to the databases is also recorded but this information is erased when you log off.

All of this information is considered confidential by the library and will not be disclosed to any outside agencies or persons, except in cases where a justified and bona fide subpoena or federal court order is submitted. In the case of patron failure to return materials, the library may disclose circulation information and correspondence to appropriate legal authorities involved in securing return of, or payment for, these materials. The library maintains permanent records of patrons but destroys records of information seeking (including circulation records) upon return of the materials.

Choice/Consent

The library must collect certain information in order to provide services. Library materials can be checked out of the library only by patrons who have released their names, addresses, and phone numbers, as the library needs some way to contact patrons should the materials become overdue. Refusal to identify oneself under these circumstances may be grounds for denial of service.

Library staff are authorized to request identification from library users as necessary and appropriate for safety and security or when library rules have been violated. Refusal to identify oneself under these circumstances may be grounds for contacting Campus Safety.

Information collected by the library web site is, in general, never connected to the user. The information collected is automatically furnished by the user's web browser. The library will always ask the patron for permission to collect any information that can be identified with the patron.

Access/Participation

All library patrons who have had personally identifying information about them collected have right to be sure the information is accurate and up to date. All information collected in connection with the issue of library cards may be reviewed and updated by contacting any librarian. Patrons may view their current circulation records and should see a librarian if they find any inaccuracies. You can view your circulation record online by selecting the link in TomCat that says "View your library record."

Security/Integrity

The library takes the integrity and security of all records seriously. All records which can be identified with a patron are stored on computer systems which are not readily accessible by agencies or individuals outside the library, and only authorized personnel have access to such records inside the library. All of the library's records kept on computers which can be accessed from outside via the internet are protected by passwords and other reasonable measures. Patrons should realize, however, that no security measures can promise complete security from unauthorized "hackers."

The library will update patron records as needed to ensure that all data is accurate. The library does not share any patron information.

Redress/Enforcement

The library recognizes that privacy polices must be enforced and will take appropriate measures to redress any violation of a patron's privacy. Library staff should cooperate fully with law enforcement to the extent required by law, but all requests to identify persons with respect to their use of library materials and services should be referred to the Library Director(s).

*--adopted by the Woodhouse Library Spring of 2003.
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