OFFICE: Library	**DEPARTMENT:** Public Services
DATE: Last revised June 30, 2016	
CATEGORY: Policy	
SUBJECT: Reference Policy	

RESEARCH SERVICES POLICY

Statement on Mission

The Library Reference Policy reflects the mission of the Benedictine Library as stated in the Benedictine Library's Mission and Vision Statements. http://www.ben.edu/library/about.cfm

Purpose

The primary purpose of the Benedictine Library is to support the curriculum of Benedictine University by providing resources and research services to faculty, staff and the student body.

Statement of Ethics

- The Benedictine Library and its reference staff will, to the best of their ability, provide accurate and up-to-date answers to all research questions.
- Research inquiries will be kept confidential, and librarians will be impartial in interactions with users.
- The Library adheres to the "Code of Ethics," "The Freedom to Read Statement," and the "Library Bill of Rights" of the American Library Association.

Goals

- Professional librarians, who are committed to providing accurate, up-to-date answers to questions, will be available either at the research desk or on call.
- The research librarians will promote the resources and services of the Library.
- The research librarians will provide informal instruction in the use of library resources to all users.
- The reference librarians will work to build a reference collection in accordance with the Benedictine Library Collection Development Policy to support the needs of the University community.

Personnel

During normal semester hours, a librarian will be available either at the research desk or on call through the staff at the research desk. The Library's website should be consulted to determine the Research Center's current hours.
http://www.ben.edu/library/hours.cfm

Clientele
- The Benedictine Library will offer research assistance to all users, regardless of race, creed, color, sex, or age, during the hours that the library is open to the public.
- The Benedictine Library will give first priority to current faculty, staff and students.
- The Benedictine Library will give second priority to people outside the University community who request assistance.
- Priority is given to in-person inquiries; however phone messages, email, text and online chat messages will be answered in a prompt manner.

Services
The research librarians at the Benedictine Library will:
- Assist users in using the collection, the online catalog, online databases and the Internet.
- Assist in formulating effective research strategies
- Suggest appropriate resources
- Provide quick factual information
- Determine if the library has a particular item
- Provide directional information regarding the library and its collections as well as the campus, including University contact information
- Refer to other libraries for additional information

The research librarians at the Benedictine Library will not:
- Give out advice (e.g., legal, medical, psychological, religious, or tax, etc.)
- Conduct patent, trademark or legal research for users
- Engage in "trivial pursuit" in the case of contest questions
- Give out personal telephone numbers and addresses
- Proctor tests

Research Consultations
Research consultations are available at the Benedictine Library to faculty, staff, and students of Benedictine University. Research consultations are scheduled in advance to insure uninterrupted time for the researcher to consult with a librarian about appropriate resources and strategies for a project.

Referral
If an inquiry cannot be answered after exhausting the Benedictine Library's resources, the user or inquiry may be referred to another library or source.

Reference Evaluation
Evaluation of the Benedictine Library's research service will occur on an annual basis. The evaluation will include the following criteria:
1) Review and interpretation of reference statistics
2) Analysis of how well the research section is serving the University's *constituents*
3) Review of measures to improve the service
4) Discussion and implementation of new methods to improve research services.
5) Evaluation of the reference collection as determined by the Reference Collection Development Policy.

Policy Review
Review and updates of the Benedictine Library Reference Policy will occur as needed due to changes that may occur or conflict with the current policy.

Reference Collection
Reference Collection Development Policy (October 1995 reviewed June 2014)
The Reference Collection is a non-circulating collection of materials brought together in a special collection because of their format and the nature of the information provided. Reference materials are consulted for short periods and for segments of information. They are separated from the circulating collection because allowing check-out would cause inconvenience to more library users than it would benefit. Exceptions are seldom made and only with the approval of a Librarian.

The nature and format of the information, and how library staff anticipates the library's users' utilization of the materials, that inform whether items will be placed in the reference collection. Interests and needs of the college community—primarily students, faculty, administrators and staff are the basis of selection.

The purpose of the selection policy is to acquire and retain works, which represent the most current information in the field. The collection will be kept up-to-date by the acquisition of new materials and the de-accession of outdated materials. Standard reference works of historical and scholarly importance are selectively retained. The collection will include basic introductory reference sources, which provide a general overview of most subject areas taught at the University.

The reference collection includes titles in various formats including print, microforms, and electronically delivered materials (e.g., available over the Internet or from commercial vendors). Availability, ease of use, cost, timeliness, space and equipment requirements, as well as preservation issues, are considered in selecting the format for specific reference works.

Print
Materials housed in the reference collection and denoted by the letter "R" on the call number label <u>do not </u>circulate*, **except to faculty***, and then only with the permission of a librarian. Reference materials must be used only in the library—they must not be taken to other departments or offices in the building without permission. ***Faculty may charge a reference item out only overnight.***

Electronic Resources
Electronic resources available through the library website are primarily for the use of current Benedictine University students, faculty and staff; although the electronic resources can be used by any patron who is physically in the library. Access to electronic resources from anywhere outside the library is restricted to current Benedictine students, faculty, and staff.

Approved by:_____ 	**Date:**_____
                  Jack Fritts, University Librarian

Approved by:_____ 	**Date:**_____
                  Provost Academic Affairs