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Treatment of Personal Property of Library Patrons including Found Items (April 2014) : NPML Guideline--011

Nelson Poynter Memorial Library.

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Subject: *Treatment of Personal Property of Library Patrons including Found Items*

Functional Area: *Access Services*

Date of Origin: 2007-11-15 **Date Last Reviewed:** 2014-04-08

I. INTRODUCTION (Purpose and Intent)

The Nelson Poynter Memorial Library was designed and has been maintained in order to facilitate and enhance the Library's primary mission to serve the students, faculty, and staff of the University of South Florida St. Petersburg (USFSP), as well as the entire USF System. The facility is open to the general public, as well as to the USF community. The University is in an urban setting and entry into the building is not controlled. Everyone is welcome as long as they abide by all Library, University, and System codes of conduct and standards of behavior and make appropriate use of Library facilities and services. While Library staff members and security personnel are authorized to request identification of anyone in the building, the Library is not staffed to exercise that authority routinely and staff cannot actively monitor the behavior of individuals throughout the building.

II. STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Nelson Poynter Memorial Library is not responsible for the security of personal items brought into the Library and assumes no liability for theft of, or damage to, personal property of library users. Individuals are solely responsible for the security of all personal belongings and are advised to keep their belongings, especially valuables, within their sight at all times. The Library cannot guarantee that it will be able to reconnect patrons with their personal property. The Library must follow University policies and comply with safety and legal requirements when handling individuals' personal property.

On occasion, people may leave items behind in the library. Library staff will determine the appropriate disposition of all items that are found in the library and turned into the Service Desk.

III. REQUIREMENTS AND LIMITATIONS

- The Library cannot guarantee that lost item(s) will be found or, if found, that they will be kept indefinitely in the library.
- Wallets, purses, backpacks, jewelry, electronics, keys, and other items of obvious value will be reported to the USFSP Police and turned over to them for safe-keeping within the hour of acceptance at the Service Desk.
- People who have found expensive items in campus locations outside the library will be directed to the USFSP Police to hand in the items.
- The Library cannot accept materials from faculty or other individuals for pickup by a second party.

- Library staff members can neither accept custody of items of value nor make any commitment to watch or monitor the personal belongings of library patrons. Requests for such will be declined.
- Items that may be a health, safety, or security concern will be disposed of appropriately.
- Foods and drinks will be discarded immediately.
- USF ID cards will be held at the Service Desk for one semester and then turned over to USFSP Police.
- Key rings that include University keys will be turned over to the Facilities department.
- Items not claimed by the end of a semester will either be discarded or donated to a local charity.

IV. PROCEDURE FOR CLAIMING OR REPORTING LOST ITEMS

- Inquiries about lost items can be made at the Service Desk.
- Individuals claiming property must be able to describe it accurately and will need to present a picture ID before items will be turned over to them. Occasions of disputed ownership will be referred to the USFSP Police.
- Individuals wishing to report a lost or stolen item should contact University Police Services at (727) 873-4140.

Authorized by:

**Dean of Library
Library Leadership Team**