

**Reference Services Standards
duPont-Ball Library
Stetson University, DeLand, FL**

In order to provide good reference service, librarians in the duPont-Ball Library will strive to fulfill the following standards:

Standard One: Act in a manner that encourages patrons to ask questions

- A. At the Reference Desk or on the phone, greet patrons in a cordial manner
- B. Use a pleasant, friendly voice when speaking to patrons in person or on the phone
- C. Answer electronic reference requests cordially and promptly
- D. Answer Reference Desk telephone voicemail promptly and cordially
- E. Avoid bringing work to the desk which requires intense concentration
- F. Reassure waiting patrons that they will be helped as soon as possible
- G. Allow patron to finish asking a question before commenting
- H. Remain calm and polite when dealing with patrons
- I. Approach patrons who look as if they need help
- J. Offer reassurance to frustrated patrons
- K. Look up frequently to see if patrons in the reference area need help

Standard Two: Interview patrons to determine their information needs

- A. Use good listening skills to clarify a patron's request by identifying the following:
 - The subject area and the kind of information requested
 - The depth and amount of information needed
 - Recency of the information needed
- B. Restate patron's query to ensure complete understanding of the patron's request

Standard Three: Identify and direct patrons to appropriate resources

- A. Select resources most likely to contain the information sought
- B. Consider all possible sources and seek more than one reference source, if appropriate
- C. Ask for assistance from colleagues, if necessary
- D. Provide instruction for use of resources (regardless of format), if necessary
- E. Break down reference assistance into logical modules or steps, as necessary, and encourage patron to return to desk for help with the next step.
- F. Educate patron, as appropriate, by suggesting additional sources or services which would help the patron
- G. Consider all possible resources before telling the patron the needed information is not available
- H. Accompany patron to the designated source(s) unless the location of the source is clear by pointing or by locating on a Library map
- I. Provide appropriate referrals, if needed, e.g., other campus departments, other libraries (public library, Volusia County Law Library), subject specialists.
- J. Initiate contact with referral when appropriate (e.g., call the public library, the law library, or a campus department and explain that a patron needs information from them)
- K. Encourage patron to check back at the Reference Desk if unable to find what is needed, has trouble using any of the resources, or needs more in-depth assistance

Standard Four: Demonstrate and develop knowledge of information resources and services

- A. Engage in formal and informal study to further knowledge of information resources and services
- B. Attend workshops and/or conferences and share information with colleagues
- C. Keep abreast of current literature regarding information sources and services
- D. Examine new reference tools and share resources with reference colleagues

Standard Five: Create and disseminate User Help Guides and web links

- A. Revise or create in-house publications as needed (both print and electronic)
- B. Make user guides available electronically via the Library website
- C. Make use of in-house publications (research guides, research aids, brief guides, etc.) and contribute information to them when needed

Standard Six: Work as a team at the Reference Desk

- A. Help colleagues at the Reference Desk when asked
- B. Offer assistance to a colleague who is having a problem answering a reference question without undermining the colleague
- C. Ask for assistance from colleagues when necessary
- D. Alert colleagues to class assignments and frequently asked questions
- E. Alert colleagues to reference materials that may be of particular use for an assignment or to new reference materials
- F. Help at Reference Desk, even if not “on duty,” if reference demand warrants it
- G. Remain flexible about Reference Desk hours
- H. Keep Reference Desk area neat
- I. Follow up on any materials left for patrons at the Reference Desk to see that they are either delivered to the patron or removed from the Reference Desk in a timely manner

Standard Seven: Participate in collection development

- A. Contribute to the development of the Library’s collections by recommending items to be purchased (both print and electronic). See also: Reference Collection Development Policy

(http://stetson.edu/library/policies_colldevref.doc) and Web Site Collection Development Policy (http://stetson.edu/library/policies_colldevweb.doc).

- B. Assist in weeding the Library’s collections by recommending items to be weeded

Standard Eight: Understand and apply library and departmental policies

- A. Explain to patrons not affiliated with Stetson the Library’s “Stetson University Library Associates Program” which governs access and membership
 - B. Enforce Library policies on food, drink, noise levels, and cell phone policy
 - C. Enforce the Library’s policy on use of the Internet.
 - D. Enforce the Library’s (and Stetson’s) policy of no soliciting or passing out of organizational literature in the building. Director’s permission is needed for posting signs and event posters or flyers
 - D. Be familiar with the Library’s emergency procedures on the shared Library s: drive
- Approved by Library faculty October 6, 2000

Reviewed and/or revised by the Reference Team, September 2002; September 2005;
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