



Use of Libraries

Policy Type: Local

Responsible Office: VCU Libraries

Current Revision Approved: 02/12/2020

Policy Statement and Purpose

This policy articulates the expected behaviors of individuals using VCU Libraries. The VCU Libraries has adopted this policy to protect the rights of both users and staff, to create an appropriate academic atmosphere, and to provide an environment that is safe, inclusive, and conducive to research and learning. All library users are required to comply with this policy when using the VCU Libraries.

Contacts

VCU Libraries officially interprets this policy. Please direct policy questions to the Associate University Librarian for Research and Learning.

Definitions

Academic Pursuits

Activities that advance research, coursework, creative endeavors, or learning that require the resources of a research library. Academic pursuits do not include general access to the internet or popular reading materials, such as what is available at public libraries.

Members of the VCU Libraries Community

VCU faculty, students, administrators, and staff; VCU affiliates; card-holding members of the Friends of VCU Libraries; and VCU Alumni card-holders.

VCU Libraries

All services, collections, and technology associated with facilities managed by VCU Libraries including James Branch Cabell Library; Tompkins-McCaw Library for the Health Sciences; and the VCU Medical Center Health and Wellness Library.

Policy Specifics

The facilities, technology, materials, and services of the VCU Libraries are intended to support the instruction, research, patient care, creative endeavors, and study needs of the university community, and to preserve and protect collections for future users. Library resources and services are primarily for members of the VCU Libraries community who are engaged in academic pursuits. Non-VCU students, faculty, and staff with an institutional identification from a high school, college, or university are permitted limited use of library facilities, computers, resources, and services to fulfill academic pursuits and in accordance with library policies, procedures, and rules.

Members of the general public who wish to access and use library facilities, resources, and services must be either a) attending events open to the public or b) engaged in academic pursuits. The VCU Libraries, in consultation with other VCU employees when necessary, will determine whether a member of the general public is engaged in academic pursuit. The Health and Wellness Library provides high-quality consumer health information and serves as a business center for VCU Medical Center patients and their families or caretakers. Any other use of library facilities by members of the general public is not permitted and may be considered trespassing. Each library location reserves the right to request proof of VCU identification or government-issued identification, and to limit access to library facilities exclusively to members of the VCU Libraries community during certain operational hours.

Events held within VCU Libraries' space must be either organized or specifically approved by VCU Libraries. All users must comply with posted rules for specific spaces.

The following actions are prohibited when using VCU Libraries:

1. Any acts or conduct in violation of: this policy; policies, guidelines, procedures, and rules posted in VCU Libraries spaces or on VCU Libraries websites; University rules, procedures, and policies; or City of Richmond codes, Statutes of the Commonwealth of Virginia, or federal laws.
2. Any behavior that is disruptive to library use, including but not limited to: engaging in disorderly conduct; fighting or inciting violence; indecent exposure; sexual harassment or any other unlawful harassment; excessively loud noise; or interfering with staff members' performance of duties.
3. Disruptive noise in designated quiet/silent areas (Cabell Library's third or fourth floors or Tompkins-McCaw Library's second floor and stack areas); loud noise in any other area of library buildings.
4. Talking on cellphones in quiet/silent areas. Users must set cellphones and other mobile devices to a non-audible signal, and must be considerate toward other users when using cellphones in all library spaces. Audio playback without headphones is prohibited in all open study spaces.
5. Professional, commercial, or mass media photography, videography, or audio recording without prior approval from VCU Libraries.
6. Advertising, selling, or soliciting for money, items, services, or causes in ways that are not compliant with the VCU Libraries Display or Posting of Information Items Policy.
7. Approaching library users for interviews or surveys.
8. Distributing flyers, advertisements, or other materials outside of approved bulletin boards, which are available for exclusive use by VCU students, employees, and departments.

9. Bringing animals inside the library, other than service animals as defined by the university.
10. Using skateboards, roller skates, or bicycles on library premises, including outdoor seating areas and library buildings' exterior features. Library users may not bring into library buildings bicycles, scooters, or similarly large vehicles, with the exception of mobility aids required by persons with a disability. Skateboards and similar vehicles must be small enough to fit under a library chair without impeding foot traffic or other library activities.
11. Refusing to leave a library space or building when it is closed or during an evacuation.
12. Holding organized or advertised events in VCU Libraries' spaces that have not been approved by VCU Libraries.
13. Using library spaces as living quarters. Evidence of such includes but is not limited to routinely sleeping in libraries or bathing in library restrooms.
14. Removing library materials or property from the premises without authorization.
15. Use by children under 14 years of age unaccompanied by a responsible adult.

Enforcement

The VCU Libraries reserves the right to revoke or restrict library privileges of any user for behavior in violation of this policy. Failure to comply with the VCU Libraries established rules and regulations may result in exclusion from library facilities, services, and/or access to collections temporarily or permanently. Violations of this policy or other university policies, procedures, or rules may also result in loss of library privileges as adjudicated by other university entities.

Restrictions and revocations of library privileges that are determined by VCU Libraries are issued in writing by Associate University Librarians at VCU Libraries. Written appeals disputing misapplication or misinterpretation of VCU Libraries or University policies, guidelines, and rules may be made in writing to the Dean of Libraries within five (5) business days. Decisions about appeals will be issued in writing to the appellant within ten (10) business days.

Individuals in violation of Richmond City Codes, Statutes of the Commonwealth of Virginia, or federal laws are subject to the relevant sanctions of those rules in addition to the sanctions under this or other university policy. Library staff, campus police, or university officials may request any user to provide identification. The VCU Libraries reserves the right to report prohibited behavior to university officials.

Related Documents

1. [VCU Code of Conduct](#)
2. [VCU Information on Service Dogs and Emotional Support Animals](#)
3. [VCU Computer and Network Resources Use](#)
4. [VCU Libraries Display of Posting of Information Items](#)
5. [VCU Libraries Request Permission to Film/Record/Install Art](#)

6. [VCU Reservation and Use of Space](#)
7. [VCU Smoke and Tobacco-Free Campus](#)
8. [VCU Student Code of Conduct](#)

Revision History

This policy supersedes the following archived policy:

May 2018

Use of Library Facilities