

# Bibliographic Instruction & Reference Guidelines

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## Introduction

Due to the small size and staff of the NFCC Library, the reference department and the circulation department function as one unit. The front desk services as both the reference and the circulation desk. The library employs one full-time librarian to head the Reference/Circulation Department. That librarian has a graduate degree from an ALA-accredited institution. The librarian responsible for reference and other professional library staff, as needed, perform reference services. When a librarian is not available, a trained paraprofessional may provide limited assistance. Reference services are provided during all library business hours.

## Reference Services

Reference services provided by the NFCC Library include but are not limited to:

### Providing information in response to reference queries

The majority of reference queries are presented by patrons who come into the library. Patrons are served on a first-come, first-serve basis. Patrons who are present at the desk are generally given priority over telephone calls. However, priority shall be given to college administrative and faculty requests, regardless of form, if circumstances warrants (in the discretion of a librarian).

- ***Assistance in locating and retrieving library materials.***

The librarian's degree of assistance to the patron is dependent upon the user's needs and abilities. Because of the instructional mission of the institution, many instructors encourage and expect their students to master the basic skills necessary for locating and utilizing library sources of information. Individual instruction is provided for accessing the online catalog, the databases, and print reference materials. For group instruction faculty members may schedule their classes to come into the library. Instruction is provided by the two professional librarians. In addition, a professional librarian teaches courses related to Information Skills. Students are encouraged to take these classes their first semester at NFCC.

- ***Telephone reference service, e-mail and U.S. Mail.***

Most incoming phone calls to the library are answered by the paraprofessional staff, who then directs calls to the requested person or appropriate personnel for handling. Library staff answering the phone may answer basic or directional questions, such as library hours of operation, whether a book is overdue or if the library owns a particular title. Other reference queries are directed to the librarian responsible for reference or to another librarian if the librarian responsible for reference is unavailable or occupied with another patron. If a professional librarian is not available to answer to reference query, the patron is advised that a librarian will return the call. Telephone reference queries, which can be answered within a few minutes, are answered at the time of the call from the patron. If more that 2-3 minutes are needed to furnish an answer to the caller, the precise informational need is determined, and the patron is called back with the answer. However, patrons with complex or involved research needs are strongly encouraged to come into the library for assistance.

Other reference queries are by e-mail. By choosing the ***Ask A Librarian*** link on the NFCC Library's home page the off-campus student may chose to send an e-mail to the librarian responsible for reference at NFCC. It is the goal of the librarians to deliver the most accurate, appropriate, and relevant information to the patron as efficiently and

quickly as possible. Reference information requests that come in the form of letters via the U.S. Mail are answered as quickly and efficiently as possible.

## General and Directed Bibliographic Instruction

- **Bibliographic Instruction**
  - **Library and Information Skills (LIS 1001)**, is taught by professional library staff, and is designed to introduce the resources of the library to all NFCC students. Students are instructed in the use of the online catalog and other electronic resources, and are taught basic research techniques using a variety of reference tools. Students are encouraged to take this course early in their college career.
  - **Introduction to Internet Research (LIS2004)**, is taught by professional library staff, and is designed to introduce the resources available via the Web all NFCC students. Students are instructed in the use of the online electronic resources, and are taught basic research techniques using a variety of search tools. Students are encouraged to take this course early in their college career.
- **Course-specific bibliographic instruction** – Faculty members are encouraged to bring their classes to the library for course-related bibliographic instruction, in order to introduce students to the specific resources available to them for a given assignment. Instruction is tailored to the needs of a particular class in that library tools are identified and described which are applicable to the class (i.e. statistical sources, biographical sources, and/or subject encyclopedias).
- **Online Library Tutorials** – The librarian responsible for reference creates online tutorials to guide students in the use of the library's print and electronic resources. These tutorials are located on the library's webpage and are embedded in online courses if the instructor chooses. The tutorials can be customized to any subject area or specific library resource at the request of the faculty member.
- **One-on-One Instruction** – Patrons are provided with personal assistance at any time during library operating hours on a needs basis. Extra assistance is usually requested by patrons in the use of the online catalog, the Internet, and the online databases, as well as in the use of the printer and copy machine. Appointments for one-on-one instruction and research assistance may be scheduled with the librarian responsible for reference.

## Interlibrary Loan Services

Interlibrary loan depends upon a cooperative agreement between libraries for the sharing of library resources. As a full member of OCLC, the NFCC Library is both a borrowing and a lending institution. The NFCC Library follows Interlibrary Loan protocols as determined by the applicable consortia, namely NEFLIN, FLIN.

Any patron in good standing may request interlibrary loan services. Patrons are not charged fees for ILL services, except where the item carries a fee imposed by the lending institution.

Whenever possible, items are obtained from lending institutions which do not charge fees. All interlibrary loan requests are forwarded to the technical services librarian for handling.

## Bibliographic Verification

Patrons frequently need assistance verifying such bibliographic information as an author, title or copyright date of a publication. Verification may be made using such tools as the online catalog, OCLC or other union catalogs. Bibliographic verification is conducted by a librarian or trained paraprofessional.

## Provision of printed informational materials

- **Bibliographies** – The library is occasionally requested by faculty and administrators to prepare bibliographies of library holdings in various subject areas. Bibliographies on particular topics are customized to the needs of the requestor and are compiled by one of the libraries or a trained paraprofessional. This service is provided only to faculty and administrators for college-related business, and requires sufficient notice to the library.
- **Reading lists and course information** - The library encourages faculty to provide a syllabus for each course being taught so that the library can have appropriate materials available. For example, the librarian responsible for reference maintains an approved reading list for English students. This list, available at the circulation desk, contains notations on the availability of each title in the NFCC library. The librarian responsible for reference also gathers information about sources in the library for recurring research topics.
- **Information** - Instructional information sheets, which assist users in operating library computers and databases, are compiled and updated by the librarian responsible for reference with input from other libraries. The librarian responsible for reference also develops printouts and visual aids, which are utilized in library orientation and bibliographic instruction sessions.

## Referrals

Referrals to other libraries, agencies and organizations are made when informational needs cannot be located in the library or when the informational need is better served by an outside agency. Personal referrals to individuals such as doctors and lawyers should be avoided. (See ethical considerations below).

## Ethical Considerations

Reference transactions follow the rules outlined in the NFCC Library Privacy Guidelines and complies fully with all of the provisions of the US Copyright Law (17 U.S.C.) and its amendments. The library supports the Fair Use section of the Copyright Law (17.U.S.C. 107), which permits and protects citizens to reproduce and to make other uses of copyrighted works for the purpose of teaching, scholarship, and research.