Guidelines for using materials from the Belk Library University Archives

The Belk Library University Archives has both public and private records. Depending on the researcher’s request, access to these public and private records may be limited. Outlined below are general guidelines of what one can expect when requesting information from public and private record collections.

Public Record Requests:

Public records include documents, collections, and publications that the university has published or that the Archivist has processed and noted no highly controversial or confidential materials. These records are usually readily available for consultation and research. In rare cases, patron registration and usage information may be shared with other campus offices on a need-to-know basis, as the well-being of Elon University takes precedence over the researcher’s privacy rights.

Private Record Requests:

Private records include any documents and collections that contain confidential information or that have not been processed completely by a member of the Archives staff. Depending on the researcher’s request, the use of sensitive records such as files from the Board of Trustees and the President’s office will require written permission to be obtained from appropriate offices on campus. When requesting to use private records from the Archives, the well being of Elon University will take precedence over the researcher’s immediate needs. Patron registration and usage information may be shared with other campus offices on a need-to-know basis.

Society of American Archivists Code of Ethics:

For both public and private record requests, the Archives staff will follow the Code of Ethics outlined by SAA in relation to Access and Privacy.

I. Access

Archivists strive to promote open and equitable access to their services and the records in their care without discrimination or preferential treatment, and in accordance with legal requirements, cultural sensitivities, and institutional policies. Archivists recognize their responsibility to promote the use of records as a fundamental purpose of the keeping of archives. Archivists may place restrictions on access for the protection of privacy or confidentiality of information in their records.

II. Privacy

Archivists protect the privacy rights of donors and individuals or groups who are the subject of records. They respect all users’ right to privacy by maintaining the confidentiality of their research and protecting any personal information collected about them in accordance with the institution’s security procedures.

Last updated: August 2012