

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

THE LAW LIBRARY

TRAINING SESSION F

Working With the Public

Rev. 8/06

Training Session F Working With the Public

SESSION F: WORKING WITH THE PUBLIC

Introduction

- For this session you will need a pen or pencil, this packet titled “Working with the Public,” and the green packet titled “Quiz Packet: Working with the Public.”
- **The purpose of this session** is to give you factual information and guidelines that will help you deal effectively with a wide variety of situations you may encounter when working with the public at the Circulation or Reference Desk. The session consists of two parts:
 - **Rules you must follow as a Desk worker**
 - **Rules you must administer (that patrons follow)**

Part I: Rules you must follow as a Desk worker

- **Being here in body: Your schedule commitments**
 - The two Desks must be staffed at all times services are offered at the Desks.
 - Your supervisor will provide you with your work schedule. You must make every effort to always report to work when scheduled.
 - Your work commitment includes the entire semester, through the last day of law school exams. You are expected to work your schedule during school breaks and on holidays when the Library is open. Your supervisor will provide a modified schedule during exam periods.
 - You must stay on duty at the Desk until your replacement arrives. To avoid inconveniencing other workers, you must make every effort to report on time for your shift.
 - Desk workers may seek to trade hours by posting a “sub slip.” If someone signs your “sub slip,” they are obligated to work your shift. If no one signs the sub slip, you remain obligated to work that shift. Your supervisor will provide more details regarding the “sub system.”
- **Being here in heart: The attitude you convey**
 - You should always convey a professional appearance and attitude.
 - Your goal is to be approachable to the Library’s patrons; try to speak first when a patron approaches the Desk.
 - Make every effort to be polite, respectful, and attentive to patrons’ needs.
 - Infrequently a patron may behave in an abusive or threatening manner towards you. If this happens, and a staff member is on duty, refer the patron to the staff member. If no staff member is available, give the patron the name and phone number of your supervisor and excuse yourself from the situation. If the patron continues in inappropriate behavior, call Safety. Do not try to handle the situation by engaging in like behavior.
 - Your job at the Desk comes first. Some supervisors may permit you to read or study while at the Desk, but only to the extent that this does not interfere with your Desk duties or normal Desk activity. It is never appropriate to carry on lengthy personal discussions with friends, either in person or on the phone, while at the Desk.

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- **Being here in mind: You will learn as you go**
 - There is much to learn in the Library; you cannot learn it all in a short time. It will be an ongoing process.
 - Desk workers receive general Library training, specific Desk training, and departmental training.
 - Documentation and daybooks are available at each Desk to provide you with current information.
 - If a patron asks a question and you cannot find the answer, do not guess; offer to take the patron's name and number and have a supervisor call her back.
 - If a patron argues with you about a service you cannot provide, try to offer a positive alternative. Refer the patron to a staff member, if possible. You may also invite the patron to write out an incident report explaining his difficulty; ask him to include name and phone number so that a supervisor may call him back.

- **Using the telephones**
 - **Telephones are kept at the Desk to conduct Library business. It is important that the lines be kept available for that purpose.**
 - **Desk staff** may use the library phone for business purposes only, except for personal calls that are brief (under one minute) and can't be made at another time.
 - **Patrons** must use public phones (one is located in the basement of LR), except when the patron must call Safety to report a theft or an emergency.
 - Campus calls may be made by dialing the last 5 digits of the number; dial 9 to place a call outside the University.
 - We do not place calls on hold in the Library.
 - Answer the phone with a greeting and identification: "Good afternoon, University of Michigan Law Library, Reference Desk."
 - To transfer a call:
 - Explain to the caller what you are doing.
 - Provide the caller with the 7-digit number to which the call is being transferred.
 - Press "tap" button; wait for dial tone; dial the appropriate 5-digit number.
 - Announce the call; hang up.
 - To leave a message:
 - Use a message pad.
 - Include date and time of call; name of caller; phone number of caller; message; your initials.

Part II: Rules you must administer as a Desk worker

- **Limited access policy and procedures**
 - Only those with an appropriate pass or ID may use the Library.
 - Valid IDs are UM law students (verified in The Law Library database), UM law faculty (verified in The Law Library database), other UM faculty (verified in the directory), and lawyers with a current bar card.
 - Passes are Visitor pass, collection use pass, and seven-day pass. Passes are issued as appropriate at the Reference Desk.
 - Limited access policy is in effect at all times. Circulation staff man the entrance gate during busy times to check passes and IDs.

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- All desk staff must confirm that a person has a pass or appropriate ID before providing services.
- Persons without a pass are asked to apply for one or leave. If a person refuses to comply and refuses to leave, call Safety.
- If a person complains about the policy, show them the Policy and Procedure sheet, then refer them to Margaret Leary or an Assistant Director.
- Turn in an incident report to describe uncooperative patrons or situations where you need to call Safety.

See attached for complete Food & Drink policy at back of handout.

- **No food in the library. Drinks are allowed in acceptable containers.**

- No exceptions: food is forbidden in the Library at all times.
- Drinks are allowed, preferably in spill-proof containers. Examples of acceptable and unacceptable containers are pictured below.



Preferred Containers

Items with a screw-top



Less desirable Containers

Items with any sort of lid

Unacceptable Containers

Any item without a lid

- Desk workers may never have food or drink at either Desk.
- Patrons observed with food or unacceptable drink containers must be approached politely, but firmly. Unopened food or drink must be concealed in a backpack or other container. Opened containers that cannot be resealed must either be taken to the washroom and emptied, or out of the library for consumption.
- Library staff and journal students may have food in their offices only. *They may not carry food openly through the Library building.* An “office” is defined as a floor to ceiling enclosed area; this does not include carrels.

- **Lost and found**

- The Library’s lost and found area is located in S-180 (Administrative Services Unit office).

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- If a valuable item is turned in: From 8-12, 1-5 M-F, take the item to Admin. Other times, call Safety to come pick it up. (Write an incident report, including Safety's report number.)
- If a non-valuable item is turned in: Address it to "Lost and Found" and put it in the box for delivery to Admin.
- Do not modify the lost and found procedure.

- **Working with Library equipment and supplies**
 - Keys to offices or carrels are to be used for Library purposes only.
 - Keys may not be loaned, with the following exceptions:
 - Keys on reserve may be checked out. The reserve number can be found by consulting the "keys on reserve" list.
 - Law school faculty may borrow the "carved stick key" at the Circulation Desk.
 - Journal students may not borrow keys to open their offices.
 - Office supplies for staff are at the Desk areas; office supplies for patrons are in the copier areas. Supplies may not be taken out of the Library building.
 - Library equipment may not be used for personal business.

- **S-106 – Seminar room**
 - Seminar Room is kept unlocked during weekdays, but locked on evenings and weekends.
 - A key to unlock the Seminar Room is available at the Reading Room Desk, but only to someone who has scheduled the room.
 - The Library does not administer the seminar room. Scheduling of the room is done by the Law School.

- **S-395 and S-397 – Group Study Rooms**
 - When the rooms are not reserved, anyone may use them.
 - Only groups may make advance reservations. Same-day reservations may be made for either groups or individuals.
 - Reservations must be made at least one hour in advance at the Circulation Desk and no more than one week ahead of time.
 - The rooms can only be reserved for up to two hours at a time.
 - Same-day reservations, please use sign up sheet in holder near window.



Remember to turn in the green packet to your supervisor!

ACCESS POLICY

Access to the Law Library

The University of Michigan Law School welcomes researchers to the underground Smith Addition to use the collection, including U.S. depository materials, for their legal research.

Who May Enter the Smith Addition

- **By showing identification:**
 - U of M Law School Faculty and Students : A current U of M ID which can be verified in the Law Library's database.
 - U of M Faculty : A Faculty ID which can be verified in a directory, with status of professor (assistant, associate, emeritus).
 - U of M Regents : A picture ID which can be verified in the UM Board of Regents webpage at www.umich.edu/~regents/ 
 - Attorneys : A valid Bar card from any state or country. Attorneys from jurisdictions without bar cards should apply for a Collection Use Pass.
- **By obtaining at the Reference Desk on Sub-1 (bring identification), or showing, one of the following passes :**
 - Visitor Pass : to look around the building for a short time.
 - Seven-Day Pass : to use the collection for seven days; you may obtain up to two in a semester. To use the collection for a more extended period of time, apply for a Collection Use Pass.
 - Collection Use Pass : to use the Law Library collection for research for a semester.

Those with no legal research need are welcome to use the Reading Room, which is open for general study.

PASS APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Visitor Pass

We welcome visitors to look around our building for a short time. Please pick up a Visitor Pass at the Reference Desk and ask for the "About the Law Library" bookmark. This pass does not allow you to use our books or to study here. If you need to use the collection for research, please apply for one of the passes described below.

Please remain quiet; noise travels and disturbs others.

Seven-Day Pass

If you have a short-term research project or if you first arrive to use the collection evenings or weekends, apply at the Reference Desk for a Seven-Day Pass. You may obtain up to two Seven-Day Passes during a semester if you have not already obtained another type of pass. If you need to use

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the Law Library for a more extended period of time, you must apply for a Collection Use Pass.

Collection-Use Pass This pass is valid for one semester.

You may be eligible for a Collection Use Pass if you:

- Need to use material in the Law collection not available elsewhere on campus, and
- you need to use the collection for course work, class assignments, writing a paper or honors thesis, personal research, research for a professor or law firm, or in-depth research such as for a PhD.

You may also be eligible for a Collection Use Pass if:

- you are a full-time law student at another law school; or
- you are an attorney from a jurisdiction that does not issue bar cards.

An instructor who has made previous arrangements with us may obtain Collection Use Passes, but individuals may also apply at the Reference Desk. We ask for documentation of your need. Please apply at the Reference Desk. If you have questions, call 764-9324.



University of Michigan Law Library



Modus Operandi

Food and Drink Restrictions

The Rule: NO FOOD in the Library.

DRINKS IN THE LIBRARY ONLY IN CLOSED CONTAINERS.

Spill-proof containers are strongly encouraged.

Reasons: We must restrict food in the library and drink for the following reasons:

- We do not have sufficient janitorial staff to clean up the mess associated with spills and debris.
- Eating or chewing gum can be distracting to others.
- Any food or drink spilled will damage the books, as well as furnishings and computers.
- Crumbs and spills attract bugs and vermin, both of which are not only unpleasant but a hazard to books and people.
- If we develop a bug problem, we must use chemical insecticides, which are not good for anyone.

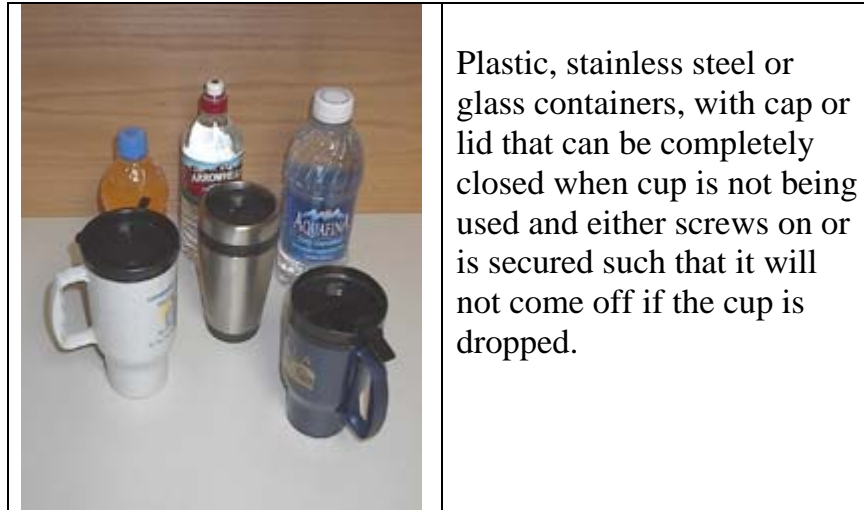
Guidelines: Therefore we ask that everyone follow these guidelines:

- Follow the rules: don't bring food in, and limit drinks to those in acceptable containers.
- Follow the rule anywhere in the library, including the stairs coming into the building and the area outside the Seminar Room.
- Don't put drinks near library computers, equipment or printers. Be cautious about putting a drink anywhere near a laptop, since spills on laptops can damage the laptop greatly.
- Remove and recycle any plastic or glass bottles you bring into the building.
- If you do have a spill, go to the Circulation Desk on S-2 to get supplies to clean up any mess.
- Keep caps screwed on bottles and lids closed when you are not drinking from a container.

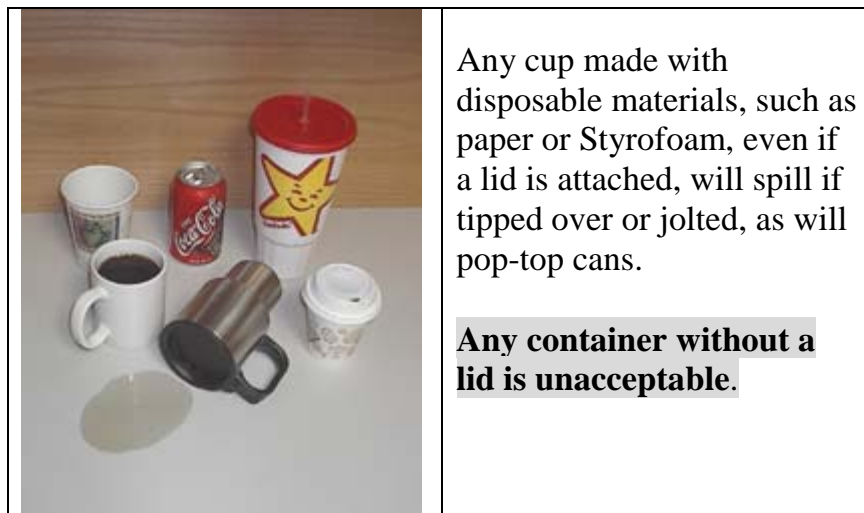
See over for examples of preferred containers.

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Examples of preferred containers:



Examples of unacceptable and less desirable containers:



If you want to eat or drink a beverage in an unacceptable container, go to the snack bar on level one of the legal research building, where you will find tables and seating.

If the snack bar is open, you can purchase a spill-proof container there; we *much prefer that drinks be contained in containers such as those on the top illustration.*

Thank you for your cooperation. The purpose of this restriction is to keep the library a pleasant place to study while protecting the books, building and inhabitants from problems caused by food and drink. We periodically review the rule; if we find that there are too many problems caused by allowing any drinks in the library, we will go back to not allowing any drinks.

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University of Michigan Law Library
Food & Drink Policy Chart – STAFF USE
 August 31, 2006

GENERAL RULE: NO FOOD in the Library. Drinks in acceptable containers.

Note: The area outside S-106, stairway to the Library, landing and hallway with email terminals are all part of the Library and this policy also applies in these areas.

**Spill-proof drink containers are strongly encouraged!*

| <i>Situation</i> | <i>Acceptable?</i> | <i>Follow-up action</i> |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>Food in ANY container</u> | NO, <u>UNLESS</u> it is Library Staff or Journal Member and food is completely concealed | Politely remind Library Staff/Journal Member that food is not allowed in the Library for all other patrons, and that 1) He/she MUST fully conceal food to transport to an office where food is permitted; OR 2) Take food out of the Library to finish it. |
| Open top mug, glass, cup, etc. | NO | Politely let patron know that this is not an acceptable drink container & give a copy of the Circ/Ref Desk Handout. Present 3 options for patron: 1) Take out of Library and finish at leisure; 2) Take to restroom and dispose in sink; OR 3) Purchase spill-proof container in Snack Bar & transfer drink. |

QUIZ PACKET: WORKING WITH THE PUBLIC

Each quiz is one page. When you finish a quiz, restart the tape and continue until you are instructed to take the next quiz. Remember: if you do not know an answer, you can rewind the tape to listen again to any portion of the tape.

NAME _____

DATE _____

COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS

When you have completed this quiz packet, be sure to turn it in to your supervisor.

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QUIZ #1

| Situation: | Circle the number of the response you think is best |
|--|---|
| <p>You are the only one on duty and scheduled to get off work at 6 p.m. on Saturday. It is now 6:25 and the person who is supposed to relieve you has not shown up. You try to phone the person, but , only get her answering machine. You have plans to meet friends at 7 p.m. and are getting worried.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Call other desk assistants to see if someone can come in and sub for the no-show. If so, wait for the sub to arrive, then leave. If not, call your friends to cancel the night's plans. In either case, leave an incident report for your supervisor! 2. You notice that Joe, a shelver is working. He's a nice guy and seems to be very good at shelving books. You ask him if he can work for you. He says sure, but he's never worked the desk before. So you give him a crash 15 minute training session, tell him your beeper number and leave. 3. Put a sign up saying the desk is closed and leave. |
| <p>You have a huge paper due the next day and you're nowhere near finished. Your professor told you no late papers accepted. You call around to try to get a sub, but can not find anyone who can work for you on such short notice.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Just don't show up and don't answer your phone. That will force the person who is working to stay and work your shift, but that's not your problem. 2. Come in, spread all your notes around, plug in your laptop and start working. Put on a Walkman and keep your head down to discourage people from bothering you. 3. Come in to work and provide the same good service you always do. Do some reading for your paper, as you can, and maybe make some notes about material you intend to include, but plan an all-nighter to finish it and resolve to plan your time better in the future. |

If I would like to be excused from working a shift for which I am scheduled, I post a ____ slip.

I commit to working the whole semester, including

- a. spring break
- b. holidays, if the library is open
- c. through the law school exam period
- d. all of the above

TRUE or FALSE: If I am going to be late for work (once in a blue moon!) I should call the person on duty to let him or her know that I will be late and when I will arrive.

TRUE or FALSE: If I am scheduled until 6 p.m. and Joe calls to say he is running late and will be in at 6:20, I can just post a note that someone will be back at 6:20 and leave the desk unattended.

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QUIZ #2

| Situation |
|--|
| A patron approaches the desk. He is upset and wants to complain about the service he has received. It turns out is going to be a long story, starting over a year ago, when he first began his research and received what he considers to be bad advice from someone at the desk. There is a second person on duty with you and the desk is not busy, but you are just starting a long chapter that has to be read by class at 8 a.m. tomorrow morning. You are worried you will not be able to finish it. |

| |
|--|
| You are working at the desk and your room mate stops by to see you. You are planning a big Saturday night party and he needs to know what he should buy. It's a problem, because your third room mate is going to do the cooking, so you don't really know what is needed. |
|--|

| Circle the appropriate response |
|--|
| a) The minute you hear it began last year, interrupt him. Tell him flatly that you weren't working here last year and can not be held responsible for the advice. b) Listen to his story. It is too bad you might not finish the chapter, but you are here to do a job and that comes first. When he has finished, first express regret that it worked out so badly. Help him with the immediate problem and ask him if he would like to have your supervisor call him the next day for further follow up. If so, ask him to fill out an incident report form with his name and telephone number and a brief description of the problem. c) Half listen to him, mumble appropriate noises every once in awhile. Don't be rude, but act disinterested so as not to encourage him to keep talking about something you can't undo anyway. |
| a) Tell your room mate "hi" and make plans to meet at Amer's after you get off work. Ask your room-mate if he can get hold of the third planner to meet with you then. b) Give your third roommate a quick call and the three of you sit behind the desk and discuss the plans. Of course you help patrons when they come to the desk and get your attention. c) Have your room mate stand on the other side of the desk, call your room mate and hold a three way conversation with you in the middle. Tell patrons to come back later, when you are less busy. . They have no way of knowing you're not conducting library business. |

Which of the following are NOT appropriate apparel while working:

- a) a bathing suit
- b) an iPod plugged into your ears
- c) bare feet
- d) all of the above

TRUE OR FALSE: What matters is *what you say*; not how you say it. No one pays any attention to tone of voice.

TRUE OF FALSE: It's the patron's responsibility to get my attention. If he wants help, he should ask for it.

TRUE OR FALSE: When a person is angry and upset, I should take it personally and respond in kind. That will probably make things better because he'll know he can't get away with acting like that!

TRUE OR FALSE: Because I am working at the desk, I just have to take whatever people dish out. If someone yells and swears and calls me names, I just have to take it. It's part of working with the public.

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QUIZ #3

| Situation: | Circle the number of the response you think is best |
|---|--|
| <p>A patron approaches the Circulation Desk at 9 p.m. on April 15. He seems to be in a great hurry and wants the copy of Reproducible Income Tax Forms on reserve.</p> <p>It turns out that these forms were checked out to a faculty member early that morning and will almost certainly not be returned before the library closes at midnight. The patron is frantic and agitated and insists that the desk worker do something to get him the forms needed.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Crack a joke about serving jail time...that should make him see that he has lost his perspective. 2. Curtly remind him that <u>he</u> is the one who left it until the last minute. 3. Tell the patron that you know of no other place to get these forms, but staff at the Reference Desk may have a solution. Instruct him to go up to talk to them, but first call Reference to alert them to the problem and let them know this person is coming up. |
| <p>This same patron approaches the Reference Desk.</p> <p>You know the problem, because the staff at the Circulation Desk have called you, but you have checked all your aids and have been unable to identify an alternate source for the forms.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The minute the man comes to the desk, inform him you know what he wants, you don't know why those idiots downstairs sent him back up – you don't have any magic wands to wave. 2. Listen to the man tell you what he needs to be sure you understand the situation correctly. Then tell him that you do not know of another source, but since it is only 9 p.m. and you know tomorrow will be too late, offer to make a quick call to your supervisor to be sure that there is not a better answer. 3. Tell him to try the public library. You're <i>quite sure</i> they have the forms there and you <i>think</i> they're open until 10 p.m. |

The first thing I must do when I arrive for my desk shift is to read the _____.

If I have a question and no one is available to answer it at the moment, I can always write it out on an _____ form and submit it to my supervisor.

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QUIZ #4

Complete the message slips based on the following situations:

The phone rings at 11:45 a.m. July 3rd; how do you answer it?

It is Donald Duck, calling for your supervisor, Minnie Mouse. As far as you know, Ms. Mouse just left for her coffee break. . What do you tell Mr. Duck?

He leaves this message: “I am returning your call. What is the scoop with Chuck?” He asks that you take his number: (123) 456-7890

How would you fill out the message slip?

As a staff member, you can use the phone for personal calls

- a) never
- b) if the call is brief and necessary
- c) anytime, no matter how long the call, as long as I help patrons when they come to the desk

Patrons can use the library phone:

- a) never
- b) for research purposes only
- c) to call safety to report a theft or emergency

TRUE OR FALSE: It makes people feel like the library is a friendly place if the phone is answered with a witty greeting-- something like “YO! Joe’s Bar & Grill; free legal advice from the bartender” would put the caller at ease.

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QUIZ #5

TRUE OR FALSE?

- _____ The access policy is only in effect when staff are at the entrance station.
- _____ If a wallet is turned in, open it up to find the person's name, then call him to let him know where it is.
- _____ If a person is drinking from a container with out a lid, it is OK.
- _____ A lawyer can use the phone at the desk to call his office and check in.
- _____ If a staff member of one of the student publications locks himself out of his office, we can use our keys to let him in.
- _____ Law Library staff know who is scheduled to use the seminar room at any given time.

MULTIPLE CHOICE (circle the correct answer)

You find someone has left his wallet on the desk when you open on the weekend, so you

- a) take it home with you (finders keepers!)
- b) take it to lost & found in S-180
- c) put it in the mailbox to go to S-180 later in the day
- d) call Safety to come and get it

A person approaches the Reference Desk and asks to borrow a key to his office. You recognize him as being Professor Soandso, who teaches in the Law School.

- a) tell him we never lend keys and can not help him
- b) give him all the keys we have and tell him he is welcome to see if one of those keys works
- c) tell him there is a "carved stick key" available at the Circulation Desk and send him there to check the key out. Call the Circ Desk to tell them Professor Soandso is on his way to the desk.

You approach a patron who is drinking coffee and eating a donut. You tell her that the coffee is acceptable but we don't allow food in the library. She asks, "What am I suppose to do with it?". You then tell her

- a) she can take the food and throw it away.
- b) she can take the food out of the building.
- c) she can wrap up the food and put it away.
- d) she has the choice of any of the above.

A student studying in the RR wants to come into the addition to make photocopies of his notes for biology class. He points out that there are no copiers in the RR.

- a) tell him " No. It is against the rules. "
- b) tell him he can not come into the addition to make copies, but tell him the undergraduate library just across the street is a nearby place to make the copies.
- c) let him in just this once
- d) offer to make the copies for him

Remember to turn this quiz packet into your supervisor! Be sure your name is on it.

Please rewind the tape before you return it to the Circ Desk