Archives and Manuscripts Department
Collection Policy

Mission Statement
The mission of Southern University and A&M College, Archives and Manuscripts Department is to serve as the final repository for all the historical records of Southern University and A&M College.

- Manage information resources created by or written about the University in support of administration, teaching, research, and service.
- assists the University in appraising and managing its records throughout their life cycle.
- collects, organizes, and preserves records of enduring value in all formats created by administrators, faculty, students and alumni;
- supports research and teaching by making available and encouraging the use of its collections by the Southern University community and the public;
- provides information services which support University administrators in performance of their duties; and promotes knowledge and understanding of the history, programs, and goals of Southern University and A&M College.

Statement of Purpose
The primary purpose of the Archives and Manuscripts Department is to document the history of the University and to provide source materials for administrators, faculty, students, alumni, and other members of the University community, as well as scholars, authors, and other interested persons who seek to evaluate the impact of the University’s activities on the history of American social, cultural, and intellectual development.

A. Scope
The University Archives collects records relating to the history and culture of Southern University and A&M College that have long-term, indefinite administrative, legal, fiscal or historical value. The majority of the records collected by the Archives are generated by University administrative units and academic departments that document the process of administering and managing the University. Another prominent but less voluminous source of records collected by the Archives are the records generated by faculty, student and alumni organizations. The Archives also collects records that are about the University and members of the Southern University community, even if the creator of these documents is not associated with Southern University. Finally, the Archives collects on a selective basis the personal papers of prominent Southern University faculty and alumni.
B. Conditions of Acceptance

Archival material may be collected by gift, bequest, or in some cases, purchased. Loans are discouraged but may be considered on an individual basis if the material is unique or of special value to the institution. Records will not be accepted if the donor’s ownership of such records is uncertain.

Since Southern University Archives is primarily an information resource, restrictions on access to donated material is strongly discouraged. In some cases, in order to protect individual privacy, clearly stated restrictions of limited duration can be imposed with guidance from the University Archivist.

Collection Development

The Archives Department is the "official repository for all records of the University" that have enduring historical, administrative, or community significance received by the University officers or employees in the course of their duties on behalf of the institution. The Archives department was first mentioned as a separate library collection in 1955, but a university archivist was not appointed until 1972.

From 1972 to 2002 the university archivist position was held by Mrs. Ledell Smith. From July, 2002 to 2013 the position was held by Ms. Angela V. Proctor as the Archivist and Metadata Librarian. In 2003 the archives established the Joseph S. Clark Rare Book Collection, and the subsequent transfer of the archival rare books, literary collections, and other selected special collections to a separate rare book repository located in the archives department. In 2009 the Library purchased an Archival Database software application which would allow the archives collections to be accessible electronically as well as to create finding aids. With the addition of this database the name of the archives department was changed. The official name was changed to The Archives and Manuscripts Department. In August, 2013 the position title of the archivist was changed to University Archivist/Digital Librarian which is still currently held by Angela Proctor.

In order to oversee its growth and development a policy statement was initiated for the preservation of University records for the purposes of:

- maintaining a clear account of University life and achievements, administrative policy and actions and educational programs
- reinforcing an image of the University that stimulates financial support and encourages an appreciation of the University's past and its role in the history of American higher education among students, faculty, and alumni and
- making available a body of records useful for students, casual, and scholarly research in history and other disciplines.

The records of the Archives Department are voluminous. In the absence of a systematic records management program, the Archives must rely on the cooperation and support of administrators, deans, directors, faculty, students, and alumni to ensure that materials of historical value are collected and preserved.
Archive Internal Material Transfer Guidelines

The Archives preserves records and other materials that Southern University considers precious, important, and reflects the history and life of the university. If you are interested in donating, or retiring, and must find a home for your records, awards, and other important materials, you may consider transferring them to the Archives.

Before transferring any records or materials, please review the Archives Transfer Form and the list below to determine which items the Archives will accept and whether your materials or records are appropriate.

1. **Institutional Records:**
   Records include the history of buildings, athletics, campus grounds, off campus facilities, special collections, organizations, instructional divisions, departments, administrative offices, administrators, faculty, staff, students, governing boards, and related organizations. Also, any documents containing deeds, charters, events, speeches, and meeting minutes.

   - Board of Administrators
   - President’s office

2. **Student Records:**
   Records include minutes, reports, and memorabilia of student clubs and organizations.

3. **Faculty Records:**
   - Departmental operations, e.g., minutes, reports, syllabi, faculty vita, correspondences
   - Retired, resigned, terminated, or deceased personnel employed by Southern University
   - The registrar’s office: calendars, class schedules, enrollment records, and graduation programs

4. **Publications:**
   The Archives preserves student yearbooks such as “The Cat.”

   - the University College Catalog
   - Student Handbooks,
   - campus literary publications,
   - Student Newspapers,
   - newsletters for staff, posters, and booklet about or distributed by Southern University
   - promotional flyers, pamphlets
   - alumni magazines
   - and telephone directories and similar relevant materials.

5. **Special Format Materials:**
   Documenting the operation and development of the university, such as:

   - Still photographs, motion picture films, negatives, slides, renderings, drawings, and video and sound recordings of former and current Southern University students, faculty, staff, and campus events.
Maps and plans of the university and its buildings.

6. Reports of:
- Self-studies and accreditation visits
- Annual budgets and audits
- Academic and administrative offices and units

7. Student final projects
- Electronic records and descriptive aids for maintaining access to the records
- Ph.D., Master’s and Honors theses, dissertations (hard copy only).

Inappropriate for the Archives
- Routine correspondence (newspaper clippings, obituaries, [unless the person is of significant stature within the university] and non-university related material).
- Routine accounting transactions.
- Routine student records (grades).

C. Constituents
The archives primarily serves the faculty, staff, and students of the institution.

- **Administrative units and academic departments**: Have ready access to the permanent record. The Archives collects comprehensively and broadly in this area. The goal is to document the creation, development, priorities and activities of every Southern University administrative unit and academic school, department or research center.

- **Affiliated organizations**: Connects with the institution by learning about its history and placing themselves within that context. This category includes faculty bodies, student organizations, alumni groups and Southern University support organizations.

- **Distinguished or outstanding records in research and teaching**: Use the archives for research and as a source of curricular materials. The goal is to document the faculty member as a researcher, as a teacher, and as a scholar interacting with professional colleagues. Unlike administrative papers, the Archives collects selectively in the area of faculty papers. In determining whose papers to solicit, the Archivist evaluates: 1) the scholarly, research contributions of the faculty member; faculty members who have achieved “Distinguished Rank” status at Southern University; 2) whether a faculty member’s papers reflect upon and contribute to the understanding of a particular research strength of Southern University; and 3) whether the faculty member’s papers might more appropriately be deposited in the Archives and Manuscripts Department because his/her papers is of special collecting value to the Archives and Manuscripts Department.

- **Alumni with a distinguished record in research**: May access and use resources that help maintain personal connections with their alma mater. The archives, is also important as a physical space which
provides historical continuity, to which they can return at any time to experience the past. As with faculty papers, the Archives collects selectively in the area of Southern University alumni papers.

The archives has a scholarly commitment to preserve knowledge. The archives serves as the institutional memory of the university and plays an integral role in the management of the institution’s information resources in all media and formats. To fulfill the responsibilities of that role, the archives identifies, acquires, maintains, and preserves records of enduring value that chronicles the institution and ensures its continued existence. The archives documents the process of institutional evolution by retaining both the evidence which shapes decisions and the decisions themselves.