



Benedictine University Library

OFFICE: Benedictine University Library
DATE: Last revised March 2023
CATEGORY: Policy
SUBJECT: University Archives and Special Collections Policy

Mission

The mission of the Benedictine University Archives and Special Collections is to select, preserve, and make accessible primary source materials that provide long-term research and instruction value to Benedictine University (the “University”).

Purpose

The Benedictine University Archives is maintained and curated by the Benedictine University Library (the “Library”). The University Archives exists to retain and provide an authentic record of the programs, people, and operations of all current and historical locations of Benedictine University. We are committed to preserving and providing access to the work of individuals, departments, organizations, and other entities associated with Benedictine University and the Benedictine communities of Lisle, Illinois and Mesa, Arizona. The Library seeks to acquire and preserve records in their original formats generated by and serving the needs of faculty, staff, students, alumni, and both the Benedictine and local communities impacted by our organization. The Library especially wishes to document the academic, social, and cultural activities of the university and the impact of the university and its associated personnel and organizations on the wider community. The Library also strives to uphold the mission of the university and of the library through our [Collection Development Policy](#) and our [Research and Reference Services Policy](#).

Materials & Format

The Benedictine University Archives and Special Collections acquires personal and institutional records, rare books, manuscripts, photographs, ephemera, audiovisual materials, digital files, and other primary source materials of a rare or unique nature. The collection scope is not limited by format or by type of acquisition. We acquire new holdings predominantly through donations and transfers. Acquisitions for purchase may be considered based upon their alignment with the [Collection Development Policy](#).

Access & Use

The Library values open and equitable access to all University archival holdings. All its collections are open to the public for use in compliance with our [Archives Usage Policy](#), save those collections that have been restricted due to the personal or sensitive nature of the information contained within the collection.

Scope

The central collecting focus of the Benedictine University Archives is the records created by and relating to the function and impact of the University and its Benedictine community partners. Portions of the collection may document areas outside the University, but these collections are related to the function or community of the University and inform the impact and historical involvement of the university in the wider geographic, academic, and religious community of which it is part. Further external collections will be evaluated for acquisition based on their alignment with the mission of the University, the library, and the current archival holdings.

Primary Collecting Areas

University Archives

The University Archives collects and preserves records documenting the history and culture of Benedictine University that have enduring administrative, fiscal, legal, cultural, or historical value. Most of these records are created or curated by Benedictine administrative units and academic departments during their daily tasks carried out on behalf of Benedictine University. Records are also collected from faculty, staff, student, and alumni organizations and from individual faculty, staff, and alumni. Also of importance to the university archives are materials that document the University's relationship with the Benedictine community of Lisle and its interactions and impact on the local DuPage County area.

The University archives is the designated repository for doctoral dissertations and master's and undergraduate theses.

University Archives: Mesa Campus

The University Archives will also collect and preserve records documenting the operations, history and culture of Benedictine University's Mesa Campus, which may reflect the unique cultural composition of the Mesa student body. This collection area may include, but will not focus on, materials that reflect Mesa and Arizona history, interfaith relations at Mesa, or other areas that inform the student experience on the Mesa campus.

In summary, the University Archives will collect materials that represent the people and places served by Benedictine University, and that will provide a contextual background for understanding the operations, culture, and experience of the students and employees of Benedictine University.

Czech- and Eastern European-American history

The University Archives collect records that document the experience of immigrants and Americans from a Czech or Eastern European background as they inform and intersect with the rich and prevalent Czech heritage of Benedictine University.

Existing collection strengths: Kanka papers

Illinois Politics, Labor rights history, and civic engagement

As a force for social change and a champion of progressive values, the Benedictine University Library collects records of organizations or individuals involved in politics especially relating to social justice, local activism, and the values and partnership of the University.

Existing collection strengths: John Erlenborn Papers

Illinois History

Records and papers of individuals and organizations that touch on the intersection of Illinois history and the University. Records relating to the history of higher education and campus life in Illinois are also of importance and relevance to current University holdings. General collections relating to the history of Illinois are out of scope.

Existing Collections: Thomas J. Dyba Lincoln Home Collection, Vachel Lindsay Collection, WSHEC Records, Lincoln Society of Philately

New Collecting Areas

Benedictine University is “an inclusive academic community dedicated to teaching and learning, scholarship and service, truth and justice, as inspired by Catholic intellectual tradition...Seek[ing] to provide a transformative and integrative education experience grounded in Benedictine values, helping students shape lives of meaning and purpose as engaged citizens who care for the Earth, welcome people of diverse faiths and cultures, and promote the common good.” Areas for collection expansion that highlight the university’s commitment to faith, justice, and diversity would be welcome and accepted. Such topics might include, but are not limited to:

- Regional modern immigration history
- Regional Muslim American history
- Regional Catholic history
- Interfaith dialogue and ecumenical service
- Benedictine tradition, mission, and identity
- Lisle, Naperville, and DuPage County history
- Catholic environmentalism
- Catholic LGBTQ culture and dialogue

Materials and subject areas we do not collect

- Collections unrelated or unaligned to the University’s academic mission or the Archives and Special Collections’ existing holdings.
- Photocopies of materials held in other repositories.
- Photocopies or other reproductions of original material, unless the originals are no longer in existence or are unavailable to the public
- Images of museum objects

- Duplicates of material copies of our collections, unless the duplicate is in better condition than the copy held by the archives and special collections.
- Current local, state, and federal government records
- Autographs, in most cases
- Large artifacts with little research value such as plaques and trophies
- Non-English language resources not related to the history and development of Benedictine University and the Abbey.

Contacts:

- Provost and Chief Academic Officer (630) 829-6240
- Chief Institutional Compliance and Risk Management Officer (630) 829-6404
- University Librarian (630) 829-6060

Additional Resources and Policies:

Collection Development Policy

Archival Usage Policy

Research and Reference Services Policy

Date of Issuance: 2006

Last Revised: March 23, 2023

Department Responsible: University Library