

Toward a User-Centered Reading Room

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Outline

Best practices

Haverford

Buy-in

Our values

Best Practices

SAA-ACRL/RBMS Joint Task Force on the Development of Standardized Statistical Measures for Public Services in Archival Repositories and Special Collections Libraries

ALA-SAA Joint Statement of Access: Guidelines for Access to Original Research Materials

ACRL/RBMS Guidelines Regarding Security and Theft in Special Collections

About Haverford

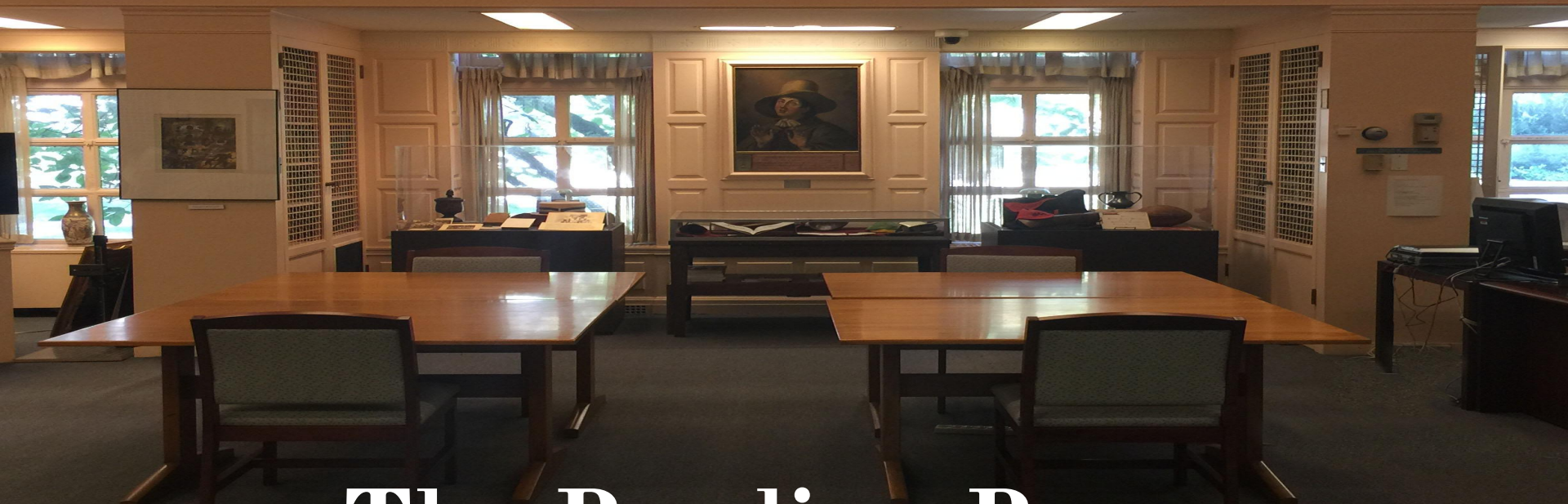
Small (1200 students) liberal arts college

8,000 linear feet/ 50,000 volumes

About 1500 visitors and off-campus research requests/year

Open 40 hours/week

3 curatorial staff



The Reading Room



Working with Students

We don't require silence, or that people work individually

Emphasizing that they are welcome anytime during open hours

Emphasizing the reading room desk as a resource for asking questions, not as a way to tell people “no” or watch their behavior

Focus on handling as little as possible

Staffing the Reading Room

We use students

Try to have two people at the desk, so that one can go and page materials

Importance of training and consistency

On-call system for curators

New system, in use since 2014

Buy In

Necessary for policies to be effective, from both staff and from patrons

Important for making changes, but also for the day-to-day things

What is really essential, and what are we just doing because we have done it?

Our Values

The way we run our reading rooms should be user-centered

Access is as important as security and preservation

Problematize the privilege inherent in certain policies and ideas which underly them, such as ID rules and surveillance

Thank You

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