

Greater Western Library Alliance On-Site Reciprocal Circulation Agreement

I. Definition

Reciprocal circulation is a collaborative service whereby the faculty, staff and students of participating university libraries within the Greater Western Library Alliance consortium (hereafter GWLA) may borrow library materials on-site at other participating member libraries.

In the following document, “home library” designates the institution whose users borrow materials from another participating library. “Host library” refers to the institution lending materials to individuals visiting from other campuses.

II. Purpose

The purpose of the Reciprocal Circulation Agreement is to provide the academic community among GWLA-member institutions with convenient access to circulating library materials as a low-cost alternative to interlibrary loan.

III. Scope

Library users eligible for reciprocal borrowing are those with valid faculty, staff, or student identification cards from a participating institution.

“Valid” identification is defined by the host library. Patrons must be in good standing with their home library (e.g. no lost or long overdue items).

This Agreement is intended to complement, not invalidate, reciprocal borrowing arrangements which may already exist between participating institutions.

It is understood that users may approach host libraries directly, without being referred by their home libraries. This is entirely appropriate under the terms of the Agreement, provided that the home library complies with the responsibilities outlined below.

To the extent that it is necessary for the participating libraries to maintain records of delinquent borrowers, such records will be maintained in confidence and will not be available to persons other than those involved in the return of library materials or the assessment and collection of related charges.

IV. Responsibilities of Home Libraries

1. Each participating library should provide resources to support the ordinary teaching and research needs of their own user community.
2. The home library will assist in enforcing compliance with the conditions of the loan, as established by the host, and will be responsible for assisting the host library in collecting fine and replacement costs, if necessary. The host library should

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- first contact the patron directly for payment of all overdue fines, recall fines, replacement costs, or other fees assessed by the host. If this fails, and billing the home library is necessary, correspondence should be sent to the home library's contact person. Any such referred fines should be dealt with by the home library using the same means used to enforce its own policies, provided that the home library is given timely notice of a borrower's delinquent status. As with interlibrary loan, the home library is ultimately responsible for any fines or other charges its patrons may owe to another institution.
3. Each library should inform its users of the purpose of the Reciprocal Circulation Agreement, and of its policy of compliance with the host library's conditions, through whatever channels are normally used to convey library policy.
 4. Unless specifically forbidden by the host library, copying borrowed material is permitted provided that it does not violate copyright law and that no damage to the original material would result.
 5. Borrowed materials should be returned directly to the host library by the borrower. All material the borrower chooses to return by mail or other shipping method should be addressed to the circulation department of the host library; borrowers are responsible for material until it is received by the host library.
 6. Each participating library will identify a "contact person" (see point #2 above). Should the contact person change, it is the responsibility of staff at that library to make this change known to the other participating institutions' contact person.

V. Responsibilities of the Host Libraries

1. Host libraries should use whatever method necessary to validate a user requesting reciprocal service. This could include: asking for presentation of a current ID card from the home library, asking the requestor to access their library record for inspection by appropriate staff, and/or any other method devised by the host library.
2. Hosts are encouraged to be as generous as possible in extending borrowing privileges to GWLA visitors. Host libraries reserve the right to charge a small fee for making a borrower card and for library privileges similar to the fee that they charge for other non-affiliated users.
3. Host libraries are encouraged to provide users visiting from other institutions with reference assistance, especially that which can only be provided on-site, with due consideration to the interests of their primary clientele.
4. Each participating library should formulate a policy to clarify details of the Agreement, such as loan periods, hold and clearance procedures, etc. This policy should be made available to other participants in the Agreement upon request.

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VI. Maintaining the Agreement

Each library is responsible for complying with the provisions of the Reciprocal Circulation Agreement in good faith. Host libraries will not suspend interlibrary loan services to those home libraries that have patrons with delinquent accounts.

All records and correspondence of lasting significance that pertain to the Agreement are maintained by the RSDD Advisory Committee of GWLA.

Revisions to the Agreement may be introduced at the annual GWLA meeting. Motions may then be voted on by a quorum of the RSDD section members present.

VII. Statistics

For ease of accumulating statistics, each participating library is encouraged to create a patron type specifically for patrons using library services under this program. Statistics should be compiled on an annual basis. Both the number of patrons using the program, and the number of items borrowed/renewed should be compiled. Those figures will be sent to the chair of the GWLA RSDD Advisory Committee for review and discussion at the annual meeting.