

## Book Repair Unit Summary of Policies and Procedures

August 2018

**Mission:** The Book Repair unit performs repair, rebinding, and pre-shelf binding on general collections materials that do not fit the Library's commercial binding contract or that otherwise require special handling and individual attention. The unit aims to develop and use repair techniques that permit efficient turn-around but that are preservationally sound and sensitive to the integrity of the book and to the needs of the Library's patrons.

**Scope:** The Book Repair unit works on print materials from the general and circulating collections of the University Library, with limitations and exceptions noted below. Materials from any of the Library's rare book or special collections should be brought to the attention of the Conservation Unit of the Department of Preservation & Conservation.

**Resources:** Book Repair is staffed by two full-time bookbinders who are sometimes assisted by part-time hourly and interns. Work is performed at the Library's Conservation Lab located in the Buhr Building on South Campus. While certain operations are assisted by specialized machinery, all treatments are essentially performed by hand.

Book Repair staff (phone 763-2446):

Jeff Gilboe (gilboe)

Norm Harris (nharris)

Book Repair staff report to Marieka Kaye (marieka, phone 647-8461), head of Conservation & Book Repair; the Department of Preservation & Conservation is directed by Shannon Zachary (szachary, phone 763-6980), who reports to the AUL for Collections.

**Clientele:** The Book Repair unit serves all libraries and divisions in the University Library system; it does not serve the independent libraries on campus (e.g., Law, Business, Bentley, Clements, Ford, and departmental libraries).

**Library Contact Person:** We ask each library that sends material to Book Repair to designate a contact person who will work with us to coordinate the workflow and resolve problems that may arise. Library staff are encouraged to discuss special situations and repair problems directly with the bookbinders.

The bookbinders are assigned primary responsibility for the libraries as follows:

- Norm Harris: HHGL (general books), International Studies, Labeling, Science, and UGL
- Jeff Gilboe: AAEL, Asia, Buhr, Clark, Fine Arts, Museums/Herbarium, Music, and Taubman

To discuss specific needs or resolve problems, feel free to get in touch with the Book Repair contact person for your library.

**No Quotas:** Book Repair has so far avoided setting up a quota system for the various libraries that send us work. Our goal is to treat all materials sent to us that fit the unit's criteria for treatment. Occasionally, if we receive more material at one time than we can handle, we will negotiate postponing work to a slower time of year or schedule pacing the work over a period of time. If your library has identified many more items for Book Repair than it usually sends, please contact us to discuss special arrangements.

**Turn-around Time:** Book Repair's goal is to maintain a one-month turn-around or better for materials in our workflow. Certain classes of treatment, especially oversize, older, or non-standard formats, may take longer. Procedures for RUSH requests are described below.

**Commercial Binding:** The Library's commercial binding service is always the cheaper option for books that fit the criteria described in the binding contract and so should be considered the preferred route for rebinding whenever possible. **Books in need of repair should normally be sent to Bindery Prep.** Bindery Prep staff will assess books and initiate a transfer to Book Repair if necessary.

**Send the following directly to Book Repair:** Following are typical reasons for sending books directly to Book Repair rather than to Bindery Prep. Please call (763-2446) to alert Book Repair that a special-problem (i.e. "yucky") book is on its way!

- wet, mold, active insects, or other "yucky" problems (see also below)
- RUSH binding or repair

**Sending Books to Book Repair:** Books in need of repair are identified at each library, usually by circulation staff examining books returning from loan, by shelvers, or by tech processing staff. Staff at the library that owns the book flags the Item Record for the book with the Item Process Status code *BD* or *BR* (the *BD* Item Process Status code automatically posts the message "At Bindery," the *BR* code posts the message "At Book Repair" in the status field in MIRLYN public mode). Special communications may be written on a flag (a piece of paper about 2-4 inches wide and 11 inches long) which is slipped into the book. Books may be sent via Library truck in campus envelopes or grouped in totes addressed as appropriate to:

Bindery Prep/Monographs  
3215 Buhr Bldg.  
837 Greene St. 3213

or:

Book Repair  
3211 Buhr Bldg.  
837 Greene St. 3213

If Bindery Prep transfers a book to Book Repair, the Item Process Status code is changed from *BD* to *BR* (or vice versa). When treatment is complete the books are returned to the owning library addressed to the Book Repair contact person. Library staff check the book back in and remove the MIRLYN Item Process Status code.

**RUSH:** Book Repair makes it a priority to accommodate RUSH requests for materials needed for course reserves or wanted urgently by a patron. Books sent RUSH to Bindery Prep for commercial binding will be away five to six weeks. Turn-around time for a RUSH binding in Book Repair will depend on the staff available and the nature of the work required, but is usually under a week.

If a library unit alerts us that an item already in the Book Repair work stream has been requested by a patron, we will try to locate the book and process it as a RUSH item.

**UPDATE In-House Book Repair Program:** While previously some libraries performed simpler repairs at location rather than sending books to the Book Repair unit, Book Repair staff will now address all treatment needs, including simpler repairs (e.g. tipping in a loose page, mending a tear). Please address all books to the the designated Book Repair contact as listed above.

**Wet, Moldy, Infested, or Soiled Books:** Any book that is wet or shows active mold growth or insect infestation should be treated as urgent. First isolate the book by placing it in a plastic bag. If the book is wet, arrange with Library Facilities (764-9365) for a special rush delivery to Book Repair; we need to receive the book within a few hours for the best chance of salvaging it—if possible it should not sit overnight. Contact Book Repair (763-2446) to alert the staff to expect an urgent item.

**Disasters:** The combined Conservation and Book Repair units provide emergency assistance to help protect and salvage library materials that have been damaged by water, fire, collapsed building structures, and the like. For assistance during working hours call:

763-6980	Head, Preservation & Conservation
763-2045	Conservation
763-2446	Book Repair

After hours call 734-763-6980 (Head, Preservation & Conservation) and listen to the recorded message for a contact person and phone number.

### Book Repair Treatments

Book Repair staff perform a wide variety of treatments, many of which may be especially tailored to a particular problem. The following list summarizes some of the more common treatments performed.

**Page Repair:** Torn pages are repaired with Japanese tissue and sodium carboxymethylcellulose adhesive or wheat starch paste.

**Tip-ins:** Loose pages, errata sheets, detached plates, and the like are secured into the book. Either the sheet is tipped in (adhesive only) or hinged in (attached with a strip of tissue).

**Photocopied Replacement Pages:** Staff in the library owning the book must acquire the replacement photocopies for missing pages (from another copy or through inter-library loan); Book Repair staff do not search for source copies for replacements. The copy should be on acid-free bond paper with a minimum 1/2" gutter margin, if possible. Two-sided copies must be aligned so the resulting page will fit the book when it is trimmed. Multiple pages should be aligned so they can be trimmed together on the power cutter. Limits:

- Book Repair staff will tip in up to 10 extra sheets per book, if the binding is sound and the book will not be rebound by commercial binding (more than 10 sheets strains and weakens the binding).
- Book Repair staff will trim copies in preparation for a book that will be sent out for commercial binding; limit of 30 sheets if the copies are not aligned (must be trimmed individually); no limit if the copies are aligned (can be trimmed as a stack in the power cutter).

**Lettering Corrections:** Corrections are made to lettering of title or variable panel information on books from commercial binding. If the error was made by the commercial binder (their fault), it should be returned to Bindery Prep to go back to the binder. If the error was made in the information supplied to the commercial binder (Library's fault) Book Repair does the correction. (Because lettering is supplied to the commercial binder electronically, errors are almost always the Library's fault.) Book Repair can not accommodate retrospective title changes for runs of serials. Minor corrections in the call number (add a dot, change a single character) can be made in Book Repair; major changes to the call number should go to Labeling to have a new call number label applied over the incorrect number.

**Tighten Hinges:** When the text block of a book is working loose at the line of flex of its hard-bound cover but no material (endsheets or cloth) is yet broken, the hinges are glued back firmly into place. This is a quick and simple repair that can prevent more extensive damage (and more expensive repair) down the road.

**Spine Repair:** If the bookbinders assess that the text block is sound and the boards firmly attached to the book and only the spine of the cover is flapping loose or detached, they may opt for a simpler repair than making a new cover for the book. A new strip of cloth is wrapped around the spine and the old spine cloth (with stamped title) adhered on top. This repair may also be called a “rebacking.”

**Recase:** A hard-cover book is given a new cover. Books with a sound text block and leaf attachment but damaged cover should normally go to Bindery Prep for commercial binding. Complex or unusual binding problems may be transferred to Book Repair. Please note that the Book Repair unit does not stock the same line of book cloth as the commercial binder: we can not match exactly the cloth or lettering style of an existing series.

**Reattach case:** The text block and the cover are both sound but have become detached from each other at the endsheets; the old cover is reattached to the book. While most books in this category should be routed for commercial binding, Book Repair will reattach sound covers in order to keep a set uniform, preserve an artistic or informative cover design, or keep an original cover printed with non-roman characters.

**Quarter-joint:** Books printed on single leaves (adhesive binding, spiral or comb binding, loose-leaf) are rebound with PVA adhesive on the spine of the leaves and a new cover with extra-wide joints is attached. The commercial binding contract includes adhesive binding structures for books printed on single leaves; these should come to Book Repair only if it is a RUSH item or the volume is rejected by Bindery Prep.

**Staplebinding:** Thin, soft-cover publications are stapled into commercially-prepared binders, usually after processing but before the book is shelved for the first time. Single-section, folded pamphlets are saddle stapled (through the spine fold); single sheets (pages are not folded at the spine) are stapled through the side about 1/2" from the spine. Most pamphlet binding is now sent out to the commercial binder and should be sent to Bindery Prep along with other monographs. Bindery Prep will transfer fragile items to Book Repair for binding in-house.

Pamphlets that can not be stapled or stitched into a pam binder (because of weak paper or insufficient inner margins, for example) are usually placed in a pocket binder for protection.

### **Protective Enclosures**

Some books cannot be rebound: books with brittle paper, unusual binding structures, or other peculiarities may be contained on the shelf in a protective enclosure. Book Repair staff make simple boxes, four-flap wraps, and pocket binders for these materials. Book Repair also measures books for the commercial binder to construct a drop-spine box from acid-free corrugated board.

**Lettering and Labels:** When feasible the spine of the original cover with printed title information will be attached to the spine of the new cover. If the original spine can not be used, computer labels with title and variable panel information are prepared and glued on. Book Repair does not normally prepare and attach call number labels; these are provided by Labeling.

**Special Repairs:** Many books dating before 1925 and books with artistically significant covers are regularly set aside for special treatment in order to retain as much as possible of the original binding. The bookbinders often exercise great ingenuity to produce a structurally sound book for the circulating stacks while retaining original binding material. Sometimes compromises must be made; books that are identified as having scholarly significance as objects (as opposed to or in addition to the text they contain) should be ticketed for a protective enclosure only or considered for transfer to a special/rare books collection.

**DoAs:** Occasionally Book Repair receives books that are too weak or damaged to repair or rebind. Typically the problem is very brittle paper (we define “very brittle” for this purpose as paper that breaks after just one corner fold), but sometimes the book may have extensive problems with pages fused together, mold, or insect damage. Such books are affectionately dubbed “DoAs” in the department. Book Repair sets these books aside and works with the Head of the Department of Preservation and Conservation to resolve the problem. Typical options include:

- Gather batches of 30 to 50 brittle books and work with the Digital Conversion Unit to digitize any book that has not already been digitized; we work with selectors to determine whether the book is boxed and returned to the shelf after scanning, or withdrawn. A library sending a book in this kind of condition may ask up front that the book be boxed and returned to the shelf.
- Work with Acquisitions to replace more recent publications with serious mold or water damage.
- Work with selectors to resolve individual problems.

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