

Cheng Chat with Kurt W. Wagner



The Library's Values are Your Values

What do you value? Some people value pleasure, some value money, some value their family – the list is long. Values are complex and individual.

Some of us may take important things for granted – things that, if examined, are of considerable value. Our Constitution's first ten amendments, the Bill of Rights, list a set of limitations that protect the natural rights of freedom and property. Leading off this list is freedom of speech, one of librarianship's core values. We like to think the library's values are your values.

All library materials, regardless of technology, format, or mode of delivery are available and made accessible equally to all library users. Though the library is primarily for the WPUNJ community, we invite the community at large to use what we have.

Your privacy and confidentiality are central to our operation. We do not retain any records that connect you with any library materials after they are returned. To us, it is fundamentally important that no trace of your library use is viewed by someone else.

We resist all efforts to censor library resources. At times and for different reasons libraries are asked to remove materials that a group finds objectionable. We do not include or exclude materials based on their social or political popularity or unpopularity. Being informed on all sides of all issues is a key component of active and effective citizenship. We value the free expression of ideas and believe that library's role is to archive the accepted as well as the unorthodox so future generations will have the chance to sort it out for themselves. The library and the university value a diversity of opinion and expression.

Not all our values are so grandiose. Like most people, we also value being comfortable. We have asked for your feedback and we have received a lot of it, particularly about noise and uncomfortable temperatures in the building. We do listen and share your concerns. To this end we have replaced the library's heating and cooling system in order to better control the temperature in the library.

Maybe you've noticed the glass partition as you enter the second floor via the front staircase? This was done in response to frequent requests from you to control the noise in the library. Like you, we also value a quiet environment for study and we hope this helps achieve it. Please let us know how it's working.

Along with these things, we share the value you put on time and efficiency. We strive to improve our services so that your needs are addressed. We keep asking you to tell us what you need and how we can serve you. This will ensure that our values stay in tune with yours. Are they?