

Faculty Senate Resolution 13–03

Defacement of Library Holdings: Education and Remedy

Sponsored by David Lindenfeld, History; Stephanie Braunstein, LSU Libraries' Faculty Senator; Elissa Plank, LSU Libraries, Middleton Library, Head of Circulation.

Whereas it appears that markings in library books (underlinings, magic marker highlighting, marginal comments, etc.) are on the increase on the LSU Baton Rouge campus;

Whereas such markings prejudice any subsequent reading of a book by automatically directing the user's eyes to the marked passages;

Whereas the removal of such markings already involves a significant expenditure of time and resources that could otherwise be used for furthering the mission of the Libraries¹;

Whereas markings constitute a defacement of library materials and thus reflect and encourage a poor image of the Libraries;

Whereas because library books are university property, such defacements thereby constitute violations of the Code of Student Conduct, which specifies property damage as an act of misconduct. Section 8.2.B.21 of the Code reads as follows: "Property damage - Vandalism, malicious destruction, damage, misuse or unauthorized possession of public or private property, including, but not limited to, library materials, computers, lab equipment, furniture, etc.";

Therefore, be it resolved that the Faculty Senate direct the Libraries to undertake additional educational measures to reduce the practice of marking in library books;

¹ Data from a recent log of time spent by student workers erasing markings in library materials indicate that on any single day, 5.5 hours of student time could be taken up by this activity. Furthermore, this statistic obviously pertains only to those materials that were identified as having markings; so if the rate of identification improved, the time spent erasing would increase in proportion.

for example, providing consistent monitoring procedures for discovery by staff of damage to materials during both the check-out and discharge phases, creating electronic messaging on the Libraries' web site to remind patrons not to deface library materials and warn them of the consequences of that defacement, and disseminating printed reminders (such as book marks, signs in the stacks) that also deliver those messages to library users;

Be it further resolved that, as part of such a campaign, the active cooperation of student organizations and faculty be enlisted. Faculty members whose teaching involves the heavy use of library materials should include such messages on their syllabi or other places in Moodle or other Course Management System software. Student Government should be encouraged to pass a similar resolution in support of the campaign, thereby allowing for the greatest opportunity for exposure of this information to library patrons at LSU.