

## Jefferson College Library

### Chat/SMS Reference Policy

Chat/SMS (Short Message Service) reference services offer the opportunity to provide patrons with immediate access to Library reference services. A growing number of Jefferson College students and community members use the Internet and mobile devices to fulfill their research and information gathering needs. Jefferson College Library is committed to meeting the needs of our patrons through the use of technology. The Jefferson College Library Chat and SMS Reference service provides students with quality reference services from off-campus locations.

- I. Definitions:
  1. *Chat* refers to one-to-one, real time, text-based conversations via an Instant Messaging service.
  2. *SMS* refers to the exchange of brief text-based conversations via a mobile phone.
  3. *Library H3lp* is the name of the software which the Jefferson College Library utilizes for the Chat/SMS Reference service.
  
- II. Purpose:

The purpose of the Jefferson College Library Chat/SMS Reference Service is to provide real-time, easy access Reference Services to Jefferson College students, faculty, staff, and the community. The Library strives to make our services available to students both on- and off-campus, and this service allows us to meet this goal.
  
- III. Guidelines:
  1. Availability- Chat/SMS Reference is available any time the Library is open, except during times the Librarian staffing the chat service is assisting others in person or teaching a class. Library hours are available at <http://www.jeffco.edu/library>. Chat/SMS Reference is not available when the Library at Jefferson College-Arnold is closed.
  2. Service- There are three ways in which to engage the Librarian in Chat/SMS Reference: patrons may choose to visit the *Ask A Librarian* tab found at the top of the Library's home page; patrons may access the chat page on the Library website directly by navigating to the URL: [http://www.jeffco.edu/library/index.php?option=com\\_wrapper&Itemid=182](http://www.jeffco.edu/library/index.php?option=com_wrapper&Itemid=182).; or patrons may send a text message to 636-486-0898. Patrons may also visit the Library's mobile website located at <http://vega.jeffco.edu/library/m> and click *Ask a Question*.
  3. Usage- The types of questions patrons may ask via Chat/SMS Reference include, but are not limited to: information about using Library materials or services; guidance on finding information sources on the Web; assistance with using Blackboard, STARS, and other computer services; and directional assistance

finding the appropriate Jefferson College resources to solve their problems. Chat/SMS Reference can be used for any informational needs that patrons may have.

Chat/SMS Reference complements the Library's other online reference service where patrons can ask questions by email. Librarians may advise patrons to contact us by phone at 636-797-3000 ext. 3160, 3161, 3166, 3167 (Hillsboro), 3556 (Arnold) or in person if a question seems better addressed in one of those ways. Reference questions are answered in the order in which they are received. If there will be a wait time, the approximate wait time will be communicated to the patron. Patrons visiting the library in person will have priority. If the question would be better addressed by a different Jefferson College department, the patron will be given the contact information for the appropriate office or department.

4. Inappropriate Usage- Behavior inappropriate to societal standards will not be tolerated. The Librarian reserves the right to terminate chat sessions of patrons engaging in obscene language, threats, or harassing behavior. In the event that a reference session is terminated, the patron will be informed as to the reasons why their behavior is not appropriate.

In addition, Librarians are unable to provide professional opinions on medical, legal, or financial matters, but will refer the patron to appropriate information sources.

5. Privacy- Patrons may use the Chat/SMS Reference service anonymously; however, IP (Internet Protocol) addresses are logged automatically. The Library keeps logs of chat sessions for training and tracking purposes. Any information which might identify a particular student is purged from the record. Identifying information may include student name, Jeffco ID number or other personal information.