

Quick Reference Guide to the KSU Archives

What is an archive?

The word archive can be used to describe both collections of material and the facilities where those materials are preserved.

The materials archives collect and preserve are **primary sources**, which are items produced by the day-to-day activities of people, families, and organizations. These firsthand accounts provide evidence of what occurred in a specific place and time. Some examples of primary sources are correspondence, photographs, diaries, scrapbooks, maps, films, oral histories, blueprints, and meeting minutes.

The word “archive” can also refer to the **facility** where archival collections are preserved, ideally in an environment that controls temperature and humidity, which is referred to as a climate-controlled environment. Materials are preserved with care so they can be used long term for research.

What can you find here?

The KSU Archives preserves collections of primary resources about our university history and regional history.

For university history, this means collections documenting **the history of Kennesaw State University and Southern Polytechnic State University**. These collections contain material such as the papers of past presidents and faculty, records documenting the development of academic programs, university publications (including student newspapers and yearbooks), and photographs of our campuses through the years. Records like these demonstrate how the schools have grown, changed, and affected our region over time.

Our regional history collections, or “special collections,” document **the history of North and Northwest Georgia**, including Cobb County and surrounding counties. These include the records of significant people, families, and organizations, such as the Bell Aircraft Corporation, the Marietta Housing Authority, Congressman Phil Gingrey, Marietta’s Theatre in the Square, and the Cobb County NAACP.

How can you use the KSU Archives?

Researchers can use our collections to explore a variety of historical topics, such as changes in regional industries and the experiences of marginalized people and groups. However, archival research supports much more than just the study of history. Our collections can inform the study of politics and government, economics, architecture, surveying, environmental studies, education, and more. Archival research can also support creative pursuits, such as writing and fine arts projects.

Who can use the KSU Archives?

The KSU Archives are open to the public. This means that **faculty, students, staff, and community members** are welcomed and encouraged to access our collections.

Locating materials

There are **two ways of locating materials from the KSU Archives: visiting our reading room** in person by appointment or **visiting our online access repository**.

I want to know if the KSU Archives has materials about a specific person, event, or other topic.

Search [ArchivesSpace](#), the KSU Archives online catalog. This database offers descriptions (finding aids) for all collections held by the KSU Archives. If an item is available online, a link to our digital collections will be provided. If there is no link to our digital collections, the item is accessible in person via our reading room by appointment. See Visiting the Archives below to learn more.

I am looking for materials from the KSU Archives that are available to view online.

Visit our [Scholarly Online Access Repository \(SOAR\)](#) to access digital collections. If materials are available online, they can be found here. However, only a portion of our collections are available online. Be sure to check ArchivesSpace for descriptions of additional resources available in person.

For tips on searching and browsing in ArchivesSpace and SOAR, check out our Guide to Searching and Browsing KSU Archives Collections.

Visiting the Archives

The KSU Archives is open to the KSU community and the general public by appointment only. Our hours are Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. We are located on the second floor of Sturgis Library on KSU's Kennesaw campus. To request an appointment (or for other questions), email archives@kennesaw.edu.

Explanation of archival terms

Primary sources

Primary resources include firsthand accounts of events created at the time of these events or later recalled by an eyewitness. These can include resources such as letters, photographs, oral histories, newspapers and clippings, reports and publications, video and audio recordings, and scrapbooks.

Finding aids

A finding aid is a document written by archivists to help researchers navigate a specific collection. Finding aids describe the contents of the collection and how they are arranged. This makes it easier for our researchers to find, understand, and use the materials you are looking for.

Example of a finding aid from the KSU Archives: [Southern Graphics Council International \(SGCI\) Records](#).