



# Spelman College Archives Collection Development Policy

## Mission Statement

The primary mission of the Spelman College Archives is to collect, preserve, and promote archival collections related to the institutional history of the College, its alumnae, and individuals or institutions associated with Spelman. As a component of the Women's Research and Resource Center, a fully-appointed academic unit which coordinates the Comparative Women's Studies Program, the Archives also focuses on building special collections to facilitate and support research by and about women of the African Diaspora, with a particular interest in the areas of feminism, activism, and social justice. The Archives serves the faculty, students, and staff of Spelman College, the Atlanta University Center, and the general public.

## History of Spelman College

Spelman College was established in 1881 as the Atlanta Female Baptist Seminary, led by the efforts of missionaries and teachers Sophia Packard and Harriet Giles. The first class of students met in the basement of Friendship Baptist Church, a historic African American congregation led by Rev. Frank Quarles. In 1884 the seminary was renamed for the parents of Laura Spelman Rockefeller, Harvey Buel and Lucy Spelman, longtime anti-slavery activists. The seminary became Spelman College in 1924, and continues to be an internationally recognized historically black higher education institution that excels in educating diverse young women from around the world. Since its founding, Spelman College has documented the history of the institution, the founders, students, faculty, as well as the surrounding community.

## Collection Scope and Rationale

The Spelman College Archives serves as the official repository of the College and collect the administrative records, departmental and program records, publications, photographs and other material relating to the history and administration of the College, from its founding until the present day. The Archives are also the repository for the records of the National Alumnae Association of Spelman College and its affiliated chapters.

The Archives also collects the personal papers of Spelman alumnae, faculty, staff, and the surrounding community as it relates to the history of the college. These manuscript collections span the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present. In addition, the Archives actively seeks collections related to feminism and social

justice, particularly related to women of the African Diaspora – such as the collections of Audre Lorde and Toni Cade Bambara. These materials support the teaching and research of the faculty and students of the Comparative Women’s Studies program as well as many other departments and academic units on campus.

### **Formats & Subject Matter**

As the official repository for Spelman College, the Archives collects the non-active records of campus departments and offices that document the College’s daily operations and interactions between faculty, students, and staff. These types of materials include correspondence, memoranda, meeting minutes, photographs from campus events, video recordings, audio recordings, and digital objects.

Subject matter of interest includes materials related to the personal and/or professional lives of Spelman College alumnae, faculty and staff, from the origins of the college in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present day. The personal and/or professional papers of individuals or organizations affiliated with Spelman College are also of interest to collect, to document the national and international relationships of the College and the community. This includes materials in a variety of formats, including correspondence, scrapbooks, photographs, audio recordings, video recordings, and digital materials

Rare books, publications, oral histories and artifacts are also of interest, but will be collected based on relevance to existing collections and will require consultation with the Archives staff.

The Spelman Archives seeks to document the institutional history of the National Alumnae Association of Spelman College and its affiliated national and international chapters.

The Archives also seeks to collect the personal and/or professional papers of women of the African Diaspora involved in social justice, feminist, and civil rights movements nationally as well as globally.

### **Acquiring and Handling of Archival Materials**

The Spelman Archives acquires materials primarily through donations (solicited and unsolicited), transfers from other Spelman College departments, purchase, or transfer from another repository. The Archives staff will work with potential donors either through onsite consultation or via a visit to the Spelman Archives on campus. The staff will make decisions to accept the material based on specified criteria including format, subject matter, condition of materials, and whether or not the collections fits in the defined parameters of the collection development policy.

It is preferred to have complete collections in an institutional archive to avoid scattering of archival materials across repositories. The Spelman Archives will make every effort to avoid acquiring collection material known to be primarily collected at another institution, unless there is strong connection to Spelman or another compelling reason to accept the materials. Donors whose materials do not fit in with the designated collecting policy will be recommended to the appropriate repositories.

Materials within accepted collections but determined not to fit within the scope of the archival collections will be deaccessioned (removed from the collection) pursuant to the stipulations of the donor agreement.

All gifts are tax deductible to the extent allowed by the law. The Spelman Archives does not provide tax advice or appraisals for collection materials. Donors must obtain their own tax valuation by qualified appraisers. While the Spelman Archives will not participate in the appraisal process, we may provide a list of qualified appraisers for consultation.

### **Materials Not Collected**

The Spelman Archives do not collect:

- Cancelled Checks or Bank Statements
- Books (unless they are rare or out of print)
- Loose newspaper clippings
- Photocopies of documents held in other Archives
- Photocopies or photographs of original materials, unless the materials no longer exist or are inaccessible to the public
- Research notes (unless a part of an existing larger collection with relevant material)
- Large Oversize Paintings
- Collections unrelated to the subject matter of existing Spelman College Archives Collections

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