Memorandum to Presidents

Date: July 10, 1974
From: Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor
Subject: Public Access to State University Libraries

Governor Wilson has approved a bill (Assembly 11663-A) authorizing the promulgation of regulations concerning public access to State University libraries. The text of the bill is as follows:

The state university trustees and the board of higher education of the city of New York are hereby authorized to establish such rules and regulations as may be necessary and appropriate to make provision of access and use by the residents of the state of the libraries and library facilities of the public institutions of higher education under their respective jurisdictions.

It has been the policy of the State University for some time, as expressed in the Master Plan of 1972, that the general public be given access to University libraries insofar as possible. Some campuses are presently able to provide such access in varying forms. It should also be noted that public access to the collections is also available through interlibrary loan (including the New York State Inter Library Loan (NYSILL) network), through the Regional Reference and Research (3R’s) Systems, and through local cooperative arrangements with other institutions.

Broader implementation of a policy of public access has fiscal and administrative implications which must be carefully considered before new regulations can be issued. The Office
of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Programs will be preparing a draft set of guidelines for review. In the meantime, I encourage each of you to extend the facilities of your libraries to the general public, whenever it can be done in a manner that is both fiscally sound and consistent with your primary educational mission.

cc: Chancellor Boyer

This memorandum addressed to:

Presidents, State-operated Campuses

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