Interlibrary Loan (ILL)

What is Interlibrary Loan?

Interlibrary loan (ILL) is a service that enables our library to borrow materials, usually books and articles, from other libraries throughout the world. Through this service, the Mervyn H. Sterne Library provides access to materials to support faculty, staff and students in their study and research. Materials ordered through the Interlibrary Loan service should be for scholarly purposes. Recreational and/or leisure materials should be ordered through your local Public Library. Conditions for interlibrary lending are set by the National Interlibrary Loan Code of the American Library Association and by individual libraries. Some libraries will not lend certain types of materials, making them difficult to obtain on loan.

Who may use Interlibrary Loan?

UAB faculty, staff, and students may use Interlibrary Loan. A UAB BlazerID is required to get started.

What materials are available through Interlibrary Loan?

Generally, the following materials may be obtained:

- Books
- Photocopies of book chapters
- Photocopies of articles in journals, anthologies, and proceedings from symposia and conferences.
- Theses and dissertations
- Microfilm

Most libraries will NOT lend:

- Rare or valuable material, including manuscripts
- Typescript doctoral dissertations when available on microfilm
- Audio-visual materials such as record albums, videocassettes, dvds, and computer programs (software, cds, cd-roms)
- Reference or other non-circulating materials
- Material in high demand at the lending library, especially recently printed books and best-sellers

In addition, Sterne Library normally will NOT accept requests for:

- Materials on reserve at Sterne Library
- Material owned by the Library, but in circulation at the time of request
- Textbooks available for purchase at the bookstore
Items that would violate copyright guidelines
- Materials owned by Lister Hill Library of the Health Sciences

Under current copyright law, we cannot request or copy:
- Articles longer than 50 pages
- Articles that comprise the entirety of an issue
- More than three articles from a single issue
- Entire volumes of periodicals

Can I obtain dissertations through Interlibrary Loan?
Dissertations are available through Interlibrary Loan and may arrive in print, microfilm, or microfiche. Please submit an Interlibrary Loan request for a dissertation that is not available online.

Electronic Theses and Dissertations at the University of Alabama at Birmingham are included in UAB's Digital Collections. If a requested U.S. dissertation is not available through Interlibrary Loan or available online, we offer Dissertation Express as an option for you to obtain a copy. You may purchase a copy directly from this service for $43, which is generally available in 4-5 days. Graduate works published prior to 1980 may take a few extra days. The dissertation is available in unbound, shrink-wrapped format only. The fee may be paid by credit card.

How many requests can I place through interlibrary loan? Is there a limit?
We have a limit of twenty-five active requests per person at any one time. This ensures fair and equitable service to ALL of our users by assuring that no one person or research project monopolizes our services at any given time. Patrons who submit a high volume of requests may be referred to the appropriate subject reference librarian who can recommend research options.

How long does it take to fulfill a request?
The time it takes to fill a request varies. If we can locate a library willing to telefax the article, we can have it within 24 hours. The average turnaround time is 7 to 10 days when we receive the article by mail. For articles we receive in electronic format ("PDF"), it is 2 - 3 days.

Supplying a complete citation and its source will help to ensure a quick response.

How much does Interlibrary Loan cost?
At the present time there is no charge to you for materials obtained through Interlibrary Loan. The library absorbs most of the charges paid to obtain the material you need. If we need to charge you for an item, we will contact you before we process your request.

How long may I keep items I borrow through Interlibrary Loan?
Loan periods are established by the lending library and usually vary between two to four weeks. The Sterne Library loan period for Interlibrary Loan materials is four weeks. Renewals will not be permitted.

What is the policy on overdue books and fines?
Interlibrary Loan books are lent as a courtesy by another library. In order to maintain our
reputation as a borrowing library, and our privilege to borrow, we must adhere to the due
dates and restrictions imposed by that library. Please help us to keep good relationships with
the libraries we borrow from by returning your materials in a timely manner.

The fine for overdue materials is one dollar per day per item.
Reminder notices are sent before items are due.

Overdue notices are sent on the following schedule:

- the first overdue notice is sent when an item is more than 5 days overdue.
- a second overdue notice is sent when an item is more than 10 days overdue.
- a third overdue notice is sent when an item is more than 30 days overdue.

When the first overdue notice is sent, you will be automatically BLOCKED from using
Interlibrary Loan services. A BLOCK on your Interlibrary Loan account will also be placed for
failure to return materials that have been RECALLED within five days of the recall notice. All
blocks on your Interlibrary Loan account will be removed when the overdue items are
returned. If an item becomes very overdue, we will add the charges for fines, replacement and
processing to your Library account.

What are the copyright restrictions?
The copyright law of the United States governs the making of photocopies or other
reproductions of copyrighted materials. Photocopies or other reproductions can be furnished
only under certain conditions, if they will be used solely for private study, scholarship, or
research. Use of the reproduction for other purposes may make the user liable for copyright
infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its sole
judgement, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

What should I do before I make a request through Interlibrary Loan?

- Check our catalog to determine whether Sterne owns the specific titles that you are
  looking for.
- Exhaust the resources available in Sterne Library. If you do not know what other
  materials might be useful for your research, ask a reference librarian for assistance.
- Consider your time restrictions and the time it takes to receive materials through ILL.
  Normally it takes one to two weeks to receive materials from libraries in Alabama.

Are there any commercial document delivery suppliers?
There are several commercial document delivery suppliers with World Wide Web access for
those individuals with credit cards. These commercial services are NOT subsidized by Sterne
Library or UAB. You are financially responsible for any copies (i.e. documents) you purchase
from these services. For more information on some of these services, see the list of
Commercial Document Delivery Suppliers compiled by OCLC (Online Computer Library
Center).

How can I find more information about Interlibrary Loan?
If you have any questions, please come by the Interlibrary Loan Desk (first floor) during
Library Hours and the staff will gladly assist you. You may also contact Interlibrary Loan by:

- e-mail
- telephone (205) 934-6364
FAX (205) 975-6230 (address your fax to "ILL")
Some Alabama academic libraries have implemented a Universal Borrowing (UB) System. The libraries involved in the project are using compatible software systems. Institutions participating are:

- Auburn University
- Auburn University at Montgomery
- Jacksonville State University
- University of Alabama
- University of Alabama at Birmingham (Sterne Library)

Eligible library patrons may walk into a participating library and check out books using a photo ID. The books can be returned to any library in the ALLIES group.

In addition, Library users may request books from these libraries and have them delivered quickly to any library in the ALLIES system. Universal Borrowing allows ALLIES users to identify materials of interest by simultaneously searching the participating libraries' catalogs. Once identified, the availability of a title can be seen in real time. An online form immediately sends the request to the holding library. There, the item is readied for delivery to any participating library for pickup. When the requested item reaches the destination library, the borrower is notified that it is ready for pickup. Throughout this process, the status of the item is always available through the online catalog. The borrower can monitor the status through their patron information record.

Eligible patrons include:

- Currently enrolled undergraduate or graduate students who have circulation privileges at their home institutions, and are in good standing.
- Currently employed faculty or staff members who have circulation privileges at their home institutions, and are in good standing.
- Officially retired faculty and staff members, in good standing.

Circulating books are the only type of material eligible for Universal Borrowing. However, books used as textbooks in UAB classes should not be requested. Books may be renewed once, and the maximum number that may be checked out via Universal Borrowing is 10 (ten).

The ALLIES libraries have agreed to a common 28-day loan period.