

# Interlibrary Loan Subsidy

## Introduction

No library can afford to purchase everything published in the myriad of formats on the market today. The Interlibrary Loan (ILL) service is the Mercer University Libraries' way to ensure that our limited purchasing resources do not limit your research potential.

The Mercer University Libraries' ILL Unit makes every effort to find materials at no cost to the borrower. However, sometimes it is impossible to find items at no charge. This page is an explanation of charges that are involved in ILL and how the library supports your research while remaining fiscally responsible and living within our budgeting framework.

As of the 2017-18 academic year, the University Library will pay up to \$30 of any borrowing charges.

## Sources of Charges

### Shipping Charges

Most libraries will simply pass along shipping charges. Those are only very rarely over \$30. However, for large items from overseas, we may see exceptional shipping rates.

### Processing Charges

Other libraries charge a processing fee. We make every effort to avoid institutions that levy processing charges.

### Copyright Royalties

The main fee that we see in ILL is the copyright royalty charge.

Our interlibrary loan office operates under a policy known as the "rule of five." This means that we are able to borrow five articles from the last five years of a journal at no charge. If we borrow six or more articles, those from the sixth onward are subject to copyright royalties.

How much are copyright royalties? These are up to the publisher. Some are low per-page charges, while others have a flat fee per article, and still others charge a per-article fee plus a per-page charge.

To make charges more reasonable, we began a relationship with a vendor that provides a lower per-item charge. Our average copyright charge is under \$30.

## What happens when there is a charge?

If we run into a circumstance where it costs us more than \$30 to acquire an item, we will send you an email alerting you to the fact. We will tell you how much we expect to pay for a given

item and how much the University Library is able to pay on your behalf. This leaves you with a choice:

- You can elect to pay the difference. We will place this charge on your library patron record, which you must pay before we will deliver your item. (Example: If it costs us \$35 to deliver your item, we will pay \$30, and you will need to pay the University Libraries \$5. You may pay by Bear Card at the circulation desk or through the [Mercer eStore](#).)
- You can elect not to pay. In this case, we cancel your request. If you would like assistance in finding alternative or additional materials, please contact a librarian at [library\\_reference@mercer.edu](mailto:library_reference@mercer.edu).

We use these requests, whether you elect to proceed or not, to inform our collection management decisions and ensure that our subscriptions meet the vast majority of Mercer's research interests and needs.