Office of Senate Curator
Expectations for Conservation Treatment Proposals

All proposals submitted to the Office of Senate Curator for conservation treatment projects must adhere to the Code of Ethics of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works. Accordingly, preservation of original material and surfaces, and minimal intervention through treatment are sought to the greatest extent possible. When treatment requires that new material be added, it should be done in such a way to isolate original material from new, allowing for future removal of non-original material, as warranted by advances in conservation treatment methodology or discovery of previously missing original material.

The scope of work prepared by the Office of Senate Curator for each conservation treatment project is not written by a conservator, and while treatment for specific damage or agents of deterioration may be requested, the extent of problems or the methods best suited to treating these problems should not be assumed to be fully defined. In order to submit a proposal, conservators are first asked to evaluate the object(s) or art work in person, using basic tools and non-invasive techniques. The proposal submitted should be based upon observations made during the evaluation, and should address all aspects of the project described in the scope of work. In addition, information learned from the evaluation that goes beyond or perhaps contradicts what is described by the scope should be included, along with an explanation of its relevance to the recommended treatment.

Three types of information are important to include with each proposal in order for a fair comparison of proposals to be undertaken. First, the basic cost of labor, and where relevant, materials should be indicated. Second, the proposal should include a complete list of all materials that may be used to carry out treatment, and the range of materials under consideration for each step of treatment indicated, as well as the type of testing necessary to make a determination. Third, the amount of time used as the basis for determining the cost of the proposal should be noted for each separate step of treatment.

Unless otherwise specified, the result of treatment should incorporate this office's curatorial preference towards revealing, to the greatest extent possible, the original appearance of an object or art work. At the same time, treatment should also incorporate the philosophy of "minimal intervention," and preserve conditions resulting from age and use that are a reflection of an object's or art work's history.