Records Management 1: Introduction

University Archives

What is Records Management?

- A program designed to systematically control or monitor records during their entire lifecycle from creation or receipt to disposal.

How Does It Control Records?

- Promotes efficient administration and management of records.
  - Removes inactive or obsolete records from the offices.
- Ensures that records are maintained as long as they meet administrative, fiscal, and legal requirements.
- Ensures the protection of vital and historical records.
- Ensures compliance with all internal, state, and federal policies.
  - Reduces the university's liability.

What is a record?

- A record is any document created, received, and maintained that documents the university's activities, transactions, and functions in the course of the its business or legal obligations, regardless of format.
- Examples:
  - Correspondence
  - Invoices
  - Time Sheets
  - Travel vouchers
  - Meeting Minutes
  - Registers
  - Maps
  - Photographs

Records Are Information Fixed On Any Media

- Electronic Records
  - Word documents
  - Spreadsheets
  - PDFs
  - JPEGs
  - DVDs
- Databases
- Videos and photographs
- Paper documents

Records Are Defined by…

- Federal and State legislation
  - FERPA, HIPAA, SOX (Arbanes-Oxley), Gramm-Leach-Bliley, IRS
  - The courts – “ESI” (Electronically Stored Information)
  - Institutional Policy
  - Department Needs

University Records

- Records created or received by a department or an employee of the university become the property of the university.
- Records created or received by faculty in the conduct of student advising, committee work, administration, or university program, school and department administration are also university records.
  - Exceptions include faculty manuscripts, teaching and research notes. These items may be donated to the University Archives.

Records Have a Value

A records management program ensures that records are kept as long as they have value:

- Administrative/Operational
- Fiscal
- Legal/Regulatory
- Archival/Historical
- Research

What isn’t a record?

- Reference materials
- Surplus publications
- Personal files
- Duplicates
- Preliminary drafts
- Convenience copies
- Blank forms

Why do we do we need a Records Management Program?

- To minimize risk and lower liability
- To provide efficient and transparent business processes
- To preserve our institutional story

Minimizes Risk and Lower Liability

Significant legal liabilities and costs associated with poor or inadequate records management practices.

- Ensures that vital records are not discarded, destroyed, or transferred outside the custody of the university.
- Records are kept as long as required and destroyed when retention requirements are met.
- Ensures records comply with state and federal regulatory requirements, legal and financial requirements, and best practices.

Provides Efficient and Transparent Business Processes

Provides guidance on maintenance, retention, and storage based on their legal, administrative, fiscal and historical value.

- Good records management practices reduce clutter and streamline workflow.
- Well organized and managed information is quickly and easily retrieved.
- University administrative, legal, audit, research and historical interests are served.

Preserves Our Institutional Story

- University records are important information assets and may have historical and research value or lasting administrative significance:
    - Core functions
    - Organizational structure
    - Major projects
    - Publications explaining activities and programs
- Records of enduring value are transferred to the Archives on a regular basis to be preserved and made accessible.

Best Practices for Managing Records

- Create records that accurately document their core activities.
- Manage and store records in a manner that facilitates timely and accurate retrieval.
- Ensure that records are stored in secure locations and stable environments.
- Allow only those with proper authority to have access to the records.
- Carry out the proper disposition of records.

Compliance

- Know and comply with University policies regarding records management.
- Know and comply with external laws and regulations that affect the records.

Who is responsible?

- An effective records management program requires the cooperation of all University colleges and departments.
- Each employee is responsible and accountable for keeping accurate and complete records of the business activities they conduct.
- Each employee is responsible for protecting the University by creating, using, retrieving and disposing of records in accordance with the University's established policies and procedures.

Consult the Archivist for Guidance

The University Archivist oversees the Records Management Program and works with records creators and users to ensure the program operates effectively:

Olivia Solis
University Archivist & Records Manager
Harriet K. & Philip Pumerantz Library
Room 105
Ext. 5304
osolis@westernu.edu