



Records Management 2: Records Inventory

University Archives

What is a “records inventory?”

- A detailed listing of the volume, scope, and range of records of an organization.
- Helps in knowing where records are located.
- Aids in creating or adding to the Records Retention Schedule.

Taking inventory of your records will identify...

- Which records are vital and have a permanent retention.
- Which records are archival or have historical value.
- Which records are candidates for preservation.
- Which records are inactive.
- Which records are no longer useful and ready for disposal.

Identify Official University Records

- Was the record created in the course of business?
- Does the record communicate University requirements or policies.
- Is the record mandated by a state statute or federal regulation (FERPA, HEPPA, etc.)?
- Does the record support financial obligations or legal claims?
- Are the records vital for the resumption or continuation of university operations in an emergency or disaster?

Identify Non-Records

- Is the record reference material?
- Is the record a convenience copy?
- Is the record a draft or working paper?
- Is the record transitory information?
 - Routine messages
 - Internal meeting notices
 - Routing slips

Know Your Office's Records

Begin by surveying your office records using the Inventory Worksheet.

- Know what files you have.
- Know how your files are arranged.
- Know their locations.
- Know their volumes.
- Know how the records are used.

Know Your Office's Records cont.

- Identify vital or confidential records.
- Identify records with historic or research value.

Records Inventory Worksheet

COLLEGE/ADMINISTRATIVE DEPT.	
RECORD SERIES TITLE	
RECORD SERIES DESCRIPTION (Describe content and characteristics of records)	
DATE SPAN	
RETENTION <input type="checkbox"/> Scheduled retention & disposition <input type="checkbox"/> Applicable mandates (Federal, State, Local) <input type="checkbox"/> Not scheduled (Appraise and reason for proposed retention)	
ARRANGEMENT <input type="checkbox"/> Alphabetical <input type="checkbox"/> Numerical <input type="checkbox"/> Chronological <input type="checkbox"/> Alphanumeric <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
LOCATION	
FORMAT <input type="checkbox"/> Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Audio/visual <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic	
VOLUME <input type="checkbox"/> Linear feet <input type="checkbox"/> Number of items & type	
VALUE <input type="checkbox"/> Vital <input type="checkbox"/> Historical <input type="checkbox"/> Routine <input type="checkbox"/> Copy (Not original)	
NAME OF PERSON COMPLETING FORM	DATE

What is a “series?”

- A series is a family or grouping of similar records which may be filed and maintained together as a unit.
 - Contracts
 - Publications
 - Minutes
 - Correspondence
 - Annual reports
 - Grade records

How do I measure the volume?

- Paper documents are measured in linear feet.
- A record or bankers box measures one linear foot.
- For audio/visual material, count the number of individual items.
- Electronic records may be listed as the number of files in a folder.

Appraising Records

- The process by which archivists determine the value of a record.
 - Administrative value
 - Fiscal value
 - Legal Value
 - Historical value
 - Research value
- Once the value of a record is determined, a realistic retention period can be assigned to it.

When the Inventory is complete...

- Compare the length of time that you normally keep a record to the same series listed in the Records Retention Schedule.
- Check for laws or regulations that might govern a record's retention.
- If your record series is not covered by the Records Retention Schedule, establish its value and develop a minimum retention period, then notify the University Archivist.

Determining Retention Periods

- How long is the record useful to your unit?
- Are the records used to support processes or decision making?
- Do the records relate to functions or activities essential to the mission of the unit?
- Do the records document legal basis of the unit's operations?
- Are the records available elsewhere?

Notes

- Make sure to indicate when the next purging is scheduled for.
- Determine if records need to be scanned
- Indicate which records are “confidential.”

Consult the Archivist for guidance

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