

A SIMPLE GUIDE TO DOCUMENTING THE HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY AND TRANSFERRING THOSE DOCUMENTS TO THE UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

The Archives includes those records which have been determined to have sufficient historical, legal, or administrative value to warrant their continued preservation. It provides storage and security measures while still being available for historical research.

The benefits of the University Archives to individual offices within the University community are wide-ranging. It produces a collection documenting the function of an office and its value in the University. The University Archives also saves space and reduces costs, while providing documents for office and/or public use. All deans, department heads, and liaisons must give complete cooperation for the program to succeed.

The Records Liaison is the person most familiar with the disposition of the departmental records. A liaison can be the department head, a coordinator, office manager, or another assigned individual. The assigned liaison will be in charge of the regular transfer of inactive records to the **University Archives**. It is also the responsibility of the liaison to notify the **University Archives** if they leave their position as liaison. The University Archives will need to contact the department head for the appointment of another liaison. It is equally imperative to report changes in department heads or office consolidations as soon as they occur.

When the consolidation of two or more offices occurs, the **University Archives** should be notified immediately. For the **UA** to continue quick retrieval of records needed for research, it is important to assemble the recently generated records into one group.

In order to routinely and efficiently transfer non-active records to the University Archives, the following guidelines should be strictly adhered to by designated office liaisons. If the information contained below does not completely answer your questions concerning the proper procedures for records transfer, please do not hesitate to contact our office (202-994-7295).

STEP 1 : Survey Recommendation Form

Review the University Archives Survey Recommendation Form for an outline of materials that should be periodically transferred to the University Archives. We will be conducting new surveys beginning in 2005.

STEP 2 : Conversion Chart

Consult the conversion chart included in Appendix 1 and determine the number of boxes needed for the transfer.

STEP 3 : Number of Boxes Needed

Request the number of boxes that are needed for the transfer procedure to the University Archives. Requests should be made for copies of the Record Transmittal and Receipt Form. Staff from the requesting office must arrange for pick-up of empty boxes and deliver of them to University Archives via GW Transportation when the collection is ready for transfer.

STEP 4 : Organization

Prepare and organize the files according to the guidelines outlined in the File Preparation and Packing Procedures, which are located in the section immediately following these Step Procedures. Neatly place folders in the University Archives transfer boxes, maintaining the original order. Fill each box completely, without overstuffing. Poorly packed boxes, or materials transferred in boxes not provided by University Archives, will be sent back to the originating office for repacking.

1. Remove duplicates from file folders; no more than one copy of an original document should exist.

2. Remove all paper clips and staples. The only acceptable paper clips are plastic or plastic covered, the only acceptable staples are stainless steel.
3. Remove all envelopes unless important information appears somewhere on the surface. Envelopes to be saved should be attached to the back of the document.
4. Unfold documents, unless when unfolded they are too large to fit into the folder.
5. A folder should be no more than 1/2 inch to 1 inch thick. Materials moved from an overstuffed folder to multiple folders should be correctly relabeled.
6. Remove all photographs, drawings, and other delicate materials, which must be transferred separately.
7. Folders should be right side up and facing the same direction.
8. Remove bulky, spacious and metal-containing objects, such as binders.
9. Remove rubber bands, plastic slip covers, cardboard, and similar types of inappropriate permanent file material.

Most of the materials transferred to the University Archives are 8 1/2" X 11" or 8 1/2" X 14" sized paper products. Important archival materials, such as posters, photographs, computer disks, audio and video cassette tapes, and other irregular-sized items are also transferred for permanent storage. These items deserve special care and transfer procedures. If a liaison has one or more of the aforementioned items, please contact the **University Archives** for the materials needed to transfer these special items and for more detailed conservation information. The guide listed below will assist you in the proper processing of special materials.

STEP 5 : Record Transmittal/Receipt Form

List on the Record Transmittal and Receipt Form all folders contained in the box, using the same titles appearing on the folders. The order of the file folders listed on the Record Transmittal and Receipt Form should match exactly the order of the file folders in the transfer box. Make sure to include file dates on the aforementioned form, even if the dates are not written on the file folders.

Upon receipt of the boxes and verification of materials contained within them, as listed on the original Record Transmittal and Receipt Form previously sent to us, the University Archives will place the boxes in our storage facilities. The accession number it has been assigned will be noted on the Record Transmittal and Receipt Form, with copies being returned to your office for future reference.

STEP 6 : Number the Boxes

Number the tops of the boxes in pencil with the appropriate numbers from the Record Transmittal and Receipt Form.

STEP 7 : Duplicate

Duplicate the completed Record Transmittal and Receipt Form, placing the copy in the corresponding box and returning the original to the University Archives.

Oversize Posters, Maps, Blueprints, and Drawings

Oversize paper materials should be stored in a specially constructed folder cut from large, acid-free cardboard sheets. The liaison should insert equally large sheets of acid-free tissue paper between each archival item. Items contained within a specially made folder may be numbered in pencil on the back of each individual item. A list of the numbered items should be listed on the front of each folder (also in pencil). This list should be duplicated exactly on the Record Transmittal and Receipt Form. **NEVER** deface the items or folders with stickers or ink

markings. Make sure to gently remove all paper clips, staples, and rubber bands. **NEVER** store or transfer posters, blueprints, or other large paper items rolled up.

Photographs

A liaison should transfer photographs in legal or letter sized acid-free folders. Single sheets of acid-free white paper must be placed between the photographs, starting and ending the entire group of photographs with sheets of acid-free paper. Write special information about the photograph on the upper right hand corner of the sheet of paper preceding each photograph. File folders filled with photographs should be stored separately from regular paper records. **NOTE** : When marking the back of photographs for identification purposes, use only a pencil and do not apply excess pressure.

Negatives and Slides

Liaisons may store negatives and slides in acid-free envelopes that are available from the **UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES**. Folders made from acid-free cardboard may also be used.

Computer Disks

Computer disks should be kept in acid-free envelopes. A paper copy of the records contained within the disks should also be printed out and included separately. Please contact the University Archives before transfer of computer disks.

Audio Cassette Tapes

Depending on quality and condition, audio cassette tape will begin to lose quality sound reproduction approximately fifteen to twenty years after the original taping. In order to help assure a longer lifetime of the tapes before transfer to the **UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES**, the cassette should be rendered non-recordable by punching out the plastic tabs on top of the cassette. Play the tape through on both sides without fast forwarding or rewinding. If possible, store the audio cassette tapes in wooden or plastic containers in a cool temperature.

Video Cassette Tapes and Film

A video cassette tape should be played through once, then rewound. The liaison should then punch out the permanent recording holes. Storage of video cassette tapes and movie film should be in a room with cool temperature and low humidity.

Microfilm

Although the University Archives will accept microfilm, it is impermanent and can begin to deteriorate within fifty years. It should be stored in a climate controlled room at cool temperatures and low humidity. New master copies should be made well before the film begins to deteriorate.

Objects and Artifacts

Small objects and artifacts may be wrapped in acid-free tissue paper and stored in acid-free boxes. Unique or oversized objects deserve special care and the **University Archives** should be contacted for transfer assistance.

Retention schedules are timetables that identify the length of time a record must be retained in active and inactive status before final disposition. The retention period is the time records must be kept, by an office, before being disposed of. All inactive records deemed historically important must be immediately transferred to the **University Archives**.

Appendix 1

CONVERSION CHART

File Cabinets

1 vertical letter-size file drawer	= 1.5 cubic feet
1 vertical legal-size file drawer	= 2.0 cubic feet
1 lateral legal-size file drawer	= 2.5 cubic feet

Boxes

1 standard archival box (Hollinger)	= 1.0 cubic foot
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Shelves

1 letter-size open shelf (36" long)	= 2.0 cubic feet
1 legal-size open shelf (36" long)	= 2.5 cubic feet

Glossary

Below are the definitions of the terms most commonly utilized in our University Archives.

ADMINISTRATIVE VALUE: In appraisal, the usefulness of records to the originating unit in the conduct of current business.

CURRENT (ACTIVE) RECORD: Records necessary for conducting the current business of an office which must be maintained in office space and equipment.

HISTORICAL VALUE: The usefulness of records for historical research concerning the originating unit for information about people, places, or events.

LEGAL VALUE: The use of records containing evidence about legally enforceable rights or obligations of the University.

LIFECYCLE: The cycle a document moves from creation to current use to final disposition, i.e., permanent retention in the University Archives; short term retention and then destruction; or immediate destruction.

NON-CURRENT (INACTIVE) RECORDS: Records no longer required in the conduct of current business that can be accessioned by an archival repository; transferred to a temporary holding area for a period of time and then destroyed.

TRANSMITTAL FORM: The form used for transferring records from a liaison's office to the University Archives.

VITAL RECORDS: Records that are essential to resume or continue an organization; those necessary to recreate the organization's legal and financial position; and/or those necessary to preserve the rights of the organization, its employees, students and alumni.