



Retention of College Records Union College

Introduction

Union College requires that different types of records be retained for specific periods of time, and has designated official repositories for their maintenance. This document contains detailed retention periods for the retention of these records. (See attached Schedule A "Table of Records Schedule.")

The College is committed to effective records retention to preserve its history, meet relevant legal standards, optimize the use of space, minimize the cost of records storage, and ensure that obsolescent and useless records are destroyed.

The College takes very seriously its role in preserving the history and traditions of the institution, including historically important materials created not merely in the past but as an ongoing part of the current and future operations of the College. The Union College Archives has primary responsibility for this archival function. The Archives serves as the institutional memory of the college and plays an integral role in the management of the institution's information resources in all media and formats. To fulfill the responsibilities of that role, the Archives identifies, acquires, maintains, and preserves records of enduring value that chronicle the institution and ensure its continued existence. The Archives documents the process of institutional evolution by retaining both the evidence which shapes decisions and the decisions themselves.

Archival Records

'Permanent' records, also called 'archival records,' are records which have historical, administrative, financial, legal, or research value to the College and which we intend to keep indefinitely. The College Archivist is responsible for ensuring that the College identifies these records and that they are transferred to the College Archives once they become 'inactive.' Examples of archival records include meeting minutes, architectural drawings, organization charts, real estate records, endowment agreements, student theses, selected faculty papers, committee work resulting in College policies, and photographs of events and buildings. Prior to the transfer of Board of Trustee records, the Board of Trustees' legal counsel shall approve of records that may be considered archival.

These enduring records include but are not limited to:

1. Legal or constituting documents (e.g., charters, constitutions, by-laws), vital records or security copies produced by any campus vital records program, policy statements, and reports (along with their supporting documents), minutes, substantive memoranda, correspondence, and subject files of the institution's:

- Board of Trustees;

- President;
 - Dean/Vice President of (including subsumed departments):
 - Academic Affairs
 - Academic Departments
 - Admissions, Financial Aid, and Enrollment
 - College Relations
 - Engineering
 - Finance and Administration
 - Interdisciplinary Programs
 - Student Affairs
 - major academic and administrative committees, including the Faculty Executive Committee.
2. Reports of:
- self-studies and accreditation visits;
 - annual budgets and audits;
 - offices of admissions, institutional research, College relations—public relations both on- and off-campus—and development (fundraising);
 - research projects, including grant records.
3. Records of:
- departments, e.g., minutes, reports, syllabi, faculty vitae, and sample test questions;
 - retired, resigned, terminated, or deceased personnel the school employed;
 - the registrar, e.g., calendars and class schedules, noncurrent student transcripts, enrollment records, graduation rosters, and other reports issued on a regular basis;
 - academic, honorary, service, and social organizations of students, faculty, administrators, and staff on campus.
4. All publications, newsletters, posters, or booklets about or distributed in the name of the institution or one of its sub-units, e.g., books, posters, magazines, catalogs, special bulletins, yearbooks, student newspapers, College directories and faculty/staff rosters, alumni magazines, and ephemeral materials.
5. Special format materials documenting the operation and development of the institution, such as:
- audio, audiovisual and multi-media productions—still photographs, slides, and negatives, motion picture films, digital images or text, and audio and audiovisual cassettes;

- oral history interviews with their transcriptions;
 - maps, blueprints, and plot plans of the campus and its buildings.
6. Digital and other electronic records or lists of where such items are maintained and finding aids for accessing them.
 7. Artifacts related to the institution if space permits
 8. Records and papers produced by school-related organizations, groups, and individuals while actively connected with the school, such as private papers of faculty members produced while working with or for the school; as well as manuscript collections related to the school—unless the archives is in a division with a manuscripts department. Some archives have greatly increased the documentation of their institutions by having all records and papers produced by school personnel in the course of their profession during their employment at the school, excepting personal correspondence, lecture and research notes, and products declared official school records.
 9. Records of prominent alumni/ae
 10. Student theses as specified

Procedures

Departments and units that maintain College records are called “official repositories.” These administrative units are responsible for establishing appropriate record retention management practices in accordance with the retention periods as set forth in the attached Schedule A “Table of Records Schedule” which may be amended and updated by the Department (but only in consultation with and with input from the Record Retention Committee). The following departments have established protocols: Academic Records (attached Schedule B), Student Records (attached Schedule C), Financial Records (attached Schedule D). Each unit’s administrative manager or a designee must:

- Implement the unit’s and/or office’s record management practices;
- Ensure that these management practices are consistent with this policy;
- Educate staff within the administrative unit in understanding sound record management practices;
- Preserve inactive records of historic value, and transfer those records to the College Archives;
- Ensure that access to confidential files is restricted. Long-term restrictions on access to selected archival records should be negotiated at the time of their transfer to the College Archives;
- Destroy inactive records that have no archival value upon passage of the applicable retention period.

Disposition of Records

When the prescribed retention period for official College records has passed, a determination of whether such records are of historic value to the institution (as described above) shall be made in consultation with the College Archivist, who has the final authority to designate which records are archival subject to conditions involving Board of Trustees documents. If a document, or group of documents, has been identified as of archival value, make arrangements with the College Archivist for transfer and storage.

All non-archival records, in whatever format, that are not scheduled for retention must be destroyed or otherwise rendered unreadable (either by shredding or erasure).

Electronic Records Retention Policy

In today's environment, employees create and maintain an increasing portion of their records using computers. Electronic records must be managed alongside traditional records to ensure compliance with legal regulations and to preserve institutional history. The purpose of this policy is to inform College employees of the requirements and responsibilities for management and disposition of electronic records.

This document will address policies and procedures that are to be used in the management (including creation, maintenance, and preservation) of information that is contained in files that are electronically stored and are related to the business and administrative functions of Union College. Information that is stored electronically on computers and computer systems at Union College must be protected so that it is appropriately available for use in the day-to-day operations and long-term needs of Union College.

As well, Union College's electronic mail (email) infrastructure must be managed for the entire College community in a manner that preserves a level of privacy and confidentiality in accordance with relevant laws, regulations, and College policy. See, for example, the Responsible Use at Union College Computing and Network Services, FM VI page 33 While the College permits limited personal use of its email infrastructure, those availing themselves of this privilege do not acquire a right of privacy in communications transmitted or stored on College information technology resources.

Email custodians must not inappropriately access or disclose the content of mail transmitted or stored on College-owned or College-controlled information technology resources (e.g., desktop computers, routers, servers, personal digital assistants, etc.), except in the following situations: (i) as a response to a court order or other compulsory legal process; (ii) in certain other circumstances only with the permission of an Administrative Officer of the College; (iii) when the correspondent is unavailable and the information is necessary to conduct College business; (iv) in health and safety emergencies; or (v) in cases where the integrity and/or operation of the system is compromised or in jeopardy.

It is also important that policies and procedures should dictate how it is stored, how it can be accessed (and by whom), and how and when it must be removed and/or deleted from College systems. As with paper documents and records, the following concerns must be paramount in the retention of electronically stored information:

- Preservation of the College's history

- Legal standards
- The use of resources
- The cost of data retention
- Appropriate deletion of outdated and useless information

1. Creation/use/access of information. Policies are in place regulating the creation and access of information and who can have access to this information. Those who have a need to access the information are identified and given access through security and authentication procedures.

2. Preservation of Information. There are two major needs in the area of preservation:

- The information must be maintained so that it is available for online access as needed in the day-to-day operation of the College. This information is and will be kept online.
- In the event of destruction of computer equipment on which the information is stored, there is the need to provide for the restoration of the information on new equipment. In order to be able to restore information after a major event that destroys or makes unavailable the computer systems on which the information is stored new equipment would be installed and the information would be restored, usually from some type of backup facility. This is addressed in the "ITS Computer Backup Policy."

3. Definitions.

- Electronic Record. The term "electronic record" means any record that is created, received, maintained or stored on College workstations or central servers. Examples include, but are not limited to: electronic mail (e-mail); word processing documents; web pages; course information pages (such as are kept on Blackboard); spreadsheets; databases
- Legal Custodian. The term "legal custodian" shall mean the originator of an e-mail message or the creator of an electronic document if that person is a College employee; otherwise it is the College employee to whom the message is addressed or to whom the electronic document is sent. If the record is transferred, by agreement or policy, to another person for archival purposes, then that person becomes the legal custodian.
- Official Schedules. "Official" records retention and disposition schedules are the general and departmental program schedules that have been approved by the College.

4. Electronic Mail.

Work-related e-mail is a College record, and must be treated as such. Each e-mail user must take responsibility for sorting out personal messages from work-related messages and retaining College records as directed in official records retention and disposition schedules.

Union College e-mail servers are NOT intended for long-term record retention. E-mail messages and any associated attachment(s) are to be printed and filed in similar fashion to paper records. It is important to note that the e-mail message should be kept with the attachment(s). The printed copy of the e-mail must contain the following header information: 1) who sent the message; 2) who the message was sent to; 3) date and time the message was sent; and 4) the subject of the message.

5. Additional Items.

- Instant Messaging: The College does not support the use of Instant Messaging (IM) for College business.
- ITS Backup Files: Information Technology Services performs backups on a regular schedule of the e-mail and electronic files stored on central servers for disaster recovery (See Computer Systems Backup Policy). These backups are to be used for system restoration purposes only. The IT system administrator is not the legal custodian of messages or records which may be included in such backups.
- Litigation Holds. When litigation against the College or its employees is filed or threatened, the law imposes a duty upon the College to preserve all documents and records that pertain to the issues. As soon as College officials reasonably anticipate litigation or a College officer is made aware of pending litigation, a litigation hold directive will be issued to the legal custodians. The litigation hold directive (or Notice of Records Preservation) overrides any records retention schedule that may have otherwise called for the transfer, disposal or destruction of the relevant documents, until the hold has been cleared by the College's attorney. E-mail and computer accounts of separated employees that have been placed on a litigation hold by the College's attorney will be maintained by Information Technology Services until the hold is released. No employee who has been notified by the College's attorney of a litigation hold may alter or delete an electronic record that falls within the scope of that hold. Intentional violation of the hold may subject the individual to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, as well as personal liability for civil and/or criminal sanctions by the courts or law enforcement agencies. For additional information on litigations holds and the New Federal Rules of Discovery, please contact the College's attorney, Charles J. Assini, Jr., at Higgins, Roberts, Beyerl & Coan, P.C., 1430 Balltown Road, Schenectady, New York 12309; 518-374-3399; CJAssini@HRBCLaw.com (please cc: GKcarter@HRBCLaw.com).

6. Computer Systems Backup Policy.

Union College requires that Enterprise computer systems maintained by Information Technology Services be backed up periodically and that the backup media is stored in a secure onsite and off-site location.

The purpose of the systems backup is to provide a means to: (1) restore the integrity of the computer systems in the event of a hardware/software failure or physical disaster, and (2) provide a measure of protection against human error or the inadvertent deletion of important files. The systems backups will consist of regular full and incremental backups. Systems backups do not serve as an archival system or to meet record retention requirements. Systems backups will be kept for six (6) months.

Most well-managed data systems at the College maintain some system of tapes or other storage media that periodically copy the system's data to enable the system and its contents to be restored in the event of an emergency. For normal preservation purposes, emergency recovery copies of data are not practically accessible and interrupting their recycling would be impractical and expensive. As a result, such back up systems will usually be considered outside the scope of a *Notice of Records Preservation*, unless otherwise directed.

This policy provides guidelines for backup procedures. The standard procedure for systems backup is as follows:

- A full systems backup will be performed weekly. Weekly backups will be saved for a full month.
- The last weekly backup of the month will be saved as a monthly backup. The other weekly backup media will be recycled for other uses or destroyed.
- Monthly backups will be saved for six (6) months, at which time the media will be recycled or destroyed.
- Incremental backups will be performed following each business day. Incremental backups will be retained for two weeks, at which time the media will be recycled or destroyed.
- All backups will be stored in a secure, off-site or on-site location. Proper environment controls, temperature, humidity and fire protection, shall be maintained at the storage location.
- All backup media that is not re-usable shall be thoroughly destroyed in an approved manner. Backup media that is used for other purposes shall be thoroughly erased.
- Periodic tests of the backups will be performed to determine if files can be restored.

Exception: Because of the technologies involved with network storage devices (NAS and SAN), the academic network storage (providing email storage, personal web storage, and personal file storage for faculty and students) will have a snapshot of resident data taken once a day. The most recent snapshot will be saved to tape weekly.

NAS = "Network-Attached Storage"

SAN = "Storage Area Network"

7. Deletion of Email Messages.

Union College uses Microsoft Exchange servers for its email servers. When an individual email message is deleted it goes into the individual users "Deleted Items" folder and is removed from the mail box [although the message could be restored by the individual within fourteen (14) days of deletion if desired]. Each user determines the policy as to when the messages get removed from this area. For example, the individual may elect to have the messages removed when the Outlook client is closed (if the person is using Outlook).

All email messages and attachments are archived for a period of one(1) year. The utilization of an archival system enhances the College's ability to comply with lawfully served electronic discovery demands in accordance with the New Federal Rules of Discovery. For additional information about email archiving, please see the document entitled "Email Archiving Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). *NOTE: The College will not be archiving student email messages.*