

Guidelines for Records Disposition and Storage

University Archives and Records Management

The Archives and Records Management Departments work together to insure the appropriate disposition of your records, but perform different functions. This document is intended to provide brief guidelines to help you determine the proper disposition of your records. Please call the University Archivist (x1465) or the Records Manager (x2018) for more assistance. Additionally, refer to the Human Resources Policy Manual, Policies #907 and #1029, and the online Records Retention Schedule.

University Archives

The Archives preserves records in **all formats** (e.g., manuscript & typescript, printed, audio-visual, and electronic data, such as computer disks and files) with **enduring** historical, legal, fiscal and/or administrative value to the University (except student and personnel records, which are the responsibility of the Records Management Department).

The following are examples of materials that should be sent to the Archives:

- ❖ Historical files documenting policies, decisions, program/curriculum development, initiatives, projects, and activities; committee and task force minutes, proceedings, and reports
- ❖ Correspondence, memoranda, reports and subject files of academic department heads (chairs and directors), program heads, and senior administrators documenting projects, activities and functions
- ❖ Self-studies and accreditation reports (e.g. Middle States)
- ❖ Official course syllabi and schedules
- ❖ Institutional/departmental histories, and oral histories of past and present employees and students
- ❖ University/Departmental publications such as handbooks, bulletins, programs, media guides and releases, newspapers, newsletters, journals, magazines, brochures and posters, as well as certain memorabilia
- ❖ Constitutions and by-laws
- ❖ Student publications and historical records (including rosters) of student organizations/clubs and athletic teams
- ❖ Audio-visuals in all formats relating to STJ: photographs (preferably identified), sound, and video recordings
- ❖ Blueprints and architectural renderings

The following are examples of materials not appropriate for the Archives:

- ❖ Active records (these should be retained in your office)
- ❖ Records of routine matters (e.g., requests for leave, routine letters/memos of transmittal and acknowledgment)

- ❖ Non-personally addressed correspondence (mass mailings) such as "Supervisors and Managers" memoranda (except for one record copy from the issuing office)
- ❖ Personnel and student records (consult the Records Manager)
- ❖ Medical records (consult the Records Manager)
- ❖ Replies to questionnaires and surveys if the results are recorded in a report
- ❖ Blank forms (see Records Destruction section)
- ❖ Drafts of documents
- ❖ Student exams, papers and grades
- ❖ Teaching evaluations
- ❖ Accounting records of specific financial transactions (purchase orders, invoices) and budget files (consult the Records Manager)
- ❖ Research data and notes
- ❖ Reprints and books of non-STJ faculty and non-university publications
- ❖ Vendor catalogs, equipment manuals
- ❖ Unfunded or rejected grant proposals and files (consult the Records Manager)

Procedures

Please observe the following procedures when transferring records to the Archives:

1. Call the University Archives at x1465, in advance, to discuss the transfer of the materials.
2. Paper records should be in labeled folders.
3. Place the folders in records storage boxes in the same order in which they were maintained in your filing system. Do not overstuff the box (leave enough room for a fist to fit between the files and the box wall).
4. Label the front of the box with your department/office name and the number of the box (e.g. Psychology Department, Box 1 of 2).
5. Prepare a list of the folder titles in each box or a brief description of the contents of each box. Send an electronic copy of this list with the name of a contact person in your department, a phone number and the date to archives@stjohns.edu. Keep a copy for your own records. This will help you keep track of the materials that have been sent to the Archives.
6. Send the boxes to the University Archives, Library, Room B-20, Queens Campus.

Records Management

The Records Management Department assists offices in determining which records in **all formats** must be retained for fiscal, administrative or legal reasons, and for how long. It will facilitate your off-site storage needs, including supplying boxes and bar-coded labels, and advise you on records destruction. The retention schedule guidelines can be found at http://libraries.stjohns.edu/pdf/Records_Retention_Draft.pdf. The retention periods are based upon best practices in university settings and are formulated to follow local, state and federal regulations. The retention schedule requires ongoing research and is subject to change as new record types are identified and as new laws and regulations come into effect. Departments are encouraged to consult with the Records Manager about including new records series in the schedule.

Off-site Storage

Examples of records that can be sent to off-site storage include:

- ❖ Those with administrative and/or legal value (e.g. contracts, insurance documents, or relating to pending litigation). Note that older contracts that are superseded are also of legal value and must be retained. (Consultation with General Counsel may be necessary)
- ❖ Those with fiscal value (e.g. accounts payable/receivable, financial aid, purchase orders, and budget records). Consult with the records manager to determine whether these records have reached the end of their retention period.
- ❖ Personnel records (e.g. contracts and agreements, payroll, tax, benefit plans, and compliance records)
- ❖ Student records. Transcripts held by the Registrar's office are to be retained permanently as vital records. Academic departments may normally destroy student files six years after graduation, although they are often retained for historical reasons and/or as a convenience for writing letters of recommendation.

Examples of material that should not be sent off-site:

- ❖ Active records
- ❖ Photocopies or carbon copies (non-originals)
- ❖ Blank forms
- ❖ Draft versions of documents

Procedures

Files that are determined to be records and can be sent to off-site storage should be:

1. Removed from Pendaflex® (hanging) folders.
2. Arranged so that similar files (content, date range) are kept together in a box.
3. Placed in 1.2 cu ft records storage boxes provided by Records Management, leaving enough room so that a fist can fit between the files and the box wall (i.e. not tightly)

packed). Affix a bar-code label to the short end of the box so that is visible when the lid is in place and prepare a transmittal sheet.

4. Entered in an Access database. Keep one copy for your own records and e-mail one copy of the database to the Records Manager (cooperd@stjohns.edu).

Records Destruction

Please consult with the Records Manager or Archivist before destroying University records. If it is determined that they are past their retention period, records must be properly shredded or placed in shredding bins if they contain any personal identifiable or sensitive information (e.g. Social Security numbers, "X" numbers, grades).

The University has arranged with its records storage vendor to provide secure shredding services on a University-wide basis. Only paper records containing confidential information, and blank University forms and stationary should be placed into the 65-gallon shredding bins provided by the vendor after consultation with the University's Archives & Records Management Department. **Non-sensitive paper records may be placed in recycling bins, but should NOT be placed in Iron Mountain shredding bins.**

Materials that can be placed in the shredding containers:

- ❖ Any paper records with sensitive/confidential information, of any color. Staples, paper clips, rubber bands, small binders and file folders need not be removed before depositing in bins.

Materials that should not be placed in the shredding containers:

- ❖ Non-sensitive records, computer disks, books, and trash.

Procedures

Once in place, the shredding containers will be serviced by the vendor on a regular, pre-arranged schedule. Offices wishing to use the shredding services should contact the Records Manager at x2018.

IMPORTANT! Please provide a brief inventory describing the records authorized for destruction that have been placed in bins or shredded on-site (description and date range of the records; e.g. student advisement files 1995-2000). An e-mail to the Records Manager (cooperd@stjohns.edu) summarizing this information is sufficient.