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Records Quarterly

The Newsletter of The University of Cincinnati Records Management Program
Information Workflow Rx
Curing inefficiencies in your records processes

According to ARMA International, employees spend 3.5 hours per week every year searching for information they can’t find. One of the major goals of a records management program is to create an efficient, well-run office in which employees can easily find the information that they need when they need it. If you find yourself spending too much time creating records, searching for information, or otherwise managing information, you may want to consider implementing some of the things discussed in this article.

Analyze work processes

It is good practice to periodically review your work processes, not only for records management purposes, but also to maintain efficiency and ensure that you continue to comply with current rules and regulations. This is especially true if you have moved from a legacy system, as there may be a tendency to retain certain tasks in a workflow that may no longer be necessary in your new system. Your goal in designing a work process is to achieve the desired business objective with maximum efficiency while ensuring compliance with your regulatory environment.

For each task in a process, identify what information is required to complete the task, what information is generated, what records are created, and what records are disseminated. It may help to diagram the process to get a visual picture of the flow. Justify each piece of information that goes through the process. Are efforts being duplicated? Is the information that is being generated still necessary for compliance and to achieve business objectives? Is the necessary information being captured in the right form and at the right time? Are all approvals still required?

Following the analysis, recommend any changes that may be implemented to improve efficiency, generate the necessary records, and eliminate those no longer required.

Make automated processes truly paperless

Take full advantage of automated processes by eliminating the need to print documents. Look into using electronic routing tools as well as electronic signatures to handle documents that require approvals.
Electronic signatures are now accepted as legal evidence in most jurisdictions, but you will want to check into specific requirements before moving to a digital approval process. Examine the software that you are using for automated workflow processes and determine if there are any features that you are not using that would cut out steps or prevent you from having to print paper copies.

Take a new look at your distribution practices

Unnecessary copies are a major cause of inefficiency in the office, whether they are paper copies or proliferating email attachments. The majority of records that are created in an office today are born digital, but we still have loads of paper filling file cabinets. Consider making one electronic file available on a shared space, such as a networked server, collaboration tool, or ftp site, and pointing potential users to that document rather than sending paper copies or email attachments. Ask people on your recipient list if they still want or require copies, or if their needs would be met knowing where the information can be obtained if needed.

Make your electronic file structure mirror your paper file plan

Are you using two different ways to find things on your computer and in your filing cabinets? A documented file plan designed around the way you use your records is essential for the efficient storage and retrieval of information. (See the Summer 2008 edition of Records Quarterly for tips about setting up an active records system.) Most offices have some type of file plan in place for paper records. Extending that same structure to computer directories that house records can make finding information more intuitive and reduce time devoted to developing electronic filing systems.

Dispose of records when your retention schedule says that you can

Retention schedules are designed to make records available as long as you legally and administratively need to have them, but no longer. Keeping records that can be disposed of makes for poor use of storage and staff resources and creates a build-up of unnecessary records. Additionally, there are risks involved with retaining records too long. Having to store too many records can cause overcrowding in standard storage areas and lead to sloppy security practices. Any records that have been retained are open to discovery and must be turned over if subpoenaed by a court. Finally, not disposing of records according to our approved policies shows a lack of compliance with our own procedures.

Compare files with other departments

Are you keeping the same records that someone else within your college or business unit is keeping? If multiple copies do not need to be retained, determine which department within your unit should be responsible for a certain type of information and only store it in one place. Document a recordkeeping plan that outlines who is responsible for retaining what records and disseminate it to all parties so that individuals can locate information when needed.

Conclusion

When you take a critical view of the way you are doing things, there is a good chance that you will discover some tasks can just be done more efficiently. However, sometimes it may be difficult to look at your own processes critically and you may even want to get a third party to assist you in the analysis. The benefits of reviewing your workflow processes and instituting efficient changes include labor and cost savings, faster task completion times, fewer resource allocations, and, of course, better use of information.

Consult UC Records Management to relieve the pain of workflow hassle.
Managing Records in a Collaborative Environment

Committee work is a way of life here at UC. Most staff and faculty of the university probably sit on a committee, subcommittee, work group, advisory board or task team currently or they have in the past. Such teams can be department specific or cover a broad university-wide scope, comprised of individuals from many different areas. But a commonality among all these groups is that they generate information and produce university records. The effective management of committee records is very important. Much decision making, planning, and production is done by committees and their work represents a vital piece of UC business and history. Managing those records can be tricky, as there may not be just one person or department creating or maintaining them and information can come from many different directions. Getting a collective picture of a committee’s records isn’t always easy. This article is intended to offer guidelines and recommendations for handling records created and maintained in a collaborative environment.

Responsibility for Records Management

Generally, records for department or college specific committees are the easiest to manage. While department committees can be created for a short-term project or event, they are frequently long standing, allowing time to establish work processes and procedures. Members often work together daily as a team and roles are more clearly defined and understood. Additionally, it is easier to set up a central storage location for both paper and electronic records. But a common issue for department committees is the rotation of different members in and out of the committee. It is important to determine who on the committee will be the official record keeper and to transfer both records and responsibility to a new member if that individual leaves. Best practice is to use a central storage area and document the location in the committee’s procedures rather than to store records with the files of the person who serves as the record keeper.

University-wide committees pose some unique issues for the management of records. These groups are often transitory, convened for a specific purpose and disbanded when that purpose is met. This narrow scope can sometimes overshadow regular administrative issues such as records management, which often becomes an afterthought. Ownership of the records is not always clear.

As a guideline, official committee records should be retained by the chairperson of the committee or their assignee. Just like with department committees, as membership and position holders change, the records responsibilities should be transferred to the new person in that position. Ideally, paper records should be stored in the office of the convener. If that is not possible, they can be held by the committee member responsible for record keeping or in offsite/vendor storage managed by their office. University-wide committees should seriously consider using a collaborative software tool for the dissemination and storage of their electronic records. As described later in this article, such tools can allow individuals from different areas to share electronic documents in a central, mutually accessible space and are perfect for committee needs.

Records Retention

Common records created by committees include charter, charge, by-laws, membership rosters, agendas, minutes, presentations, handouts, publications, memos, announcements, policies, procedures, documented decisions, reports, surveys, and official recommendations. Drafts of committee work generally do not constitute university records. However, if a draft substantially documents the reasoning behind decision making it could be a record and should be reviewed by Records Management. Email messages, threaded discussions, and message boards shared by members should be evaluated based on their content to determine record status. External reference material used in committee work can sometimes be discarded when it is no longer needed.

Committee records fall under the Inter-University Council of Ohio Records Retention Matrix retention group ADM9910, Subject Files and should be retained by the committee for a minimum period of three years. After the three year retention period, the records should be transferred to the University Archives. Department committees should use the department’s records retention schedule to dispose of records.
and submit a Certificate of Records Disposal with the records. University-wide committees can complete a one-time request for disposal using the IUC retention group ADM9910 as the authority. Forms can be found on the Records Management website at http://www.libraries.uc.edu/libraries/arb/records_management/FormsDownloads.html. Copies of records maintained by committee members should be retained as long as they are necessary for that member’s purposes and then they should be destroyed.

**Collaboration Tools**

There are several tools available that allow groups to collaborate electronically. Collaboration software allows groups to share disparate types of electronic files in one area, create and edit documents collectively, post news and announcements, and conduct threaded or real-time chats. Such tools can be used to create both standing shared resources for departments and short-term project sites.

These tools provide good controls for creating and disseminating documents that need to be viewed and edited by several people. A single file can be used by everyone who needs access, decreasing the chance of proliferating paper and email copies.

Blackboard is used by many groups at UC as a collaboration tool. Through the creation of an “organization” site, groups can share documents, post announcements, conduct threaded discussions, send group emails, and perform several other actions.

To create an organization site on Blackboard, email a request to blackboard@uc.edu with the following information:

1. The full name and email address of the person who will manage the organization
2. A description of how the organization will help communications, education and/or research within the college or department
3. The total number of members that will be enrolled in the organization
4. The potential need for any visitor accounts (limit of 25)

The Blackboard Support Team will review your request and contact you about how to proceed.

SharePoint is probably the most widely-used collaborative software product and the 2010 version promises to include sounder records management capabilities. An advantage of SharePoint and similar products over Blackboard is that SharePoint allows users to collectively edit documents and it tracks versions, which adds value to decision making and development processes.

Google Docs has become a popular internet-based document sharing application. It is designed to be used with Google’s other applications for a full collaborative suite. With Google docs, users can upload native documents or create new ones based on Google’s format. Google does not offer retention and disposition tools. An export function allows an entire folder to be downloaded, documents converted to pdf files, and the entire group zipped. This makes transferring electronic files to the University Archives easy. However, I caution UC groups that are using Google Docs to create and store university records. Since it is not a university controlled product, the potential for information security issues is greater. Legally protected, sensitive, or confidential information should never be posted to Google Docs or other similar publically available applications.

**Conclusion**

The proper management of collaborative information begins with a good pro-active plan. Decide who in the group is going to be the point person to retain and manage the information produced by the group. Identify those documents created by the group that constitute university records and apply approved retention rules to those records. Determine where and how you will store and organize the records, keeping in mind that collaboration software is available and can be a valuable resource. And finally, make sure records designated as archival are sent to the University Archives at the end of the minimum retention period to ensure that all of your hard work will be remembered!
The University’s Records: Automation & Records Management

The Beginning of Automation

Efforts to automate recordkeeping at the University of Cincinnati began in the late 1940s with the procurement of an IBM system for machine records processing and the creation of the Machine Records Department. The IBM system consisted of six separate machines that used hole-punched cards for recording, entering, organizing, and processing information. Machines were available to punch, sort, collate, reproduce, and interpret the cards and to tabulate and print reports. Strategically placed holes in the cards were detected using electronic impulses, which were then translated into numeric or alphabetic characters that could be analyzed to perform various jobs. A plugboard in the wiring panel of an accounting machine could be configured to program the creation of specific reports. Similar machines had been used in World War II to process personnel records in the field. Mobile units travelled from camp to camp gathering information and recording and processing it via the punched cards.

The first application of the IBM system at UC was in the Comptroller’s Office. By 1949 all accounting processes were performed using the IBM system, including AR, AP, payroll, student accounts, and tax processing and reporting. In addition, the Observatory was using a similar system to process data collected in their study of minor planets.

In April 1949 the Faculty Administrative Committee presented a report to President Raymond Walters recommending expansion of the system to include the Registrar’s Office. Citing the indispensability of the current installations in managing accounting and observatory records, the committee recommended creating one department that would be responsible for all machine records processing across University functions. The Machine Records Department was established in 1950 as part of the Comptroller’s Office. It was staffed by the tabulator previously responsible for financial records as well as a supervisor, research assistant, and director of IBM registration. The department was responsible for processing both financial and academic records.

The Registrar’s Office began using the system to process and maintain student admissions and registration records in the fall term of the 1950-1951 academic year and added the ability to machine post permanent grade records in 1962. Use of the system was a catalyst for promoting uniformity of data structure and collection across the different schools and colleges. The highly structured layout of the 80-column punch cards left little room for individuality; consequently the Registrar’s Office worked with the colleges to simplify and streamline data collection and reporting.

Another important recordkeeping technology introduced around the time of the IBM system was micrographics. The use of micrographics as an alternate means of storage and retrieval for business records, in the form of both microfilm and microfiche, increased in offices during the 1950s and 1960s. Initially used as a means of delivering books and publications in libraries, micrographics became a viable solution for the growing problem of storing large quantities of long-term paper records. Additionally, microfilm was seen as a good preservation and backup medium.

The Registrar’s Office and the Board of Trustees both created microfilm copies of some of their permanent records. In the 1957-59 President’s Report, the Registrar noted that “One important machine recently acquired is a microfilm reader-printer which permits rapid and economical production of transcripts from our records that are on microfilm.”
Mainframe Computing

The IBM system allowed UC offices to automate previously manual systems, resulting in increased efficiency and reliability, cost savings, and better overall use and organization of information. But while some recordkeeping was now automated, the machines in use could not be considered true computers. The first real computer arrived at UC on June 1, 1958, an IBM 650 that weighed in at 6,300 pounds. Initially it was used for analyzing scientific data at the Observatory and for studying and teaching programming languages. The computer used the same type of punched cards for entering data as the IBM machine records system, but the method of processing was completely different. Along with the computer came the need for a central department to manage its operations. The UC Computing Center (UCCC), now known as UCit, was created to serve that purpose.

Recordkeeping was not one of the initial considerations in the acquisition of the new computer, but it was soon realized that business applications would greatly benefit from computerization. In the mid-1960s plans were being made to convert financial and academic records processes from the IBM machine records system to computer-based applications. A major reason for this was the University’s decision to seek state affiliation and subsequently, the need to effectively satisfy Board of Regents reporting requirements.

In 1966 the Machine Records Department became the Administrative Data Processing Center (ADP), charged with programming and managing computerized business applications. The precursors to the systems that we use today were created at this time. ADP managed systems for accounting and financials, payroll, personnel, admissions, student academic and financial aid records, alumni, and housing. Systems initially used punch cards for data entry, but increasingly terminals were made available for keying data. Additionally, exam grading was made available via optical scanner comparison of student answer sheets and a grade key. Pre-printed forms became more popular as a means of collecting uniform data to be entered into recordkeeping systems and increasing the efficiency of records creation.

In the 1970s, an Administrative Terminal System (ATS/360) was introduced allowing individual users to create documents on terminals connected to a mainframe via telecommunications software. The terminals could be rented by students, faculty, and staff in several labs available across campus. Disk storage space allowed for creating what UCCC termed “permanent records,” but which simply meant that they could be stored for future use in individual password-protected accounts. The UCCC Newsletter stated “ATS has proven invaluable for secretaries and administrative personnel who handle volumes of lengthy and repetitive reports.”

With the increased use of computers in the mid-1970s, privacy became an issue and Southwest Ohio Regional Computer Center (SWORRC) administrators stated that “an individual’s privacy is an overriding consideration in any matters dealing with computer records.” (SWORRC encompassed UCCC from 1972-1978) The Privacy Act of 1974 was passed to protect individuals’ rights to privacy regarding records held by the federal government. Computer security and the abuse of UC computer systems became a serious issue in the late 1970s and University Rule 3361:10-17-12, Conduct and Ethics, was made effective on September 29, 1978. UCCC continued to reiterate the importance of proper usage of computer resources into the early 1980s.

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Minicomputer systems that provided more processing power and local networking capabilities were also available in some offices. The Board of Trustees office had a minicomputer that handled processing of board minutes and that allowed staff to quickly and easily retrieve information needed for board decisions.

Just as important to the increased creation and dissemination of records was the introduction of networking capabilities. In June of 1983, UCCC began to study strategies for the use of computers in campus offices, termed loosely the “Office Automation Project.” After a pilot project was put into place across 12 offices, the team recommended the establishment of a campus-wide office automation system. The resulting Office Automation Network, introduced in 1984, was a three-tiered system of resources designed to provide office personnel with access to information and data processing tools. The first tier consisted of personal computers running word processing, spreadsheets, and other desktop software. The PCs were connected to the middle tier, a “Local Cluster Control Unit,” running on a minicomputer that served the needs of the department, such as scheduling and storage. The top tier was a “Central Cooperative Unit,” that connected the Local Cluster Units, passed electronic mail between users and talked to the university’s mainframes. The network used Digital Equipment Corporation’s VAX minicomputers and “All-In-One” automation software. The network allowed users to create and share electronic records as well as directly access the university’s central recordkeeping

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Office Automation

While UC had been in a relationship with the computer for two decades by the early 1980s, many records were still created by hand or typewritten. That began to change with the introduction of microcomputers (known more commonly today as personal computers or PCs) and efforts to automate office work. First introduced on campus in 1977, microcomputers really began to be widely used around 1982 and quickly populated individual desktops. The first microcomputers in use were stand-alone machines with their own operating systems that could communicate with a mainframe via a modem and software to transfer files. Along with microcomputers came software for word processing, spreadsheets, databases, and several other applications. Beginning in 1983, the growing use and dependence on microcomputers prompted UCCC and several other departments to create steering committees to study what was happening across the university and assess user needs. Eventually UCCC created a center for office automation technologies and a microcomputer information center devoted to supporting and developing microcomputer use at the university. A 1985 “Micro Census” conducted by UCCC showed that 85% of microcomputer users primarily performed word processing and 49% used databases.

“Even though we record the present and store the past, we are very active in long-range planning. Office automation has relieved the staff of many mundane, time-consuming tasks that prevented us from even thinking about innovative office techniques.”

- Toni Gregory, former Clerk of the Board of Trustees, U.C. Microcomputer Monitor, Spring 1987

A microcomputer setup in 1985

This shot of surplus equipment in 1987 shows the impact that microcomputers and the Office Automation Network had on the fate of the typewriter.
systems, such as the Registrar’s student information system, and the UC Libraries Information Database (UCLID). Also in 1984, UC joined BITNET (Because It’s Time NETwork), which allowed the transfer of files and electronic mail between UC and other universities and research centers across the United States and Canada.

In 1988 the U.C. Microcomputer Monitor reported on the growth of computer systems at UC since microcomputers were first introduced on campus, showing an exponential increase in available equipment from 98 computers in 1982 to 4,534 in 1988. As computing came closer to the desktop, the volume of records began to increase considerably. While control of data processing was held by a central department it was easier to manage what was being created and disseminated, but with that ability now in the hands of individual users, management of records began to become a bit trickier. Individual microcomputers gave users more flexibility and convenience to create documents. Floppy disks made storing, sharing, and reusing computer files easy and the ability to print multiple paper copies from a single computer file increased distribution capabilities.

Records Management

The story of UC Records Management dates back to 1969 and the efforts of Dr. William Aeschbacher, head of the Department of History, who began creating awareness of the need for archival and records management at the University of Cincinnati. Dr. Aeschbacher’s immediate concerns were that records of permanent value were being destroyed and that conditions in the McMicken attic storage space were detrimental to the safekeeping of records. In 1972 Aeschbacher became the first Archivist of the university, working with the Special Collections Department of the library in an advisory role to develop and administer the Archives.

On January 30, 1974, President Warren Bennis issued a policy statement directing that university records could not be destroyed without the approval of the office in charge of the department and the University Archivist. A proposal was submitted by the University Archives in 1977 to establish a records management program and a records center. Several issues convinced the Archives staff that such a program was needed. Departments had been sending non-archival, inactive material to be housed in the archives, indicating the need for a separate inactive records center, and there was the continued concern that records with archival value were being destroyed. Additionally, departments were increasingly having difficulty locating needed records.

On July 13, 1978, President Henry Winkler approved $22,614 to fund a records management program, allowing for the creation of two positions, a records specialist and a clerk/typist. The proposal for the records center was approved, but the plan was never carried out. A recharge committee was formed later to discuss the records center, but it never came to be. In 1979 a records management program was officially established with responsibility given to the Special Collections Department. Since UC became a state university on July 1, 1977, the program was created in compliance with the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) and under the authority of the state records commission.

The first Records Specialist, Richard Haas, began work on June 11, 1979. The first records retention schedules were written and approved in 1980, beginning with Finance. Retention schedules were created and approved at UC then sent to the state for final approval before they were approved.

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Program News

Schedule Development

Updated Schedules:
• Sponsored Research Services
• Radiation Safety
• Utilities and Facilities Business Affairs

Records Transfers

The following University records have been transferred to the University Archives:

College of Law
Accession No. UA-09-17, 38 boxes
Records, including the files of Deans Samuel Wilson, Gordon Christenson, Joseph Tomain and Associate Dean Barbara Watts, photographs, and publications, 1960-2009.

University Honors Program
Accession No. UA-09-31, 4 boxes
Records, including reports, bulletins, minutes, newsletters, correspondence, outlines, syllabi, and proposals for honors seminar topics, 1978-2009.

DAAP Student Affairs
Accession No. UA-09-33, 1 box
Records, including admissions and enrollment reports, strategic plans, orientation and program records, and policies and procedures, 1976-2002.

Office of the President, Nancy Zimpher Papers
Accession No. UA-10-01, 19 boxes
Papers, including speeches, subject files, and publications, 2004-2009.

IUC Records Retention Task Group Formed

A task group has been formed to study revisions and improvements to the Inter-University Council of Ohio Records Retention Manual and to discuss common records management issues. University Records Manager Janice Schulz is a member of the group, made up of records managers, IT professionals, legal representatives, and administrators from IUC and member universities.

The first meeting of the task group was held on Wednesday, March 31, at the IUC offices in Columbus. Topics discussed included adding new records series to the retention matrix and making recommendations for electronic records management. New series were approved for inclusion in the matrix. Those include consumer credit card receipts, student course work, accumulated sick leave records, project files, information system logs, family and medical leave records, and several new categories for general administrative records requiring alternate retention periods. Research will be done into several other records series that are not currently included on the matrix, such as patient records, police records, records necessary for students’ professional licensing, and research records.

While the group discussed several electronic records management issues, it was determined that since the Ohio Electronic Records Committee deals with the same

UC Records Management Objectives

• To promote the administrative efficiency at the University by removing inactive or obsolete records from offices.
• To protect the University by ensuring compliance with all internal, state, and federal policies regarding the creation and disposition of University records.
• To ensure that all documents of administrative or historical value are rightfully preserved through transfer to the University Archives.

Promote, Protect, Preserve
issues that the group would address, separate
guidelines will not be included in the manual. Users of
the manual will simply be pointed to the OERC
guidelines as reference.

The group will continue to meet as needed as well as
communicate and share resources through a Microsoft
SharePoint site. The ongoing maintenance of the
manual provided by this group as well as tri-annual
updates to the underlying legal database will provide
Ohio’s university system with up-to-date information
regarding records retention and allow us to more easily
promote compliant and effective records management
programs. Regular meetings of the group will also
allow the university programs to come to more
consensus on overall records management issues and
foster communication and idea sharing among the
institutions.

Workshops

The next scheduled workshops will be offered in the
fall. These workshops can also be brought to your
department. To set up your own presentation, contact
Janice. If you have interest in a more advanced records
topic, please let us know and we may be able to design
a workshop for you.

During the Introduction to Records Management
workshop we will discuss what benefits you will
receive from managing your records, UC’s records
program and role as a keeper of public records, the
definition of a “record,” how to perform records
inventories, the development of records retention
schedules and proper means of records disposal.

A new workshop offering, Managing Email and
Electronic Records, is now available. During this
workshop we will discuss the unique characteristics
of electronic records that require attention, how to
determine if an email message is a university record,
retention of email and electronic records,
recordkeeping systems, special considerations for
websites, databases, and business applications, and
disposal of electronic records including transfer to

The IUC Records Retention Manual is used by
Ohio’s public universities and colleges to develop
records management policies and procedures.

RIM Resources Across the University

Information Security

The April 9, 2010 Security Update can be found at http://
www.uc.edu/infosec/ISecUpdates/
InformationSecurityUpdate.pdf.

HIPAA Training and Resources

Several areas of the university offer training opportunities
and resources for learning about the Health Information
Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). The Center for
Continuous Professional Development offers online compli-
ance training geared toward researchers and healthcare pro-
fessionals on their website at http://webcentral.uc.edu/
cpd_online2/compliance/category.cfm?id=13. The Office of
Research Compliance and Regulatory Affairs has a reference
guide at http://researchcompliance.uc.edu/hipaa/ applicable
to human subject researchers. Information Security provides
an analysis of the act as well as a resource list at http://
www.uc.edu/infosec/Compliance/HIPAA.html.
Records in the News

State of Ohio and Local

Village’s audit finds minor record-keeping issues
_Aurora Advocate_, March 17, 2010
In a letter that accompanied the audit, Varney, Fink and Associates addressed some record-keeping issues that could be improved.

Self-revealing source frees reporter
_UPi.com_, March 17, 2010
The self-revelation by the source of leaked medical documents of a suspected serial killer kept a Cleveland newspaper reporter out of jail, officials said.

Cincinnati police officer suspended for unauthorized computer use
_Cincinnati.com_, March 22, 2010
Barry Carr, 60, of Madisonville was indicted for unauthorized use of a computer, cable or telecommunications property by using a police computer to check someone’s criminal record.
http://news.cincinnati.com/article/AB/20100322/NEWS010701/3230316/Cop+suspended+for+computer+use

Urbin’s Record Sealed
_Avon Lake Ledger_, March 22, 2010
Lorain County Common Pleas Judge Edward Zaleski ruled this morning that former Avon Lake Mayor Vince Urbin has met the criteria to have his record sealed.

Taylor Declares Perry Township “Unauditable”
_Ohio Auditor’s Website_, March 23, 2010
Auditor of State Mary Taylor today declared Perry Township, in Wood County, “unauditable” for calendar years 2008 and 2009. An unauditable designation means that records and documents necessary to conduct a routine financial audit are missing, incomplete or inaccurate.

(West Virginia) State vital records agency gets boon from PEIA audit
_The Charleston Gazette_, March 25, 2010
A Public Employees Insurance Agency audit of insurees has scores of state employees grumbling about having to submit copies of tax returns and birth and marriage certificates to the agency under tight deadlines.
http://wvgazette.com/News/politics/201003250846

Ohio Firefighters Accused of Releasing Medical Records of Fire Chief’s Wife
_The Columbus Dispatch via Firehouse_, March 27, 2010
Three Jackson Township firefighters will learn Friday that they face an administrative hearing next month for releasing medical records related to their chief’s wife.

Killers’ police files closed
_The Columbus Dispatch_, March 29, 2010
Columbus killers will have to be executed, die in prison or freed before the public can examine police case files underlying their arrests and convictions. A change in the Columbus Division of Police's interpretation of Ohio's public-records laws has led to a decision to not release any police investigatory documents while murderers remain in prison.

Federal money will fund health record exchange
_Trading Markets.com_, March 31, 2010
A local nonprofit created through the combined efforts of Morehead State University and several regional medical providers will be a primary partner in a multi-million dollar grant recently awarded to HealthBridge, Inc. by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
Higher Education

1% of Texas College Students Lack Residency Documentation
Inside Higher Ed, March 16, 2010
About 12,000 students in Texas -- or 1 percent of all college students in the state -- lack the legal documentation to show that they reside in the United States legally.
http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2010/03/16/qt/1_of_texas_college_students_lack_residency_documentation

NCAA to Release Datasets
Inside Higher Ed, March 19, 2010
Data on college sports and athletes will be much more accessible than it has been, under an arrangement announced by the National Collegiate Athletic Association and the Inter-university Consortium for Social Research at the University of Michigan.

ECMC Notifying Borrowers of Data Loss
PRNewswire, March 26, 2010
ECMC, a guarantor of federal student loans, said today that a theft has occurred from its headquarters involving portable media with personally identifiable information.

Managing E-Waste Responsibly
Campus Technology, March 30, 2010
According to Edward Newman, recycling and refuse manager for Ohio University, appropriate e-waste management is a cornerstone of the commitment that, as of this writing, has been signed by more than 600 higher ed institutions, including Ohio.

New Purdue center to help Ind. doctors adopt electronic health records, e-prescribing
Fox 58 WXIN, March 31, 2010
A new Purdue University center is gearing up to help Indiana’s primary-care physicians make the move from paper to computerized record-keeping.

Universities Rewrite Business Processes to Streamline Paper Flow
Campus Technology, April 7, 2010
Two institutions—the University of Illinois at Chicago and Texas A&M at Corpus Christi—have gone public with deployments of business process management systems from Laserfiche to improve document workflow.

UCSB mistakenly gives good news, then apologizes to 60 wait-listed applicants
Los Angeles Times, April 8, 2010
UC Santa Barbara mistakenly told 60 applicants they were admitted to next fall’s freshman class when, in fact, they remained on the waiting list for entrance, officials said Thursday.
Leg & Reg
Legislative and Regulatory Affairs Affecting Records and Information Management

Federal

Electronic Message Preservation Act
On March 17, 2010, the House passed H.R. No. 1387, or the “Electronic Message Preservation Act.” The act would require the U.S. Archivist to issue regulations for the capture, management, accessibility, and preservation of electronic messages as well as requirements for electronic records management systems. Additionally, it would create standards for the “economical and efficient management of electronic Presidential records.” The bill is currently being reviewed by the Senate’s Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.
http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d111:H.R.1387:

Plain Writing Act of 2010
On March 17, 2010, the House passed H.R. No. 946, or the “Plain Writing Act of 2010.” The act would require federal agencies to write documents in concise, well-organized language that is clearly understood by the public. Under the act, the head of each government agency would be responsible for setting up a plan to comply with the act, creating a “plain writing section” on the agency’s website to inform the public of its compliance, and to report to Congress concerning its activities. Interim guidelines that agencies can use in developing their own procedures are available at http://www.plainlanguage.gov/ . The bill is currently on the calendar in the Senate.
http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c111:H.R.946:

Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010
While the public focus of the Reconciliation Act has largely been on health care reform, it also includes vast changes for higher education student loan funding. Title II, Subtitles A & B of the Reconciliation Act deal with education and student loan reform. It is too early to determine what the recordkeeping implications will be for institutions of higher learning as a result of the passage of the bill, however an understanding of its provisions is important at this time. The bill absorbed the “Student Aid Fiscal Responsibility Act (SAFRA) of 2009” and Title II, Subtitle A bears the same name. Under the act, no new loans will be made under the Federal Family Educational Loan Program (which currently guarantees loans made and serviced by private lenders) for which the first disbursement is after June 30, 2010. It provides for temporary loan consolidation under a Federal Direct Consolidation Loan that can be taken out between July 1, 2010 and July 1, 2011. Starting on July 1, 2010 all federally guaranteed student loans will be made through a direct government loan program serviced by U.S. based private lenders, which will be required to compete for contracts. For a description of the act’s impacts see the Committee on Education & Labor’s website at http://edlabor.house.gov/blog/2009/07/student-aid-and-fiscal-respons.shtml . The texts, statuses, and analyses of the act can be found at http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c111:H.R.4872:

Faster FOIA Act Introduced
ARMA International Washington Policy Brief, April 2010
On March 15, Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT) introduced bipartisan legislation to make further improvements to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the nation’s premier open government law. Leahy is a longtime leader on FOIA issues and has led efforts to make the federal government more open and transparent to the people it represents.

Open Government Plans Available Online Including the National Archives and Records Administration Plan
Resource Shelf, April 7, 2010
The Open Government Initiative and the Open Government Directive required that every Cabinet agency organize and release their Open Government Plans by April 7, 2010. Every agency met this deadline.
State of Ohio

Textbook Affordability Act Introduced
The Ohio House introduced H.B. No. 472, or the “Textbook Affordability Act,” on March 23, 2010. While the main purpose of the bill is to encourage the availability of affordable textbooks, it also includes a provision for transparency of information in the sale of college textbooks as well as a proposed reporting requirement. As introduced, the bill would provide for the posting of wholesale prices for all new textbooks in the college bookstore. Additionally, the Board of Trustees would have to submit a report to the Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents listing each textbook and its cost used at the institution in the academic year. Texts, statuses and analyses of the bill can be found on the Ohio General Assembly’s website at http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/bills.cfm?ID=128_HB_472.

In this case, decided in the Court of Appeals of Ohio, Tenth Appellate District, Kevin Hughley sought to amend a former complaint in which he attempted to order the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) to correct its offender identification website regarding his offense. While the ODRC had previously removed some information from the website before the filing, Hughley asserted that another conviction should also be removed. Hughley argued that the offense in question was not under state jurisdiction, but rather local jurisdiction and therefore that he was wrongly sentenced to time under the ODRC. The court found that since he had already done his time at the state level, his argument was moot and denied his request for amendment. The full decision can be found at http://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/rod/docs/pdf/12/2010/2010-ohio-1009.pdf.

Medical records of person with infectious disease not given to roommate
Lexology, March 16, 2010
The Ohio appeals court has held that a patient is not entitled to the medical records of a former hospital roommate suspected of having an infectious disease. In so doing, the court overruled the trial court’s determination that the roommate’s medical records fell within a non-statutory exception to the physician-patient privilege. http://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=a1bdf04f-73f2-4a71-a6c0-04a14d63ae49

Records request appeal filed
The Review (East Liverpool), April 1, 2010
A man who lost his legal battle with the city of East Liverpool and its police chief over a records request that couldn’t be met filed an appeal Tuesday. http://www.reviewonline.com/page/content.detail/id/525456.html?nav=5188
implemented. The Records Specialist position was vacant from 1982-1985, during which time no new schedules were written. A new Records Specialist, Anne Gilliland, was hired and the program was reactivated in September 1985. Training workshops were introduced and the first program newsletter, Records Management Update, was published from November 1985 to November 1987.

It was about this time that consideration started to be given to electronic information as actually representing records. In the beginning of the automation process and throughout most of the 1980s, the idea persisted that systems and software were tools used to create paper records. In 1987 the records management program conducted a survey of automated systems at UC and created a catalog of systems and applications as well as an inventory of machine readable records. Instructions were issued for the care and preservation of computer records along with a glossary of computer terms as they applied to records. The Records Specialist was involved in UCCC’s training program, “Planning Your Office for Office Automation.”

In 1987 the state issued general records schedules to be used by all agencies. Higher education worked with the new schedules for a couple of years, but objected to them because they did not include many university-specific records and they were extremely difficult to administer in an academic setting. Universities petitioned to be exempt from the general schedules and to be allowed to continue the program as it had been. In response to higher education’s objection to the general schedules, ORC 149.33 was passed on July 1, 1991, to exclude public institutions of higher education from the State Records Law. Responsibilities for creating policies and procedures for managing records were given to the Board of Trustees of each school. Records Retention for Public Colleges and Universities in Ohio: A Manual was published by the Inter-University Council of Ohio in 1992. The manual was created by a committee made up of records professionals from the various institutions as a guide for the development of a campus records program.

Plans were put in place for a new program at UC based on the IUC guidelines, but the Records Specialist position was again vacant and the program idled for many years, creating another gap in scheduling from 1992-1998. A records steering committee was formed at UC in the Spring of 1998 to revitalize the program and a Records Specialist, Tracey Hansom, was hired later that year. On November 23, 1999 the Board of Trustees approved new rule 10-43-10 establishing a records program to be administered by the Archives per ORC 149.33. Scheduling under the IUC matrix began in 1999 and the Records Specialist position became full time. The program itself began to become automated at this time with the creation of a database to hold retention schedules and contacts as well as a website. A new Records Specialist, Anna Heran, hired in 2001 concentrated on unscheduled areas of the university, creating schedules for many departments including most of the colleges. The Records Management listserv was created in February 2001. Janice Schulz, who started at UC in March 2006, is the current University Records Manager and represents UC on the Ohio Electronic Records Committee and the IUC task group on records retention. Efforts at outreach and communication in recent years have included the publication of Records Quarterly, first issued in October 2007, and redesign and expansion of the website.

In the six decades since the introduction of automated recordkeeping at the university, advances in technology have brought both increased efficiency and major challenges. The future promises to bring even more. With each innovation we find new ways to create, disseminate, and store information that don’t always fit nicely within our established records management policies and procedures. Our program has to be flexible enough to work within new frameworks while still serving the underlying principles of efficiency, compliance, and historic preservation. Long gone are the days of managing only paper records placed in files, but as the promises of a “paperless office” have yet to be realized, our program has to continue to operate and be successful in a complex, hybrid environment.

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