RECORDS QUARTERLY

A NEWSLETTER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

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On The Same Page
In the last newsletter, I shared the exciting news of the new University General Records Retention Schedule. One of the most important reasons for the introduction of a general records schedule is to get everyone on the same page regarding the importance of maintaining, disposing, and archiving of records on a timely basis. As information security and budget concerns affect higher education, managing records through appropriate destruction is more important than ever. And as UC gets closer to the big bicentennial anniversary in a couple of years, it’s critical that everyone at the University play their role in transferring records as instructed to University Archives to preserve current history.

Now that the General Records Retention Schedule has been active for several months, I can report some early successes.

Workshop Attendance
Four workshops introducing participants to the new UC General Records Retention Schedule took place in March 2017. Records Management went on the road with two workshops at UC Blue Ash, and two workshops in the beautiful new classroom in the CECH Library. Fifty participants attended the four workshops.

Records Destruction
For the first half of FY17, university offices filed destruction certificates with Records Management documenting destruction of over 131 boxes worth of paper material.

Please remember to fill out destruction certificates when destroying university records. Forms can be downloaded here and emailed to Records Management.

Special Consultation
Many offices have reached out to me since the General Records Retention Schedule came out to request assistance with highly specialized records concerns. I’ve enjoyed getting to know many of you and help you get a handle on your records. If you are putting together a purchasing proposal that involves recordkeeping, conducting a search for personnel dedicated to handling records, or would like specialized training for staff in your area, please contact me.

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Records in the News

State and Local

Cincinnati Enquirer | May 1, 2017
A special reviewer found the Ohio Department of Public Safety improperly denied records related to Ohio state troopers dispatched to Standing Rock pipeline protests in Nebraska.

Cleveland.com | March 15, 2017
The City of Cleveland has received more complaints about public records issues than any other Ohio entity.

Cleveland.com | March 12, 2017
The Ohio Auditor's Office issued 414 public records citations to 357 entities in 2016.

Columbus Dispatch | February 26, 2017
A proposed opioid death review board proposed by Governor Kasich would be exempt from the state's public records laws.

Cincinnati Enquirer | February 23, 2017
A state representative seeks to overturn a state law that exempts the Cincinnati streetcar from disclosing records of crash investigation details to the public.

Higher Education

Lansing State Journal | May 2, 2017
Michigan State University files suit against ESPN over disclosure of athletic program sexual assault records that a county prosecutor asked the university to withhold.

Student Press Law Center | May 15, 2017
http://www.splc.org/blog/splc/2017/05/daily-tar-heel-hits-stumbling-block-in-records-lawsuit-against-unc
A judge ruled in favor of UNC in withholding records related to student or faculty perpetration of rape or sexual assault and harassment.

Lafayette Journal & Courier | May 2, 2017
http://www.jconline.com/story/opinion/columnists/dave-bangert/2017/05/02/bangert-law-shields-purdues-new-online-school/101183110/
Following Purdue's recent acquisition of for-profit Kaplan University, the Indiana legislature has moved to exempt the new branch from public records and open meetings laws.

Chronicle of Higher Education | March 16, 2017
Arkansas legislature passed measure to exempt public university police forces from the state’s freedom of information law.

San Jose Mercury News | February 28, 2017
Public records released 16 months after their initial request by the University of California system documented more than 100 employees disciplined for sexual misconduct between 2013-2016.
Should You Scan All Your Paper Records?

Are you considering a records scanning project to free storage space taken up by paper records? I'm frequently asked whether this is an advisable approach to storing records, and the answer is, “It depends.” Sometimes, converting paper records to electronic formats makes a lot of sense. But, in other circumstances, the resources involved may not be worth it.

There are several factors that should be considered prior to embarking on a large-scale scanning project, whether it is done in-house or outsourced to a vendor. These factors include:

- **Retention Period:** How long do you actually need to keep the records before they can be destroyed? If it’s only for 1-2 years, the expense associated with digitizing them is probably not worth it.

- **Long-term support:** If the records have to be kept for a significant period of time, are you prepared to commit additional resources in the future to migrate the electronic files to a new system or into new readable formats?

- **Anticipated Access:** How many people need to access the records? If the records need to be accessed by many people who are not in the same location, this is a strong argument for considering scanning.

- **Security Issues:** How sensitive is the information in the records? If records contain sensitive information, any electronic conversion will have to meet the specifications described in the University of Cincinnati Data Governance and Classification Policy.

How do you weigh all these factors against one another? Luckily, the Ohio Electronic Records Committee has developed a simple tool to help you determine the advisability of a records conversion project.

The tool is a simple spreadsheet-based questionnaire that automatically returns a score with a suggestion of which choice (continue storing the paper versus scanning) is most advisable.


The Ohio Electronic Records Committee is an organization of records managers, archivists, IT professionals, and attorneys from Ohio’s state agencies, local governments, K-12 districts, and institutions of higher education. The Ohio Electronic Records Committee identifies best practices and develops resources concerning the creation, maintenance, long-term preservation, and access to the electronic records of Ohio’s public entities. The Committee advocates for implementation of, and educates its constituencies regarding, these best practices.

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.