



Glossary of Terms

The following terms are used in records retention schedules and in records management procedures at the University of Notre Dame.

| Term | Definition |
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| Active Record | A University Record that is currently in use by the office in which it was created or received, i.e., regularly consulted in the course of business operations. |
| Appraise for retention / destruction | The University Archives will evaluate records for their historical value. Historically significant records are designated archival records and are processed for inclusion in the University's permanent collection of archival records. Non-archival records are destroyed. |
| Archival Record | <p>A University Record of enduring historical value. Archival records may be identified prior to being transferred to the Archives, or may be appraised and identified as archival records after being received by the Archives.</p> <p>University Records that are added to the University's permanent collection of archival records are generally closed to researchers until 72 years after their date of creation, as described in the Archives Access Policy. Records intended for public distribution, however, such as posters, newsletters and other publications, are available to researchers immediately and without restriction.</p> |

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| Archives Retention / Disposition | <p>What will happen to records that are transferred to the University Archives. Typically, records transferred to the Archives will be designated as either:</p> <p>Appraise for retention / destruction;</p> <p>Retain / process for inclusion;</p> <p>Retain for _ years, then appraise for retention / destruction; or</p> <p>Retain for _ years, then destroy.</p> <p>Records transferred to the Archives are retained for the total length of time required by applicable records retention schedules, based on the span dates of the records as provided by the originating office. The Archives typically does not verify the titling and dating of records unless and until they are processed for inclusion in the University's permanent collection of archival records. Until records are destroyed or processed for inclusion, records that are retained by the Archives are available only to authorized representatives of the originating office, to the President and his designees, and to the Archives staff. See also the Archives Access Policy.</p> |
| Description | Explanation of the contents, characteristics and functions of a record series. |
| Destroy | Recycle, cross-cut shred, or permanently delete. Destruction methods should depend on the information contained within the records. Please visit Destroying Records for more information on proper document destruction procedures. |
| Electronic Record | Any record that contains machine-readable rather than human-readable information. Electronic records that are created or received in the course of University business are University Records and must be managed in accordance with records retention schedules. Electronic University Records are subject to the same retention and disposition requirements as all other University Records. |
| Format | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The internal structure of an electronic file. Examples include TIF, JPG, DOC, and PDF. 2. "Format" is often used interchangeably with "media" to refer to the physical object on which information is stored. |
| Inactive Records | University Records that are no longer regularly used. |
| Media | The physical object on which information is stored. Examples include paper, CD, local server/database, remote server/database, and microfilm. |

| Term | Definition |
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| Office | Any administrative unit of the University, including academic units. |
| Office Disposition | What an office will do with a record series at the end of its Office Retention period. Office Disposition is typically “Destroy” or “Transfer to the Archives.” Unless Office Disposition indicates a transfer to the Archives, the office retains full responsibility for the proper maintenance and/or destruction of the record series. |
| Office of Record | The office that is responsible for the retention and disposition of the Official Copy of the record. |
| Office Retention | <p>The length of time records are to be retained in an office. The Office Retention period commences at the end of the current year (fiscal, calendar or academic year, depending on office practices) and continues for the length of time indicated. This is the <i>maximum</i> length of time that a series should be kept before either transferring it to the Archives or destroying it. Offices are advised, however, to consult with the Archives before making any disposition of records in advance of this time period.</p> <p>If the Office Retention is “As needed for reference,” the records should be retained only as long as necessary for administrative use. Usually this period is only two or three years, but occasionally may be longer.</p> |
| Official Copy | Original, complete and final record that must be retained by the Office of Record to meet the legal, fiscal, administrative, and historical needs of the University. An Official Copy provides evidence of the University’s business activities, decisions, operations, and internal or external transactions. Official Copies of University Records usually require a longer retention period than Unofficial Copies. |
| Record | Recorded information, in any form, created or received in the course of conducting business and kept as evidence of such activity, excluding transitory work products (e.g., unused copies, drafts, notes). |
| Record Holder | Office with possession of a record – either the Official Copy or Unofficial Copies. |
| Record Series | <p>A group of similar records that are arranged according to a filing system and that are related as the result of being created, received, or used in the same activity.</p> <p>Retention and disposition of a record series is governed by the legal, fiscal, administrative, and historical needs of the University. A record series is marked with an asterisk (*) when a minimum retention period is mandated by federal or state law. In other cases, records retention is not mandated by law but may still be necessary to provide legal defense in the event of litigation.</p> |

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| Records Contact | An individual appointed to act as a liaison between an office and the Archives and to supervise the recordkeeping practices of the office. The Records Contact performs the administrative duties involved with records organization, retention and disposition in an office and ensures the office is in compliance with records retention schedules. Please visit Records Coordinators / Records Contacts for more information. |
| Records Coordinator | An individual appointed to act as a liaison between a division and the Archives. The Records Coordinator enforces records management procedures within a designated number of University departments and oversees Records Contacts' compliance with records retention schedules. Please visit Records Coordinators / Records Contacts for more information. |
| Records Management | The “systematic and administrative control of records throughout their life cycle to ensure efficiency and economy in their creation, use, handling, control, maintenance, and disposition.” [1] |
| Records Retention Schedules | <p>Documents that instruct offices how to maintain a specific series of records throughout its life cycle according to the legal, fiscal, administrative, and historical needs of the University.</p> <p>General records retention schedules relate to records that are commonly encountered by offices throughout the University. General schedules apply to all University offices.</p> <p>Office-specific records retention schedules are developed by the University Archives in collaboration with individual University offices. Each office-specific schedule applies to a particular office unit.</p> |
| Retain for ___ years, then appraise for retention / destruction | The University Archives will store records for a specified period of time and then evaluate them for their historical value. At the time of appraisal, historically significant records are designated archival records and are processed for inclusion in the University’s permanent collection of archival records. Non-archival records are destroyed. |
| Retain for ___ years, then destroy | The University Archives will store records for a specified period of time and then dispose of them in the appropriate manner. |

| Term | Definition |
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| Retain / process for inclusion | The University Archives will incorporate records into the University's permanent collection of archival records. Archival processing may result in changes to the record series, such as removal of duplicate materials, correction of misfiles, modifications to original order, and destruction of material without enduring value. |
| Semi-Active Records | Active records may become semi-active if they are no longer used or added to regularly but are still needed for occasional ready access. Semi-active records must not be destroyed or transferred to the Archives until the time indicated on their records retention schedules. Such records can, however, be relocated to another filing area within the office or to an auxiliary storage space specifically designated for semi-active records. |
| Transfer to the Archives | An office will transfer records to the University Archives at the end of the Office Retention period. See Transferring Records for more information on transferring records to the University Archives. |
| University Record | Recorded information created or received in the course of conducting University business and kept as evidence of such activity. This definition extends to all record media and formats, including paper files, electronic files, email, film and print graphics, audio and video recordings, and any other form of recorded information. Transitory work products, such as rough drafts, notes, and unused copies, are <i>not</i> University Records and are therefore not addressed by records retention schedules. Such materials should be disposed of when no longer needed for reference. They should not be added to files that contain University Records. |
| Unofficial Copies | Duplicate versions of Official Copies. |

[1] Society of American Archivists, *Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology*.
 <<http://www.archivists.org/glossary/index.asp>>