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Interim Records Retention Policy



Applies to: LSA Non-Instructional Staff
 Related Policies:
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The following outline summarizes university policy on record and file retention based on existing documentation in the Standard Practice Guide, the Bentley Library University Archives and Records Program Records Policy and Procedures Manual, the Office of the Registrar and the student records section of the LS&A Bulletin.

References to websites for locating the complete policies referenced are included at the end of each section. LSA recommendations are made based on these existing policies. Units should maintain records for at least the minimum recommendation but may decide to retain materials longer per departmental policy or if they are still of administrative use. Because optically scanned and stored documents are a valid, legal substitute for paper originals, once documents have been scanned the paper versions can be shredded or disposed of.

Part 1: Program/Governance Files for Departments, Institutes, Libraries, Museums, Centers and Programs

Records documenting the development and implementation of university policy by unit chairs, directors, staff and by faculty acting in administrative positions are necessary to the continuing functioning of the university and to provide an accurate reflection of the activities and achievements of the institution. It is the responsibility of administrators and staff in these units in cooperation with the Bentley Historical Library's University Archives and Records Program (UARP) to ensure that records are maintained properly and that records that document the history and achievement of the units are transferred to the archives for permanent retention.

How long do you need to keep these files?

Files in this category can be sent to archives or discarded as outlined below when their administrative use is complete. LSA recommends that records be retained in the unit no longer than a maximum of seven years after they are no longer of use to the unit as the Bentley Library facilities are able to care for historically relevant documents with greater care than is possible in unit facilities.

Note that financial records, grant documentation, personnel records and student educational records must be kept in accordance with their specific guidelines outlined elsewhere in this summary.

What things have historical value and should be sent to the Bentley Museum?

- Chair or Director's topical files and correspondence
- Committee records, particularly executive and curriculum meetings
- Faculty or staff meeting minutes
- Documentation of reviews of the unit
- General development files
- Reports including annual reports
- Identified photographs
- Publications by the unit including newsletters (it is a good idea to add the Bentley Museum to your mailing list)
- Audio-visual materials originating in the unit
- Topical files kept by the Associate officers and files of committee chairs should be transferred to the archives if the records in their files illuminate policy development and implementation. The UARP staff will review these files and appraise their historical value.

Records that should **not be transferred** to archives but should be discarded when their administrative use is complete include:

- Duplicate items
- Correspondence and administrative files documenting routine activities such as room scheduling travel logistics, etc.
- Non-university printed material received by the unit and retained as reference.
- Documents widely distributed to university units but not generated by the unit.
- Routine financial records (Refer to SPG section 604.1 for specific information).

If you are uncertain about the historical value of materials the Bentley staff will gladly consult with the department on what to discard and what to send for their safekeeping.

What are the website resources for more information/detail related to this type of file?

University Archives and Records Program Records Policy and Procedures Manual

This manual also includes Guidelines for file retention specifically for Dean's Office files as well extraordinary and campus-wide committees, faculty and student organization committees.

Part 2: Financial Record and Funding Source File Retention (see SPG 604.1)

How long do you need to keep these files?

Departmental files serve as working files for monitoring and managing a department or unit's activities. These files may be used to substantiate the appropriateness and the authenticity of an expenditure for departmental or unit activities. This information must be available for the internal and external auditors' verification for the appropriate time periods.

Non-sponsored Programs

The following documents must be maintained for a period of two (2) years plus the current fiscal year by all departmental units. This retention, including all supporting materials, will document the regular review of financial statements, by authorized University units for completeness and accuracy.

- Personnel and Appointment forms (See SPG 201.46 for a definition of Personnel Records)
- Payroll Gross Pay Registers and Journals
- Personnel forms E, X, G, G-2, and Temporary Employment Forms
- Purchase Requisitions and Orders
- Service Unit Billing Statements
- Cash Receipts
- Cash Payments
- Transfer Vouchers
- Sales Invoice and Credit Memoranda
- Approval of Application for Grant or Contract Forms
- Project Budget Reports
- Statements of Account
- Encumbrance Reports
- Organization Reports
- Invoice Vouchers and Travel Vouchers
- Additional Documents that are only available in unit or departmental files

Sponsored Programs

Sponsored activities administered under the terms and conditions of a grant or contract agreement normally require retention of records for seven (7) years from the expiration date of the agreement.

Gifts and Endowments

Department gift records should be maintained for a period of seven (7) years from the time of receipt.

Tax Returns

Support documentation for all Unrelated Business Activity must be retained for seven (7) years from the end of the fiscal Year. See SPG 502.4 for Unrelated Business Income filing requirements.

What things have historical value and should be sent to the Bentley Museum for the University Archives and Records Program?

The Bentley does not keep financial records.

Software Management (see SPG 601.3-1)

For any software managed by LSA IT, all records are already retained and follow the practices outlined below. In other words, if you do not purchase software for your department, you do not need to worry about retaining software receipts.

However, for any software purchased by individuals, University of Michigan policy outlines the procedures to be taken "to ensure against copyright infringements on computer software". These steps include the retention of receipts on all software, maintaining of "inventory records of all software in the department including version number and location on specific machines," and "reviews or spot checks to verify that inventory records are current and correct." There is no minimum dollar value or length of time to indicate which receipts must be kept and for how long – therefore all software receipts must be kept indefinitely. Please send copies of all software receipts to LSA Software Licensing at lsa-license@umich.edu. You can also send email to this group for help with this process or if you have questions.

What are the website resources for more information/detail related to this type of file?

Bentley Historical Library Records Policy and Procedures Manual

UM FOIA Office

UM Software Management

LSA Software Management (*Sharepoint site*)

Part 3: Personnel Records

Staff personnel records should consist of:

1. **Appointment information**, including active record, contract letters, merit increase letters, original application, and hiring paperwork.
2. **Correspondence** and miscellaneous, including change of address forms, continuing education information, jury duty, etc.
3. **Performance information**, including evaluations and disciplinary concerns.
4. **Confidential material**, preferably in a color-coded file.
5. A personnel record does NOT include Medical Information: We are required by law to keep medical information in a separate file, preferably a color-coded file. If there has been no recent activity, staple the folder closed. Contains anything official routed through a hospital or physician. In addition, visa processing paperwork and I-9 (Employment Eligibility Verification) documents should NOT be kept in personnel records but treated as separate information in the same way that medical information is filed. Once an I-9 has been processed and hiring paperwork has been centrally processed, the department is not required to keep a copy of the I-9. Whether to do so or not is a departmental decision. Practically it may help to keep track of the need for reverification of work authorization.

Faculty personnel records also contain:

6. **Curriculum vitae**, listing of publications and yearly activity reports.
7. **Promotion/review materials** (confidential, preferably in a color-coded file). Contains the complete promotion document together with the original letters from reviewers.

The record does NOT include: reference letters where referring person's identity should not be disclosed, staff planning involving more than one employee, non-confidential medical reports and records, information that if disclosed would violate privacy, complaint or criminal conduct files, grievance investigation files.

UM Personnel Office maintains computerized appointment and address information, computerized information on employment selection process, grievance files, job applicant files, temporary hourly appointment files, unemployment compensation claim files.

How long do you need to keep these files?

The Standard Practice Guide states that individual staff files should be retained according to the established departmental policy. LSA recommends that staff and faculty personnel files be kept for the same length of time — indefinitely for active employees and for seven years plus the current year after the person's employment has ended. Departmental copies of forms and/or data should be kept for at least two years, plus the current fiscal year.

According to SPG 201.46, job applicant files should be retained for three fiscal years following the fiscal year of the filling of the position. When someone is hired who will be applying for Permanent Residency status, all applicants files for that research are kept for 7 yrs.

What things have historical value and should be sent to the Bentley Museum for the University Archives and Records Program?

For regular, full-time faculty, contact the Bentley Library for transference of some records to storage. LSA recommends that emeritus faculty records be sent to the Bentley after seven years; keep a copy of the retirement memo and the most recent CV for future reference. The Bentley does not accession or store personnel folders. Selected documents from files which may add to the historical documentation of the unit should be reviewed by the archives before destruction.

What are the website resources for more information/detail related to this type of file?

Standard Practice Guide 201.46

Bentley Historical Library Records Policy and Procedures Manual

Part 4: Student Records

Undergraduate records:

Official undergraduate student records are kept by the LSA Academic Advising Center and the Academic Standards Board.

Retention: Once students graduate, most files are kept one year and then shredded. Exceptions include: academic conduct infraction students (2 years), deceased students (2 years), inactive students (4 years), and NTR (not-to-return) students (6 years). Files will be kept indefinitely for incarcerated students, any files related to lawsuits, suspended students, and expelled students. **Departmental files.** Undergraduate "shadow" files kept by departments are governed by each department's policies.

Grade sheets and Grade Books: There is no requirement to retain copies of gradesheets or gradebooks in the departments. The Registrar's Office keeps the official record of grades and retains official copies of gradesheets. For convenience in discussing grade issues with students and faculty, departments may choose to retain copies of gradesheets (though it is not required). If they are kept, the 7 year rule recommended by LSA for other records may be useful for these documents.

While departments are not likely to collect gradebooks from instructors with continuing appointments (since the usual procedure is to consult the instructor first in investigating a grade complaint that requires reference to the gradebook), it may prove useful (though it is not required), to request that instructors turn in their U-M gradebooks to the department when they leave UM. If they do so, they may also wish to follow the 7-year rule of thumb.

Graduate records:

Official graduate student records are kept in departmental offices. (The Registrar's Office maintains student registration information and a student's official academic record. The Student Financial Operations Office maintains student account information.) Official records related to progress toward degree (such as Advance to Candidacy, detached study, transfer of credit, etc) are retained by Rackham.

Retention: Rackham does not have a policy on how long academic records must be kept by departments. LSA recommends that departments retain any original documents in the file for 7 years after graduation. This would include things that are unique to the department beyond that which is captured in the application or in the M-Pathways system.

Admissions Files: Rackham maintains applications, financial resource statements and action forms for admissions on optical imaging. Therefore, the department is not required to keep them. Any additional admissions materials generated in the department or collected from the candidate that come directly to the department should be kept for seven years.

Graduate student employment records:

Each GSI's files should be kept separate from academic files. Each GSI's record should have four files:

1. **Appointment information**, including current appointment information, fraction calculation copies where applicable, contract letters, original application, and hiring paperwork;
2. **Correspondence** (this file may be viewable by the GSI);
3. **Confidential material** (preferably in a color-coded file; some of this material may be viewable by the GSI); and
4. **Medical information**, which includes anything official routed through a hospital or physician. This file must be kept in a separate file and will preferably be color-coded. If there has not been any recent activity, staple the folder closed.

Retention. Files can be shredded seven years after official termination. Keep central and in-house course evaluations (summaries and comments) for up to seven years. (The primary reason for keeping the comments is for job placement.)

Record policy and procedure:

The Regents require that each office that maintains student records develop a written statement of its policies and procedures for handling these records. This policy needs to be available for students to examine.

Student access:

Students have the right to inspect and review all materials in their files except:

- Professional mental health treatment records to the extent necessary, in the judgment of the attending physician or professional counselor, to avoid detrimental effects to the mental health of the student or of others. These records may, however, be reviewed by a physician or other appropriate professional of your choice.
- Financial information furnished by your parents in support of an application for financial aid.
- Confidential letters of recommendation that were placed in your file prior to January 1, 1975.
- Confidential letters of recommendation concerning admission, employment, or honorary recognition, for which you have waived access. (The University may not require you to sign a waiver in order to obtain services, but a person writing a recommendation may insist on a waiver as a condition for his or her writing it.)
- Personal notes made by a faculty member or counselor that are accessible only to that person and are not shared with others.
- Materials in any admissions files, until you have been admitted to, and have attended in the U-M school or college for which the materials were submitted.

What things have historical value and should be sent to the Bentley Museum for the University Archives and Records Program?

In general, staff and student file materials are not archived. For anything of potential historical interest, consult a Bentley archivist.

What are the website resources for more information/detail related to this type of file?

The University of Michigan Student Rights and Student Records

LSA Student Records Policy

Bentley Historical Library Records Policy and Procedures Manual

Retention Summary Grid (Excel File)