Introduction to Records Management at Lawrence:
A Workshop for Records Coordinators

July 13, 2012
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Outline

I. What are records and what is records management?
II. LU RM policy and the role of records coordinators
III. General procedures
   I. How long to keep records?
   II. What to do with them?
IV. Next steps
What are Records?

- **University records** are information created or received by University employees in the course of performing official functions on behalf of the University, which must be retained to meet fiscal, legal, historical, or administrative needs
  - If a document helps you perform your job description or documents the history/administration of your office, it is probably a record
- Defined by content, not by format
  - Paper, digital, audiovisual, email, Banner data…
- Not records: personal materials, document drafts, reference materials not produced by your unit
## Identifying University Records

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Record Description</th>
<th>University record?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Received mail: signed contract</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received mail: newsletter from external organization</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual report: preliminary draft</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual report: final draft</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence: planning a lunch date</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence: conducting University business</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting files: University committee</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting files: professional association</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is Records Management?

- **Records management** is “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” (Society of American Archivists glossary)

- Benefits (or, why do we care?):
  - Legal: Compliance with regulations protects us from risk in the event of an audit or investigation.
  - Administrative: Managing records properly improves efficiency and sustainability and saves time, space, and money.
  - Historical: Capturing and preserving records of enduring value preserves our institutional history.
Records Management Lifecycle

CREATION
- Internal (Created)
- External (Received)

USE & MAINTENANCE
- Distribution
- Storage
- Retrieval

DISPOSITION
- Destruction

ARCHIVES
Permanent w/in Unit

Non-Records
Transient
Short Term
Long Term

Courtesy of the Ohio State University Archives
LU Records Management Policy

- Developed at the request of the Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees, approved by the Committee in May

- “Lawrence University is committed to meeting its administrative, fiscal, and legal obligations by systematically managing the records created in the course of the University’s academic and administrative operations.”

- Accessible from [http://guides.lib.lawrence.edu/recman](http://guides.lib.lawrence.edu/recman)
Responsibilities

- Records Management Advisory Group: provides general oversight, develops policies
- Archives: develops procedures, assists in creating retention schedules, provides training
- Each department/office: manages its records from creation to disposition in compliance with the policy

- Records coordinators:
  - Understand records created in your unit
  - Ensure that all employees in your unit follow the policy
  - Consult Archives on retention/disposition of records
  - Help the unit maintain and monitor confidentiality and security
  - Assist in the preservation and retrieval of records of the unit subject to a litigation hold
How Long to Keep Records?

- A retention schedule lists types of records, length of required retention, and ultimate disposition
  - Offers guidance for records series, groups of related records used and filed as a unit

- General Records Retention Schedule: covers records common to most or several departments or offices on campus – check this first!

- Office-specific schedules can be developed, if necessary
  - Must be in compliance with General Schedule and approved by RMAG
What about Electronic Records?

- Whether or not you keep a file, and how long to keep it, depends on its value, subject, and function – so same principles apply. A couple of additional tips:

  - For files to be retained longer than 5 years, be sure to migrate formats to newer software appropriately (or use open formats like PDF)

  - Consider imaging projects carefully – if you plan to retain records for a long time, imaging might not be the best option

  - Establish folders in your email inbox for emails that fall into record series
What to Do with Records? - Destruction

- Recycle non-confidential records (but err on the side of caution)
- Shred records with confidential information
- Delete electronic records

- When destroying records with retention period designated in a schedule, complete and sign a Certificate of Records Destruction

- Do not destroy any records subject to litigation hold
What to Do with Records? – Transfer to Archives
What to Do with Records? – Transfer to Archives

- General Schedule lists types of records designated for permanent retention in Archives

- Good rule of thumb: if you had to write a history of your office/department, what kinds of things would you want to see?

- Reports, policy documents, photographs, etc.

- Contact Archives prior to transferring records
Next steps

- Inventory the records in your unit
- Assess recordkeeping practices
- Make any necessary changes

- Use the 7-step plan as a guide

- Contact the Archives with questions or suggestions – this is a collaborative effort and an ongoing work in progress
Questions?

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