



University of Wisconsin-Madison Archives and Records Management Services

Records Management in the 21st century Part 1

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Top 8 Questions to ask yourself:

- *Can you access the email correspondence for the last hire that you completed in your department?*
- *Do you have a designated records coordinator for the department?*
- *If you received an open records request today for email relating to a particular issue within your department, could you conveniently locate, retrieve, and copy that email?*
- *Do you know what a records retention schedule is? Do you know if your department has any records schedules or is required to follow a general records schedule?*
- *When purchasing or implementing system software what records management issues should you take into consideration?*
- *Do you know where your vital records are?*
- *Do you have a disaster recovery plan?*
- *Can you name the top 5 trends that will transform IT on campus in the next few years? And then identify records management issues associated with those trends?*

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Summer 2008—RM Workshops:
- *RM 103: Classification & Files Management*
 - *RM 104: Electronic Records Management*
 - *RM 112: E-mail Management*

Visit our website for details!

CREATING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR RECORDS MANAGEMENT

The University's teaching, research, and outreach mission depends upon the effective and efficient management of information resources which are increasingly digital objects and inextricably linked to information technologies. Managing hybrid record systems requires the balancing of concerns for content and context with the capabilities of information technology. This balance can only be achieved by creating strategic partnerships for records management. Collaboration will be an important part in building a new campus infrastructure for managing the University's records and information resources. Strategic partnerships will need to be forged with campus departments and units with related concerns or with whom archives and records management may have shared goals and objectives. With the new Board of Regents Records Management Policy, 3-2 University of Wisconsin System Public Records Management (approved April 2007), and State government developing a new structure for electronic records management, this is a good time for the campus to focus on its records management policies and practices.

WHAT IS RECORDS MANAGEMENT?

Records management is a "field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use, and disposition of records, including the processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records" (ARMA, RIM 101).

The goals of records management are to:

- Comply with Federal and State laws and regulations
- Develop and implement sound recordkeeping practices
- Identify, appraise, locate, and manage University information resources during a record's lifecycle
- Maintain consistent recordkeeping practices
- Generate fewer records but better records

Records management is a globally recognized requirement. In 2001, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) issued the standard, ISO 15489, for developing a records management program. The standard specifies requirements and outcomes, as well as provides an example of an implementation methodology. Requirements for records management programs are also outlined in both Wisconsin Statutes and the Board of Regents Policies.

WHO IS INVOLVED IN RECORDS MANAGEMENT?

Everyone! With the proliferation of desktop computing systems and now PDAs, everyone is required to be involved in records management. With a strong records

A policy statement on its own will not guarantee good records management: critical to its success are endorsement and active and visible support by senior management and the allocation of resources necessary for implementation.

-ISO 15489-2:2001 (E)

management program in place that is adopted and maintained at all levels of the organization, the individual will be able to make sound records management decisions. There are wonderful resources available on the UW-Madison campus offering records management guidance and training.

The University Archives and Records Management Services (ARMS) should be the first stop for information about records management. The following free services are provided to campus departments:

- Development of Records Disposition Authorizations (RDA)
- Training
- Litigation & Audit Support
- Classification & Files Management
- Management of Electronic Records

Helping guide records management policies and procedures on campus is the Campus Records Review Group (CRRG). The CRRG is comprised of UW-Madison employees from different divisions on campus, including Audit, Legal, Records Management, Archives, Medical Records, Graduate School, Registrar, Medical School, Information Technology, and the Provost's Office. In November 2007, Provost Farrell approved the restructuring of the CRRG to include a diverse membership and expanded the mission to ensure a more collaborative and systematic approach to records management on campus.

Policy support for UW System-wide is provided by the UW Records Officer Council (UWROC), which includes records officers from UW System and each of the UW campuses.

The Policymaking body for public records is governed by the Public Records Board (PRB), a statutory authority for records management in State Government. Authority for the PRB is mandated by WisStat 16.61.

WHAT IS A RECORD?

By law, University records are any papers, books, photographs, tapes, films, recordings, or other documentary materials, or any copies thereof, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made, produced, executed, or received by any department or office of the University or by any academic or administrative staff member in connection with the transaction of University business, and retained by that department or its successor as evidence of its activities or functions because of the information contained therein.

More generally, a record is a document, data, or set of data that is created or received in the course of the organization's business. The three important elements that make up a record are: context, content and structure, all of which are required to provide evidence of the organization's activity.

The following Wisconsin Statutes provide additional definitions of a record:

- WisStat 16.61 (2) Definition of "Public Records" and Exceptions (non-records)
- WisStat 16.61 (2) (b), S 19.32 (2)
- WisStat 19.32 Open Records Law
- WisStat 16.61 (5) Records Transfer to Optical Disk Format

Public records can be destroyed only in accordance with approved records retention schedules.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

A successful records management program includes records retention policies, procedures where records are classified, retention periods are defined and destruction procedures assigned. Records classification and maintenance with the appropriate metadata are necessary for identification and retrieval. To classify records, departments should identify functions or processes of a department and inventory the documents that comprise those functions and/or processes. The inventory will determine what records are created and used and which are active or inactive. The process of inventorying provides data needed to improve the organization of records and workflows by identifying related, duplicate and unnecessary records.

Records disposition authorizations (RDAs), also known as records retention schedules, provide certain descriptive information about a given set of records, indicates the legal retention period and the ultimate disposition. State agencies are statutorily required to provide records schedules for all records not already covered by an existing records schedule. There are three types of records schedules for the University: general campus-wide, general system-wide, and department/unit specific. Campus units are required to follow the retention and disposition recommendations set out in these schedules for their similar records or submit their own RDA proposal for review and approval.

For example, there are currently 5 UW-Madison General and 4 UW-System-wide schedules, all of which are organized around business function:

- Departmental Academic Administrative
- Faculty and Academic Staff Personnel
- Student Records
- Risk Management
- Student Employment
- Classified Personnel (system-wide)
- Fiscal & Accounting (system-wide)
- Internal Audit (system-wide)
- Payroll (system-wide)

Although function-based schedules provide strong organizational structure, they are not especially suited for integrated software systems and more complicated organizational structures. In these systems, records result from transactions. Technology is thus deployed to manage and support a process and not to document or produce records. In order to accommodate these structures and yet maintain the highest level of records creation and maintenance, the trend is to create records schedules that are process-based.

Process-based schedules identify core processes and their sub-processes in accordance with workflows. Once the core processes and sub processes are identified, the documents that fall into each record series of the identified processes are inventoried.

ELECTRONIC RECORDS & DIGITAL PRESERVATION

Digital preservation presents many challenges, but addressing it is becoming a critical need for the campus. Many traditional archival resources are now

Records and recordkeeping have undergone dramatic changes in recent years. New technologies have expanded the types of information that need to be managed, while the internet and file transfer technologies have raised expectations for paperless processes. All of these factors combine to increase vulnerability and associated risks to the University. It is imperative that the University develop a coordinated approach to managing its information resources so that our valuable information is protected and remain accessible over time.

Records management is about understanding business processes, organizational culture and communication and the importance of knowledge and infrastructure management.

Admin Rule 12 requires state agencies to keep official records which are maintained in digital formats only to ensure that they are accessible.

At the present time there is not a campus-wide tool suite infrastructure to support digital preservation of institutional records. Departments are responsible for managing and preserving their records throughout the records' lifecycle.

-Campus Records Review Group

available only in electronic format, and currently there is no campus structure to capture, retain, and preserve electronic records. The timetable, course bulletin, and enrollment reports were brought to the attention of the CRRG as examples of records with critical institutional content and archival value that are now produced in significantly different ways and only in digital formats. Many of these assets are the result of substantial financial investments in staff time and technology. Without adequate attention to these digital resources, the University risks losing access to them. Electronic records management should begin with the creation of the electronic record through its retention, including the maintenance of storage media and final disposition.

Tools are often necessary to effectively manage electronic records. In a paper environment, metadata, or the context and structure, of the document is often made implicit by the document itself. However, this is not the case with electronic documents. Electronic documents require metadata to be explicitly created, usually by an end user, a computer application, or both. Such software can help manage schedules, store records in their classification schemes, as well as prescribe metadata, facilitate search and retrieval, and manage destruction, transfer or holds (litigation, open records requests, audits) appropriately.

EMAIL

Email becomes a public record when sent or received by an agency under state or federal law, or in connection with the transaction of public business. It should be preserved as a public record when it serves as evidence of University functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the University. Think about your computer and email software like correspondence files in a filing cabinet. You need a standardized filing system (labels, arrangement, order) to store your messages so that you can efficiently retrieve documents. You should have a system in place whereby the deletion or long-term storage of email messages follows the records retention policies of paper correspondence and files.

IS THIS ENOUGH AND CAN WE DO MORE?

Of course we can! A concerted campus-wide effort is needed to effectively handle records in the digital world. A truly great university, and one that is open, transparent and accountable, will plan to safeguard its valuable information resources on into the future. The CRRG and campus records management program will be engaging the campus community to make records management an even more effective tool for the 21st century.

GET IN TOUCH!

To learn more about these issues or to receive guidance on a particular matter, phone or email Nancy Kunde, UW-Madison Records Manager at:

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State and UW System Policies :

- *Wisconsin Law*
- *Admin Rule 12*
- *Board of Regents Records Management Policy 3-2*

International and National Standards

- *Records Management: ISO 15489*
- *Metadata: ISO/TS 23081-2:2007*
- *PDF-A: ISO 19005-1:2005/COR 1:2007*
- *Media Sanitization: NIST SP 800-88*
- *RM Software Application Standards: DoD 5015.2*