

Record Retention

I. Overview

In keeping with sound business practices and in support of its mission, the University of California creates, gathers, and maintains operational and historical records of its activities. The objective of the University Records Management Program is to ensure that, consistent with other University policies, applicable state and federal laws, and University contracts, administrative records are appropriately managed and preserved, and can be retrieved as needed.

Record retention refers to the length of time a record needs to be maintained to satisfy the purposes for which it was created and to fulfill legal, fiscal and administrative requirements of the University and external agencies. At the conclusion of the retention period, the record may be destroyed or transferred to archival storage depending upon the action stated in the records disposition schedules. If the record contains personal or confidential information then it should be shredded or rendered unreadable. Otherwise the record can be recycled.

II. The Records Management Program

The University has established the Records Management Program to assist in the management of its administrative records. It is the responsibility of each campus and the Office of the President to carry out a records management program. The objectives of the program are:

- to assure economy and efficiency in the creation, organization, maintenance, use, and retrieval of administrative records wherever located in the University
- to promote sound records management practices
- to establish and monitor a program of records disposition to assure that University records are not maintained longer than necessary, but at the same time are maintained as long as needed to meet administrative and legal requirements
- to assure the protection of records "vital" to the University
- to ensure the preservation of records of historical importance
- to advise University management on a variety of records and information management issues

A. University Records Management Committee

The University Records Management Committee develops university-wide guidelines and retention schedules to achieve program objectives and coordinate the implementation of the program. The Committee generally consists of seventeen members; ten campus administrative officers who on their own campuses serve as Records Management Coordinators; three officers from the Office of the President; and four ex-officio members.

- B. Campus Records Management Coordinator
UCSB's Campus Records Management Coordinator is Meta Clow x4212. Any questions regarding record retention, record disposition or forms management should be addressed to the Campus Records Management Coordinator.

III. Disposition Program Principles

The disposition program is part of the University's Record Management Program and is coordinated by the University Records Management Committee. Through the disposition program, the University strives to retain records long enough to satisfy internal and external requirements, but not so long as to incur unnecessary costs or burdens. The aim is to accomplish these goals by:

- identifying important administrative records that are common university-wide, and encouraging their consistent management throughout the UC system,
- helping to distinguish administrative records to be managed under the Program from other records and "non-records,"
- centralizing decision-making as practicable, while allowing for local decisions and practices to address location-specific situations, and
- providing tools, in the form of guidelines and the UC Records Retention Schedules, to facilitate adherence to these principles throughout the University community.

A. Record Disposition Schedules

Record disposition schedules are official documents published by the University Records Management Committee showing all actions to be taken in relation to the disposition of records. Schedules enumerate the title of the record, record number (if any), Office of Record, and the disposition schedule (retention period, in years) for the record copy and other copies of administrative records. Disposition schedules for records found on more than one campus are collected in the Records Disposition Schedules Manual.

B. Records Disposition Schedules Manual

To effect the orderly disposition of administrative records on a uniform basis throughout the University, the Records Management Committee has established the Records Disposition Schedules Manual. This document formalizes the decisions on retention periods and provides guidance for all University departments and offices in administering the retention or disposition of their records.

<http://www.ucop.edu/recordsretention>

IV. Responsibilities for Retention Schedule Review

Within each department one individual should be assigned the responsibility to monitor the records management program. Each department is responsible for:

- destroying records in accordance with published retention schedules and,
- maintaining an accounting of which records have been destroyed, the period of time covered by those records, when the records were destroyed, and who authorized the destruction.

V. Record Retention for Federal Awards

When disposing of Federal contract and grant material, the University's official disposition schedule or the Federal disposition requirement of each contract or grant must be applied, whichever is longer. However, it should be noted for both contracts and grants, when an audit or litigation is initiated before the prescribed destruction of the records they must be retained until the audit finding or litigation is resolved. Additionally, for multi-year awards, disposition should be measured from the terminating date (final year) of the award unless otherwise specified within the award.

When considering the appropriate retention period and disposition of financial documents under Federal awards, the following must be considered:

- A. The retention set forth in the University Records Disposition Schedules Manual.
- B. The existence of an audit or litigation relating to the award.
- C. The retention period established in the award for the general award file.
- D. For Federal procurement contracts, any "special" retention period for certain financial documents as set forth in various Federal procurement regulations.
- E. For Federal grants for student financial aid, any "special" retention period for certain financial documents as set forth in various Federal student financial aid program regulations.

For further information regarding the record retention of Federal awards please refer to UC Business and Finance Bulletin RMP-5 (<http://www.ucop.edu/ucophome/policies/bfb/rmp5a.html>)

References

Departments

Administrative Services

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Campus Records Management Coordinator

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Resources

University of California Business and Finance Bulletins RMP Series- Records Management and Privacy

<http://www.ucop.edu/ucophome/policies/bfb/bfbrmp.html>

University of California Records Retention Schedules Manual

<http://www.ucop.edu/recordsretention> (for search function)

<http://www.policies.uci.edu/adm/records/721-11a.html> (sorted by category)