

Records Management Best Practices

Records Management at DU:

As stated in the Board Approved Records Management Policy “the purpose of the University Records Management Program is to assist the University in complying with external record-keeping requirements, managing University risk, and preserving the history of the University.”

By following this policy, each unit across campus can ensure that the University is compliant with DU policies, state and federal regulations. The proper maintenance of records also benefits the University because it allows for easier access to documents and a reduction in the physical space and costs attributed to storage.

University Personnel Responsibilities:

University Personnel, including all University officials such as faculty, visiting faculty, staff, student workers, volunteers and others whose scope of work may include management of records, are entrusted with the day-to-day management of records in their units according to University Records Management Policy and the University Records Retention Schedule.

Records Retention Policy Information:

In regards to the Retention and Disposition of records, the policy states the “University Records Retention Schedule will define how long records should be retained, the Office of Primary Responsibility for a record, and the ultimate disposition of the record: destruction or permanent retention in an archival environment. University Counsel will review schedules for compliance with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.”

The Office of Primary Responsibility is the party that is responsible for retaining and storing a record as defined by the Retention Schedule. While there may be records that are modified or viewed by several parties, it may not need to be saved by all users. The record should be maintained by the user that completes the document’s legal/regulatory/contractual duty.

Inventory:

A records inventory is a list of all the types of records that affect a unit. This list contains the descriptive title of the records, its content, retention period, and disposition instructions. Having an inventory of records allows for units to perform efficient audits since all of the information is readily available. Also, an inventory allows for records business continuity and uniformity because all of their records information can be found on one central document.

What is a Record?

A record contains information that provides evidence of activity and transactions. Records can be paper or electronic documents that are created or received and relate to business activity. This includes any document that was created, received, recorded or legally filed in the course of fulfilling the University’s mission.

Types of Records:

University records may include, but are not limited to, student records, personnel records, financial records, contracts, grant materials, curricula, University publications, committee meeting minutes, memoranda’s, and correspondence.

Additional Record types: fax, email, spreadsheets, photographs, word processing document, receipts, contracts, etc.

What is not considered a Record?

According to the DU Policy, “items that are not considered records include, but are not limited to, personal correspondence, reference/use copies of University records as defined in Section III.F, and non-University publications (magazines, journals).”

A document may not be a record if it is a duplicate or copy of a master document that is already being stored according to the Retention Schedule. For additional details please refer to the policy Section III.C.3 http://www.du.edu/bfa/media/documents/policy/DU_Records_Mang_Policy_final_03272009.pdf

Electronic Records:

The University is committed to managing the most authentic, sustainable, complete, and useful version of a University record, regardless of format. These types of records must adhere to the University Records Management Policy and the Retention Schedule. The systems used to maintain these records must be reliable and secure.

Archives:

There are certain records that may need to be transferred to University Archives once the retention period expires. University Archives maintains items that include, “both active and inactive University departments, athletic programs, faculty research, the records of Chancellors, the Board of Trustees, and much more.”

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