



University Policy 04-010
Records Retention

Responsible Executive: Senior Vice
Provost for Academic Affairs
Responsible Office: Special Collections &
Archives Research Center
Effective: July 1, 2015
Last Revised: July 1, 2015

I. Policy Statement

Oregon State University requires that specified university records, regardless of format, must be retained for specific periods of time in accordance with institutional or legal requirements, or for historical purposes. University records must be managed according to this policy. This policy supersedes all previous records retention schedules and policies.

II. Reason for Policy

The purpose of this policy is to create a uniform practice for the retention of records created or maintained in the course of university business that document the university and its functions, policies and procedures, decisions, and other activities.

III. Scope & Audience

This policy applies to all university employees, units, and records, including both paper and electronic formats, such as email. This policy does not apply to ephemeral records, such as voicemails or text messages.

IV. Definitions

The Special Collections & Archives Research Center - A unit of the OSU Libraries and Press that is the repository for university records with long-term historical value and is responsible for the preservation of and access to those materials.

V. Website (specific to this policy)

http://leadership.oregonstate.edu/sites/leadership.oregonstate.edu/files/policies/records_retention_2015-07-06.pdf

VI. Contacts

Department	Phone	Website
Special Collections & Archives Research Center	541-737-2075	http://scarc.library.oregonstate.edu/

VII. Responsibilities & Procedures

A. GENERAL

1. The [General Records Retention Schedule](#) (“General Schedule”), sets a minimum retention period for each category of record described therein. After this minimum retention period is met, each unit may use its discretion in deciding whether to destroy or continue to maintain records within each category. Records containing sensitive or protected information should be destroyed in a secure manner such as shredding.
2. Records that may have long-term administrative or historical value, based on their on-going usefulness or significance in documenting the primary functions of the university, are identified as such in the General Schedule. At the request of a unit head, the university archivist will assist units holding these records in identifying the specific records with long-term value and developing a plan for preservation and access.
3. In the event of an audit, investigation, or pending litigation, record retention periods are suspended and no records related to the audit, investigation, or litigation may be destroyed until such time as the audit, investigation, or litigation is concluded. Units that have suspended the record retention period must obtain approval from the Office of the General Counsel before resuming the retention period. Units must inform the Office of the General Counsel of any situation that might give rise to legal action as soon as the situation becomes apparent.

B. ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Oregon State University Units
 - a. Unit heads are responsible for ensuring that their units familiarize themselves with the **General Schedule** and knowing what records—paper-based and electronic—they create or receive and are required to manage.
 - b. Units are responsible for the retention, storage, and access of university records in compliance with the General Schedule, and if appropriate, with the unit-specific schedule discussed below. Each unit head will periodically review currently-used records and forms to determine whether these records and forms are adequate and appropriate for each unit’s requirements.
 - c. Some units may be required to maintain a unit-specific retention schedule, in addition to the General Schedule, based on that unit’s internal and external requirements. In such instances, the unit head must consult with the university archivist to develop a unit-specific schedule. The unit head must ensure that all employees within the

unit are familiar with this unit-specific schedule. In addition, each unit head must maintain copies of any unit-specific retention schedule, and ensure that all employees within the department adhere to the unit-specific schedule.

- d. Each unit head must periodically review any unit-specific schedule developed for the unit to determine if changes need to be made to the retention periods. If a change to the unit-specific schedule is necessary, the unit must seek approval from the university archivist before making the change.
- e. Requests for changes in retention periods within the General Schedule should be made to the university archivist and may be implemented only after approval by the university archivist in consultation with the Office of the General Counsel.

2. University Archivist

- a. The university archivist is responsible for the development of the General Schedule and educating university personnel in records management policy and procedures.
- b. The university archivist is responsible for assisting university units develop unit-specific retention schedules where appropriate. The university archivist must consult with the Office of General Counsel before approving changes to the General Schedule.
- c. The university archivist helps units identify specific records with long-term value and develop plans for preservation and access of those records. This may include transferring the records to the Special Collections and Archives Research Center.

3. Office of the General Counsel

- a. The Office of the General Counsel coordinates discovery and public records requests and may release a suspension of the minimum retention period due to pending audit, investigation, or litigation.
- b. The Office of the General Counsel assists the university archivist in the review of changes to the General Schedule.

VIII. Forms & Tools

[General Records Retention Schedule](#)

IX. Frequently Asked Questions

None

X. Related Information

None

XI. History

Last review date: July 1, 2015

Next scheduled review date: July 1, 2018