

## **Records Management: Academic and Student Affairs**

Identifying and managing records is an important step in any successful educational enterprise. Offices become inefficient when files and drawers are too full of documents to make the records that they hold easily accessible. Electronic systems fail when too many versions of a document make it difficult to determine which draft is the “final draft” document.

### Active vs Inactive Records

Active Records are generally those consulted routinely in the daily performance of work by those in the Academic offices. Inactive Records are those rarely used, but they must be retained for occasional reference for information, to meet audit requirements, or to meet legal obligations. The dates of the documents are not wholly relevant.

Hence, in determining the appropriate “cut-off” for a specific record, the Academic officer, in consultation with the designated Records Manager, should consider the following factors regarding ongoing maintenance of the records within the office:

- frequency of reference to the files
- retention of the record series
- volume of the record series
- function of the record series (i.e. curriculum development, grade documentation, etc.)
- function of the creating office (i.e. Academic, Support, etc.)

### Storage of Inactive Files

The medium used for the storage of records depends upon their retention period. Most records can be stored electronically in order to achieve reductions in volume. Electronic files which are designated on a retention schedule as *archival* or *potentially archival* should be printed and one copy secured in the event of emergency or disaster. Files with a retention period of 10 years (or more) (for example: Nursing) should be stored electronically in a well-organized electronic system. Work processing files, saved to a disk or memory stick, should be uploaded to a directory on a main hard drive or onto magnetic tape. All electronic files must be backed-up on regular cycles (to be established by each college). The back-up should be kept in a secure location away from the site-of-initial storage. The back-up is a duplicate record and can be overwritten or destroyed at any time. Therefore, it should not be maintained longer than the original file.

Records moved to Inactive Storage should remain protected by management procedures. Intellectual and physical control must be maintained for both. Forms and logs should be created to track: records transferred to storage, storage location assigned to each box, authorized access, records retrieved for reference, records returned for re-filing, records ready for destruction (i.e. at the end of their retention period), records that are destroyed, and the manner and date in which the record have been destroyed.

## Record Destruction/ Disposition

When records have reached the end of their retention period, they can be destroyed. If they have been identified as *archival* or *potentially archival*, they should be handled in accordance with the agency/ institution's Archival Processes where they will be preserved permanently. Each college is asked to file a schedule regarding the handling of official, permanent college documents (as part of Disaster Management) with the State Archives Director of Documents. The policy should also include the designation of the proper chain-of-custody (i.e. person/s responsible per transaction) for the college's official documents.

Records which have permanent administrative, legal, fiscal, and /or historical value are considered to be archival.

Electronic records should be deleted as soon as their retention period has ended.

## Archives

Each agency/ institution preserves records of both administrative and general value. These records are retained for reference by the agency/ college and general public. Policy and procedures for the archiving (and back-up) of archived documents is the responsibility of the agency/ colleges.

## Academic Records

It is important, then, to establish those files/ records which are common to Academic offices and to provide stable guidelines for the management of records with the Academic offices of the LCTCS and its respective colleges.

## Types or Categories of Academic Records

The list of types of categories of Academic records held by the LCTCS and member colleges is intended to aid persons in obtaining access to public records. The list is generic in nature. Because of the variations in record-keeping practices, it is unlikely that all offices will organize their files exactly as outline on this list or that every office will have every item listed. Some types of information may be available in more than one office. Because of records-retention practices that provide for periodic destruction or archival transfer of information, a listed record may not be in a given office at a particular time.

### 1. Administrative Subject Files

These files include curriculum, academic policy, departmental and college committees, undergraduate programs, honors, departmental history, and governance files. Files usually relate to the college's mission and programs.

2. Case Files  
These files include correspondence, forms, and reports documents matters such as counseling records, legal actions, etc.
3. Budget Files  
These files include correspondence, memoranda, internal budget print-outs, and working document showing expenditures for programmatic salaries, equipment, supplies, etc.
4. Moveable Property Control and Supply Files  
These files include documentation concerning the moveable (and other) property for which the department (and college) is responsible.
5. Academic Statistical Report Files  
These files include statistical reports on academic progress, course enrollments, grade records, classroom space utilization, staff teaching and instructional loads, etc.
6. Course and Curriculum Files  
These include class and grade rosters, course catalogs, outlines, syllabi, reading lists, textbook order forms, records concerning program and Degree requirements, section scheduling, enrollment information by section and teaching faculty, etc.
7. Non-Academic Personnel files  
These include employment applications, test scores, applicant Referrals, appointment forms, performance evaluation reports, etc.
8. Academic Personnel Files  
These include employment applications, appointment and change-of-status Forms, letters of recommendations, initial rank assignment, records of sabbaticals, etc.
9. Promotion Files  
These include documents used in reviewing faculty for promotion-in-rank (i.e. vitae, lists of contributions to the discipline/ documentation, Performance evaluation reports), etc.
10. Committee, Task Force Records  
These include minutes, agenda, completed reports, working documents, correspondence from the college's academic committees and task forces.

### 11. Contract Files

These include contracts, agreements, financial records, progress and final reports on academic contractual work in which the college has been engaged (i.e. consultants, adjunct contracts, etc.).

### 12. Library and Information Center Records

These include files documenting the acquisition, cataloging, and used of published information, surveys, statistical data, etc.

## Student Records

Student Records represent the very core of the education enterprise. The accurate and timely maintenance of Student Records is critical to the integrity of the educational institution. The importance of accurate and timely Student Records is underscored by the requirements placed upon them by Federal Regulations. Each college should maintain specific policies which assure their compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act of 1990, and the Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990 (Cleary Act) as amended in 1992.

It is particularly important, then, to establish those files/ records which are common to Student Services offices and to provide stable guidelines for the management of records with the Student Services offices of the LCTCS and its respective colleges. A schedule for the maintenance, protection, and proper care of these files (in the event of a disaster) are to be filed, by the college, with the Louisiana State Archives Director of Documents. The college's actual policy should include the chain-of-custody (i.e. person/s responsible for transactions) for the college's official documents.

## Types or Categories of Student Records

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#### 1. Non-academic personnel files

These include employment applications, test scores, applicant referrals, performance evaluations reports, reports of leaves, etc.

#### 2. Moveable Property Control and Supply Files

These files include documentation concerning the moveable (and other)

property for which the department (and college) is responsible.

3. Student Files

These include test scores, notices of admission, semester grade reports, transcripts, departmental forms recording academic progress, transfer forms, student appeals and resolutions documents, and related correspondence.

4. Federal Compliance Files

These include documentation of compliance with FERPA, Student-Right-to-Know, and Clery Act (as amended).