

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

AT

**MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY**

1985

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this is a revision of
HANDBOOK FOR RECORDS MANAGEMENT, 1977
by
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This document supercedes the 1977 "Handbook for Records Management"

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INTRODUCTION

In 1969 the Board of Trustees established the University Archives. In this action the Board stipulated that: 1) the important inactive records of the University should be preserved to meet legal requirements, fiscal or administrative needs, or because of historical significance, 2) those inactive records which need to be retained for any of these reasons should be transferred to the Archives, and 3) non-essential records should be destroyed upon the joint approval of the unit head in which they are produced or accumulated, and the director of the Archives.

As defined by law, the records of a public agency include letters sent and received, books, photographs, maps, drawings,

tapes, disks or other documents or copies thereof that have been made by that agency or received by it in connection with the transaction of its business. Those records which are not currently in use, but which must be retained for reasons cited above, are defined as inactive records.

This handbook has been prepared to assist University personnel in the management of their records systems with particular emphasis on transferring inactive records out of filing systems. The procedures outlined in this handbook supersede those in the 1977 Handbook for Records Management (green cover).

THE PROBLEM OF INACTIVE RECORDS

The maintenance of inactive records in University offices poses some problems, not the least of which is the cost. Under present practice, many offices simply purchase another file cabinet when their cabinets are full, resulting in increased expense and increased use of valuable floor space. The cost of this alternative is high. If allowance is made for aisles and work area, a filing cabinet will occupy about six square feet of space. Office space is valued at an average cost of six dollars per square foot per year at the University. Thus the average cost of space per year to place a filing cabinet in an office is about \$36.00. Since a four-drawer file contains about 8 cubic

feet of records, the cost of floor space is approximately \$4.50 per cubic foot of records per year. This does not include the initial purchase price of the cabinet, which is about \$13.00 per cubic foot, or the salaries of personnel to maintain the file.

In contrast, there is no charge to units who store material in the Archives. There is a cost to the University, of course, but there is no cost to units using the Archives facilities.

The cost to the University for storing records in the University Archives is considerably less than if those materials were filed in an office. Archives space costs approximately one third the cost of office floor space (\$2.00 vs. \$6.00 per square foot). Through the use of special equipment the Archives can store three times the amount of records per square foot that can be stored in an equivalent amount of office floor space. Likewise there is a corresponding reduction in archival equipment versus office equipment costs. Office storage equipment costs \$13.00 and up per cubic foot of records, whereas archival equipment costs are presently \$3.70 per cubic foot of records. The net result to the University is that storage of inactive records in the University Archives costs approximately one seventh the cost, in terms of space, of equivalent storage in offices. Equipment costs for Archives storage are less than one fourth the equipment costs for office storage.

Other factors should also be considered. In files crowded with both current and inactive records, filing becomes more difficult and tedious, and the probability of misfiling is increased. Searching for misplaced records is frustrating and costly. In addition, the file cabinets required to house inactive records take up valuable space and increase the congestion in the office. Storage in closets, basements or other areas where the records are susceptible to environmental damage and tampering is not an acceptable alternative.

EFFICIENT STORAGE OF INACTIVE RECORDS

The logical solution to the problem of storing inactive records is to remove them from the office files and transfer them to the University Archives. Here they can be preserved, economically maintained and when needed they can be quickly retrieved (within one business day, in most cases). The archival storage areas are designed to ensure maximum environmental and physical security. To eliminate the possibility of unauthorized use of records, the Archives storage areas are closed to individuals, unless they are accompanied by a member of the Archives staff. Again, there is no charge to units for utilizing the Archives' services or facilities.

SELECTING RECORDS FOR TRANSFER TO THE UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

Not all records belong in the Archives. Only inactive records should be transferred. Active records--those which are used frequently--should be kept in the office under the supervision of its head until the office no longer needs them.

In order to ascertain which actions should be taken with regard to records, retention and disposal schedules will eventually be made for each University office. Such schedules are created by the Archives staff, working closely with the department or unit. Retention and disposal schedules provide for the systematic and orderly transfer of records from office files. They are designed to: 1) identify the various types of records held by each office, 2) identify the permanent records which must be preserved, and 3) specify the length of time the office should maintain the records, and the time when the records should be transferred to the Archives or be destroyed.

Currently, transferring material to Archives' storage can be accomplished in either of two ways. The preferred method is through the "Records Retention, Transfer and Disposal" schedule (currently approximately one-half of the University's units are on retention schedules). The other means is via the "Identification of University Records" process.

Option I: Retention Schedules

The records scheduling process involves a physical inventory of the records in your filing system, an appraisal of the value of those records and approval of retention criteria. The Archives provides this service without cost.

During the inventory, the Archives staff will note the records your unit has and appraise those files on the basis of administrative value, legal value, fiscal need and historical significance. We look for, among other things, whether the files are duplicated elsewhere, for instance if you have a complete set of memoranda from the Office of the President, that Office also has such a set. Only one set of these need to be retained.

Once the appraisal is completed, a Retention Schedule is prepared. Approval of the schedule comes from BOTH the Director of the Archives and your Unit Head; it is always a joint decision. The schedule lists, in alphabetical order, the record series in your filing system, how long they will be kept in the office, if and when they will be transferred to the Archives, how long the Archives will keep them (either a specific number of years or permanently). Changes in your file systems are easily accommodated. A telephone call to us indicating new record series, or obsolete ones, will be noted on a revised schedule.

Figure 1

Approved Retention, Transfer and Disposal Schedule

RETENTION, TRANSFER and DISPOSAL SCHEDULE				
Unit: <u>Facilities Planning and Space Management</u>		Date <u>Feb. 7, 1983</u>		
Approvals: <u>JAMES M. PETER</u> (unit head)		<u>(director of archives)</u>		
Record	Retain in Office	Trans. to Archives	Retain in Archives	Destroy
Administrative file	5 yrs.	purge as needed		
except: Building, Land and Planning Files	5 yrs.	X		
Bookkeeping	See: "Manual of Business Procedures"			
Capital Outlay Projects	Purge as needed			
Program Statements		X		
Grant Applications				X
Related Material				X
General file 1955-P	purge yearly			
Handicapper/Accessibility 1972-P	3 yrs.	X		
Main Building file 1970-P				
Estimate Requests	2 yrs.	X		
Estimate Received	2 yrs.	X	3 yrs.	X
Alterations funded	2 yrs.	X	3 yrs.	X
Correspondence	2 yrs.	X	3 yrs.	X
Fire Safety*	2 yrs.			X
Accessibility*	2 yrs.	X		
Space Assignment*	2 yrs.			X
Blue Prints*	2 yrs.			X
Master List printouts, 1978-P	3 yrs.	X	2 yrs.	X
Plan file 1960-P	5 yrs.			X
Preliminary Planning - Non Active Projects, 1967-1981	3 yrs.	X	4 yrs.	X
Small Scales, 1950-P	5 yrs.	X		
Space Facts, 1976-P	Retain as needed			
Space File, 1969-1981		X		
Space Inventories, 1976-P	Retain as needed			
*Indicates inactive files				

Similarly, any changes in retention criteria can be discussed over the telephone.

This retention schedule will govern the disposition of all your files. Whenever you are ready to purge your cabinets, follow the guidelines on the schedule. If material being purged is to be sent to Archives' storage, call us for the necessary boxes.

Option II: Identification Forms

The second option requires that the office staff, desiring to transfer records, complete the "Identification of University Records" form. This form, when completed, identifies the types, dates, and amounts of records held by the office. It also identifies, after joint approval by the Archives and the department or unit, which records are to be transferred to the Archives, and which records, if any, are to be destroyed. Use of this form eliminates the transfer of useless records to the Archives and relieves the transferring office of making a detailed folder inventory of records destined to be destroyed.

The office should complete the "Identification of University Records" form, supplying information under items 1-5. Under item 3, "Description of Records," the office should list in detail the types of records found in its files. The description will enable

Figure 2

Identification of University Records Form

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY University Archives and Historical Collections Identification of University Records					
PLEASE PREPARE IN TRIPLICATE. SEND THE ORIGINAL AND ONE COPY TO THE ARCHIVES.			APPROVALS		
1) Department or Unit College of Social Science, Office of the Dean			Chairman or Head of Unit (Signature)		
2) Date Prepared 2-15-76			Director of Archives (Signature)		
3) Description of Records	4) Date(s)	5) Amount (File Drawers or Fraction)	FOR ARCHIVES USE		
			Retain in Office	Transfer to Archives	Destroy
minutes of meetings:					
Curriculum Committee	1971	1/2			
Tenure Committee	1971	1/4			
Student Affairs Committee	1971	1/4			
All-College Faculty Meetings	1971	1/4			
budget files:					
purchase orders and invoices	1970-1971	1/2			
fund ledgers	1968-1971	1/2			
travel reports	1965-1970	1			
student payroll records	1968-1973	1/4			
publications					
Handbook of Undergraduate Courses	1966-1972	1/2			
Guest Speaker Series	1970-1972	3/4			
Report: Follow-Up of Social Science Graduates (with supporting materials)	1970	1			

the Archives to make the proper decisions regarding disposition of the records. The office should complete three copies of the form, retaining one for its files and sending two to the Archives.

Then Archives will recommend the appropriate disposition for each type of record listed and will return two copies of the form to the office. These guidelines will govern the transfer of the records specified.

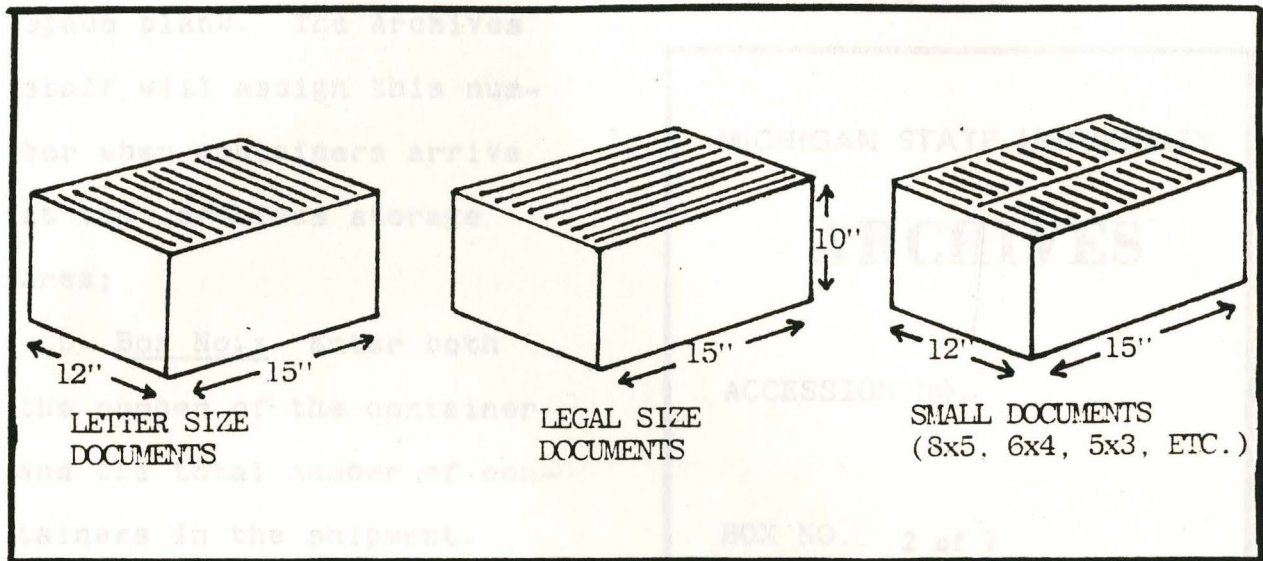
TRANSFERRING RECORDS TO THE ARCHIVES

Once transfer approval is given by the Archives, either via the retention schedule or the identification form, and the boxes are received, prepare the material for transfer. Without disturbing the existing file arrangement, pack records firmly in the containers. Do not force them. To make later reference easier, records should not be packed so tightly that later withdrawal is difficult. Do not place folders on top of other folders within the containers. Place legal-size files across the fifteen-inch side of the container. Place letter-size files across the twelve-inch side. When both legal-size and letter-size files are mixed within the same container, pack them across the fifteen-inch side. Likewise, pack hanging files

across the fifteen-inch side. Records smaller than conventional letter-size or legal-size files should be packed in records

Figure 3

Packing Transfer Boxes



storage containers using the most practical arrangements possible. Number folders as records are packed. Each box should begin with folder 1. Number containers consecutively as they are packed. Place the cover securely on the container. Do not tape or fasten it. Records which are too large to be placed in storage containers, such as bound ledgers, should be tied in bundles with sturdy cord and labeled with identification tags. Large drawings and maps can be wrapped in paper or packed in cardboard tubes and labeled.

Attach a University Archives label to each container. Fill in the spaces as directed:

a. Accession No.: Leave this space blank. The Archives staff will assign this number when containers arrive at the Archives storage area;

b. Box No.: Enter both the number of the container and the total number of containers in the shipment.

For example, the label on the second of seven boxes will read "Box No. 2 of 7."

Each transfer is numbered beginning with 1 (If in one

transfer you sent eight boxes, the first box in the next transfer is numbered "1", not "9");

c. Office Sending Records: Enter the name of the office preparing the shipment. The label has a water-soluble adhesive backing. Place it on the twelve-inch side of the container below the hand cut-out. Use only one label per container.

Figure 4

Box Label

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
ARCHIVES
ACCESSION NO.
BOX NO. 2 of 7
OFFICE SENDING RECORDS
V.C.C.-Medical Records
O-10062

Figure 3

Completed Records Transmittal and Inventory Form

Complete the "Records Transmittal and Inventory." This form consists of a first page and a supplementary page. The two differ only in that the first page requests information about the shipment of records which need not be repeated on supplementary pages. Because in most cases offices will require more than one page to list records being transferred, eliminating repetition of this information allows more space for listing records. For every shipment of records, the office should complete one first page and as many supplementary pages as are necessary to list all folder titles in the shipment. The office should prepare three copies of the "Records Transmittal and Inventory". Information should be supplied under item 1 through 4 as directed below.

- Item 1. name of the office transferring records
2. date the form is prepared
3. signature and title of the head of the unit
- 4 & 5. name and telephone number of the person packing
containers and completing the form
- 6 & 7. box and folder numbers of records in the shipment
- 8 & 9. complete file folder titles and inclusive dates of
materials contained in folders
10. leave blank

General instructions:

- a. The office should complete items 1 through 6 on
supplementary pages of the "Records Transmittal and Inventory."

Figure 5

Completed Records Transmittal and Inventory--First Page

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY University Archives and Historical Collections Records Transmittal and Inventory				page <u>1</u> of <u>2</u>
PLEASE PREPARE IN TRIPPLICATE. SEND THE ORIGINAL AND ONE COPY TO THE ARCHIVES.				FOR ARCHIVES USE
1) Department or Unit Department of English		2) Date 7-7-74		Accession Number
3) Chairman or Head of Unit (Signature and Title) <i>John Doe</i> , Chairman				Date Received
4) Person Preparing Shipment Joan Smith		5) Telephone Number 355-0000		Director of Archives
Box 6) No.	Folder 7) No.	8) File Folder Title	9) Dates	FOR ARCHIVES USE
1	1	Appointments	1969-70	
1	2	Appointments	1970-71	
1	3	Appointments	1971-72	
1	4	Appointments	1972-73	
1	5	Ballots	1967-73	
1	6	Chairmen's meetings	1970	
1	7	Chairmen's meetings	1971	
1	8	Chairmen's meetings	1972	
1	9	Chairmen's meetings	1973	
1	10	NDEA	1969-70	
1	11	NDEA	1970-71	
1	12	Placement	1971-72	
1	13	Placement	1972-73	
1	14	Scheduling	1972-73	
1	15	Summer Session	1969	
1	16	Summer Session	1970-72	
1	17	Waivers - Gen. Ed. Courses	1971	
1	18	Waivers - Gen. Ed. Courses	1972	
1	19	Staff meetings - minutes	1967-68	
1	20	Staff meetings - minutes	1968-69	
1	21	Staff meetings - minutes	1969-70	
1	22	Staff meetings - minutes	1970-71	
0) Restrictions on Use of Records (If no restrictions, write "none".) none				

Completed Records Transmittal and Inventory--Supplementary Page

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b. When listing the last folder title in a box, skip a line before listing the first folder title of the next box. It is not necessary to use a separate page for each box.

c. Records which are not sent in standard records containers should be listed separately under "File Folder Title" on the "Records Transmittal and Inventory" form. Entries should contain notations about special packing provisions. For example, a group of large scrapbooks tied in a bundle should be listed as "three (3) scrapbooks tied in a bundle, not in containers." When records other than paper documents are being transferred, the type of recording medium should be indicated, i.e., microform, audiotape, etc. The original and one copy of the form should be sent to the Archives.

Once the forms are received by the Archives, a staff member will check them to ensure that they are complete. Then the Archives staff member will call the office to indicate where the office should send the material.

After receiving approval from the Archives to transfer the records, a staff person from the office wishing to transfer the material contacts M.S.U. Stores Department for actual moving of the records to the designated Archives storage area. Be sure to state that the Archives must be contacted by Stores prior to delivery in order to receive the shipment at its storage area.

The Archives will receive the shipment, note its receipt on the "Records Transmittal and Inventory" form, and return one copy of the form to the office.

The office should file the completed "Records Transmittal and Inventory" form, discarding the temporary copy filed earlier. The office should note that an accession number is assigned by the Archives to each shipment of records. In all communication with the Archives concerning the records this accession number must be cited.

BRIEFLY THE TRANSFER PROCEDURES ARE:

1. The department or office should telephone the Archives (355-2330) to indicate that it has records to be removed from its files.

2a. If a records retention schedule exists, the necessary number of boxes will be sent by the Archives. only if

or,

2b. Arrangements are made for a records survey by the Archives. A records "Retention, Transfer and Disposal" schedule is approved by the unit and the Archives.

or,

2c. The Archives will send "Identification of University Records" forms to the office. Once this form is completed and sent to the Archives, the Archives staff will indicate those records to transfer and those to destroy, and send the boxes.

3. Along with the boxes, the Archives will send "Records Transmittal and Inventory" forms to the

office.¹ Additional containers and forms are available on request.

4. Move the material from your file cabinets into the boxes without disturbing the order.

5. Complete the "Records Transmittal and Inventory" forms.

6. Attach the Archives label to the boxes, just below the hand-hole.

7. Send the forms to the Archives.

8. When notified by the Archives, have Stores deliver the boxes to the designated storage area.

Obtaining Reference Service

Upon request from the transferring office, the Archives staff will provide three types of reference service: 1) information from records stored in the Archives, 2) copies of

1. To make the most efficient use of space in the Archives, records are stored in standard-sized records storage containers. These containers are also used to transfer records to the Archives. File cabinets, transfer files, or other boxes should never be used. The records storage containers have inside dimensions of ten inches by twelve inches by fifteen inches and hold one cubic foot of records. They are specifically designed to use with the Archives shelving and are constructed of durable materials capable of protecting records from dust, smoke, water damage, and other environmental hazards.

records stored in the Archives, and 3) temporary return of records to the transferring office.

Requests for reference service may be made by telephone or in writing. Written requests should be made using the "Request for Reference Service" form which is available from the Archives. When requests are made by telephone, the form will be completed by a member of the Archives staff.

Arrangements may also be made to consult the records in the Archives reading room. Hours are 8 a.m. - 12 noon and 1 p.m. - 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. If possible, the Archives should be notified at least one day prior to a visit. Departmental personnel must complete a "Request for Reference Service" before consulting records.

In completing the form, check the type of reference service requested. List the accession number, box number, folder number and file folder title where the requested records or information can be found. To obtain this information, consult the office copy of the completed "Records Transmittal and Inventory" form. Add any remarks or special instructions in the space provided. Each "Request for Reference Service" must contain the name of the office making the reference request and the name and title of the person within the office authorized to consult records transferred to the archives. The chairperson, department or unit

Figure 7

Request for Reference Service			
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY Archives Request for Reference Service			
Type of Service Requested (Check one only)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Copies of Records		<input type="checkbox"/> Information from Records	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Return of Record	
Accession No.	Box No.	Folder No.	File Folder Title
Remarks			
Name of Requesting Office			Date
Signature and Title			FOR ARCHIVES USE

Figure 8

Completed Request for Reference Service			
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY Archives Request for Reference Service			
Type of Service Requested (Check one only)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Copies of Records		<input type="checkbox"/> Information from Records	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Temporary Return of Records	
Accession No.	Box No.	Folder No.	File Folder Title
UA 1708	1		221755
Remarks			
L100 Vet Clinical Ctr			
Name of Requesting Office			Date
V.C.C. Medical Records (Large Animal)			11-21-84
Signature and Title			FOR ARCHIVES USE
<i>Aloria J. Lawa</i>			

head, or authorized representative must sign the "Request for Reference Service" if temporary return of records is requested.

Unless large quantities of material are involved, the Archives prefers to send copies rather than the original records in response to reference requests. This eliminates the need for return of the records to the Archives.

Copies of records furnished by the Archives are for information only. They should not be filed in the office file cabinets. They should be destroyed when no longer needed.

Records removed from the Archives should be returned as soon as they are no longer needed. They should be accompanied by the "Request for Reference Service" which will accompany the records being temporarily returned. This will enable the Archives staff to easily identify the returned records and place them in their proper containers.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, OR NEED ASSISTANCE, CALL THE ARCHIVES

355-2330.

