



Archival Records

The following document concerns records which may be Archival in nature. Many records have legislated retention periods and all records should be destroyed in accordance with University Records Schedules. Please consult the Archives if you are unsure of retention periods.

Records selected for archival retention by the University will detail the origins, the structure, the curriculum, and the decision making at UBC. In some cases the record may be a single document; such as an organizational chart for a certain year. In other cases, the record may be a collection of records relating to a subject such as a search or a project. Finally, an archival record may be a summary of a series of records, such as a yearly Financial Statement or a final report from a hiring committee.

Records which detail the origins and growth of the University, a Faculty, a Department, or a Unit are essential historic records and must be preserved.

Examples of such records are formal documents such as letters patent, contracts, and agreements. In many cases there is a formal ceremony or public announcements related to the origin of the unit and the resultant invitations, correspondence, and photographs may hold archival value as well.

- Incorporation Papers
- Deeds, Leases
- Contracts/Legal Agreements
- Planning and development records (campus maps, drawings, plans, etc.)

Records which detail how the university or its units are organized or managed as well as any administrative or organizational changes over time are essential historic records as well. Policies and Planning, including records of Board of Governors and Senate decisions, are essential records of decision-making and need to be retained. Record types can include:

- Reviews and audits
- Materials for special events such as conferences your department organized or lecture series, fundraisers, anniversary celebrations
- Minutes of major decision-making committees
- Policy and procedure manuals
- Organizational charts
- Correspondence by directors, chairs and other principle staff members on important decisions or events
- Reports such as Annual reports, project reports and studies

Financial records may be archival in nature, provided they are records of *summary* such as Yearly Financial Statements, General Ledger, or other summary reports.

- Annual financial statements
- Annual/General Ledger
- Audit material



Records which detail curriculum include the UBC Calendar, course descriptions, course syllabi, reading lists, as well as curriculum committee minutes and reports.

- Course materials if your department organizes any courses, and course development records
- Course handbooks and audio visual materials
- Course syllabi

Operational records are often archival as they reflect functions which are unique and are not captured elsewhere. For example, units within Medicine may retain resident records, LBS may retain records of electrical wiring, and Campus Security may keep records of security incidents on campus. All of these are just examples, but do indicate that individual units create and retain records which are unique to their particular unit. Units which perform a unique function on campus need to consider which records best reflect their activity. If there is any question concerning such records the Unit should consult the Archives for retention advice.

There are related records such as prizes and awards, class photographs, student activities and groups, and departmental statistics which may either be retained by the unit or by the University Archives. These records may need to be assessed by the University Archives.

In general, records related to staff, faculty, and students are not considered archival because

- a) they contain personal information and require permission from the subject to be accessed by researchers
- b) most of the related records are scheduled for destruction according to University records schedules
- c) primary responsibility lies with HR, (staff) Faculty Relations, (faculty) and the Registrar's Office and the Faculty of Graduate Studies (students) so most UBC units will be in custody of secondary, supporting, or duplicate records

The Archives is interested in the primary or **original** copy of records. In some cases this is not possible due to loss; however, it is important to remember that duplicate material and material created by other units are not generally considered archival. Circulation copies and supporting papers are most often not required.

- Records of minor committees whose main minutes/findings/reports are summarized at a higher level in the administrative hierarchy are not required. (An example might be the department safety committee which is formed every year - these records should be retained in compliance with records schedules and then destroyed)
- In most cases archival retention decisions should be made at the series level, for example, a series of departmental minutes, and not individual minutes of particular meetings.
- Try to apply retention decisions as soon as possible after records are created or received, particularly for electronic recording media which require special measures to be taken for long term preservation.



- Records generated by teaching units – curriculum/course materials – are of interest to the Archives but require some discussion of which records best reflect the teaching efforts of the department.

Retention decisions for the majority of records will be governed by the University's retention schedules, however, records created pre-1970 may be of interest to the Archives – please consult with Archives before destroying.