June – Put in a work request for annual confidential shredding, please also ask Plant Op to deliver 50 boxes to the Supplies Room (210) for packing

July - A notice needs to be sent out to the department, notifying them of the annual shredding.

The boxes of shredding need to be collected from the various offices, and placed into room 062 so that Waste Management has one location to pick up from.

**Record Management**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Kind of Record | Retain in Office | Archive | Destroy |  |
| Active  Financial  Hr | Current year  Current employees | Previous 6 years  Any employee in last 5 years | + 7 years | It should be noted, however, that both employee records and student records are retained centrally by the University and most records retained in unit offices are a supplement to the official record, and often are simply duplicates. |
| Course Evaluations | No | For five year | + 5 years |  |
| Exams, papers assignments | No | For one year | + 1 year |  |

**So, what can be destroyed?**

* Duplicate material. If you have multiple copies of a record, it is good practice to define a primary copy and to keep only that. Particularly for material such as C.V.’s, resumes, reports, and summary’s which are often updated yearly or produced in multiple copies and often bulky.
* All routine financial records such as tuition related, requisitions, receipts and supporting evidence, ledgers, etc…which are more than 7 years old.
* All applications, job search materials, resumes, etc…if older than two years. This is actually longer than required under legislation, (see below) but probably prudent.

**What records should be sent to the Archives?**

All of the records listed under *Inventory and Appraisal(above),* as long as they are no longer needed for business.

**How to manage Active and Semi-Active Records**

**Classification**‘Classification’ is the ordering of records into patterns in order to aid in the identification, management, and most importantly, retrieval  of the record when needed.  
 Some units will arrange their records alphabetically, others numerically, still others chronologically. Some units will arrange by physical shape or colour. It is even   
possible to combine elements to create, for example, an alpha-numeric system. What system the unit decides on will most likely reflect the type of records they maintain.   
In most units the records are maintained alphabetically, according to subject matter. So we see ‘Accounts Payable’, ‘Accounts Receivable’, ‘Alma Mater Society’, and so   
on in alphabetical order. This is entirely workable and needs only minor tweaking to be made more efficient. Some recommendations would include:

* Physical separation of large ‘subject’ groups. This is an old tradition in RM that reduces misfiling, and simply involves the physical separation of large subject groups   
  such as ‘students’, ‘HR’, or ‘finance’ into their own filing cabinets or areas. Thus, if a financial record is missing, the search area is substantially reduced, as it can be   
  assumed that the record, although misplaced, will be found somewhere in the financial records area.
* Avoidance of use of ‘miscellaneous’ or ‘general’ as a subject title. Everything is related to a specific subject, so either include it in an existing subject file or create a   
  new one. The risk of a miscellaneous/general file is that people will use it, and use, and use it, and use it, and use it……
* Avoid abbreviations. Although you may understand that ‘N/Fac/orientprog/’98’ relates to ‘New Faculty Orientation Programs – 1998’ it is less likely that someone new   
  to the office will understand so clearly. This holds true whether the record is hard copy or electronic. There is a place for abbreviations, but not on a folder title.
* Avoid the placement of ‘published’ material within record-keeping system. If the University of Glasgow sends you a calendar every year, and you consider it important,   
  either place it with other reference books (such as phone books), or create a library of calendars from assorted Universities. You will be much more likely to dispose of   
  obsolete or superceded published works if they are visible rather than if they are out of sight in a filing cabinet. The same can be said of any magazines or books sent to  
   the unit and kept for interest or reference. Although informative and perhaps valuable, these are not records, but library material, and should not be included in the RM system.

**E-Mail**

Another issue which needs to be addressed is e-mail.  Most units receive too much e-mail to manage and have great difficulty separating the valuable from the valueless.   
Some try to retain records on their computer, others on c.d.’s  and other optical media. Many different approaches have been suggested, including some very expensive   
e-mail management systems.  The Archives feels that the first step, as with all records, is to identify the value these records hold, and then to retain them according to a   
records schedule. An example from the University of Oregon is provided here for reference:

o        **Correspondence, Administrative**

*Administrative Memoranda Series documents communications received or sent which contain significant information about an institution's programs. Records include letters sent and received, memoranda, notes, enclosures, and attachments.*

*Record Copy:       Creating Units   
Retention:             5 years*

o        **Correspondence, Executive**

*Policies and Procedures Records This series documents significant events and the development of administrative structure, policies, and procedures of this office. It may also record the historical development of the office. Records may include: letters sent and received; notes; directives; acknowledgments; and memoranda. Correspondence may be intra-office, within OUS, and with non-OUS agencies, organizations, and individuals.*

*Record Copy:       Creating Units   
Retention:             Permanent*

o        **Correspondence, Ephemeral**

*Series documents communications received or sent which do not contain significant information about an institution's programs (Correspondence, Administrative), fiscal status (Correspondence, Fiscal), or routine agency operations (Correspondence, General). Records include, but are not limited to, advertising circulars, drafts and worksheets, desk notes, memoranda, and other records of a preliminary or informational nature.*

*Record Copy:       Creating Units   
Retention:             until read*

o        ***Correspondence, General***

*Series documents communications received or sent which do not contain significant information about an institution's programs. Records include: letters sent and received; memoranda; notes; transmittals; acknowledgments; community affair notices; charity fund drive records; routine requests for information or publications; enclosures and attachments.*

*Record Copy:       Creating Units   
Retention:             1 year*

Most e-mail received at UBC will fall into either the *Executive* or *General* categories, and although this may not be the definitive way to organize correspondence, something similar should certainly be considered. E-mail records that are to be retained permanently should, at this time, be printed out and kept in hard copy form. When the University develops  a permanent electronic records management system records may be retained in digital form, but until then, paper is the most consistent medium. In some cases microfilming may be an option as well. The management of e-mail records is problematic, and is a world-wide problem. The best policy is to determine what is valueless and delete, and to determine what is valuable and print. This should at least give units a fighting chance in the management of their e-mail.

Other issues….

**Electronic records**

Many people have been predicting the coming of the “paperless office” for what seems an eternity, but the reality is that not a single office at UBC can claim to be paper free. There are,  however, many processes at the University which have become entirely digital, including online registration and payment as well as most  HR and Financial Services functions. At this time the University, like most institutions, has very little in the way of standards or policies for the retention of electronic records. The Archives is attempting to determine ‘best practices’ in the area of electronic records management, but it is likely that we are some 10-20 years from having an entirely reliable , long term record-keeping solution for electronic records. In the meantime, the Archives does have some recommendations:

o        Bigger is better. If you are maintaining electronic records, whether they exist as single documents on your desktop/laptop, within a database, or on a server(s), the key to electronic longevity is to ensure that records are not left behind by technology. Electronic records are not the same as paper records in terms of preservation needs. You could forget paper records for twenty years, rediscover them, and you would have dusty, but otherwise intact records. Do the same thing with electronic records and you might have unreadable records preserved on an obsolete system with prohibitive costs associated with retrieving the records even if they are retrievable. In short, out of sight, out of mind, lost forever. The solution to this is *migration*, which is the movement of records from older technology to newer,  which improves records survivability dramatically. The reason *bigger is better* is because large e-record systems such as FMIS or IHRIS are more likely to be migrated than the lone C.D. of e-mails sitting in the bottom of your desk. In the same way, the information on a server is more likely to be considered for migration than a single hard drive. Traditionally, IT departments have not concentrated on long-term retention of records, but are forced to recognize obsolescence in larger, more expensive systems and will be much more likely to attempt to ensure such content is migrated.

o        Beware corruption. Most digital storage media, such as compact discs, DVD’s, mini disc’s, etc…are highly unsuitable for long term storage. Beside the risk of obsolescence, (see above) storage media of this type is unstable and prone to corruption due to such things as exposure to magnetic or heat sources, as well as through careless or improper handling. A recent study of CD-R’s showed corruption as early as 20 months, under near perfect storage conditions! (<http://www.cdfreaks.com/news/7751>)

If you use c.d.’s or other portable media to store records, make sure that you use high quality, store them properly, and check them for corruption early and often.

**Conclusion**In summation, there is no ‘silver bullet’ when it comes to records management, and it should not be taken lightly. Legal and institutional retention periods must be respected, and further,  thought must be given to what the unit considers to be its essential functions in need of documentation. Although difficult for some, recognition must be given to the fact that the unit cannot, and should not retain everything. There are many facets of RM that unquestionably require attention, time, and effort.

Efforts put into records management are certainly paid back in the benefits produced, for the employees, the unit, and for the University itself.  It can protect a unit from legal action while creating a more work friendly environment. In addition, RM can save money spent on storage while freeing up employees to devote more time to the work of the unit, and less time to searching for lost or misfiled records. Finally, RM creates a strong historic record of the people and their initiatives on behalf of the unit.  Perhaps the most important aspect that RM instills is a general sense of confidence that comes with the knowledge that records are complete and ordered, and able to serve as evidence, whether legal or historical.