

For a comprehensive list of archival terms, please go to:
<http://www.archivists.org/glossary/index.asp>

ACCESSION

The process of "accessioning" a record group into the University Archives involves the transfer of the legal title and the physical transfer of materials. The legal title is assigned in the Transfer Agreement form. Once the records arrive at the Bentley Library, a member of the staff will document the acquisition in the donor file and in the accessions database.

ACID-FREE

The chemical characteristic of having a pH of 7.0 or greater. The Archives uses acid-free paper, file folders, and boxes for preservation of permanent records. See also ARCHIVES BOX.

ACTIVE RECORDS

Generally, records move through phases of activity. Active records are records currently in use or that are considered open. It is best practice to transfer permanent historical records to the University Archives when the records are viewed as inactive. Non-permanent inactive records should be sent to Records Center or kept in office until destruction.

ADMINISTRATIVE VALUE

The usefulness of records to the office of origin for carrying out its day-to-day activities.

APPRAISAL

Appraisal is the process of determining the value of records--it is making a decision on what needs to be kept for administrative, legal, historical, and fiscal use. While appraisal is one of the most discussed principles in archival science, office personnel also make numerous appraisal decisions. The University Archives is interested in maintaining records that contain significant information about the activities, policy, and goals of a unit. Significant records would also include related documents that reflect the actions, motives, and underlying causes leading to changes within a unit or that illuminate an important aspect of the university history or development of a specific academic discipline.

ARCHIVES

(1) The non-current records of an organization or institution preserved because of their continuing value. (2) The agency responsible for selecting, preserving, and making available records determined to have permanent or continuing value. (3) The building or part of a building where archival materials are located.

ARCHIVES BOX

A cardboard storage container made from acid-free materials intended to house archival materials.

ARRANGEMENT

Arrangement refers the work process our staff undertakes once records are transferred and accessioned into the University Archives. The process is based on accepted archival principles, particularly the concepts of provenance and original order. The processes associated with arrangement usually include packing, foldering, labeling, and shelving.

BOX INVENTORY

A listing of the contents of all the boxes that comprise a collection, folder by folder; this listing may also include indications of which materials have been moved to oversize boxes or map drawers or transferred to other storage areas such as the photograph, memorabilia, or audio-visual collection. See also CONTAINER LIST.

BULK DATES

Dates of those documents that constitute the largest part of a collection, record group, subgroup, or series. Bulk dates are used to inform researchers of the chronological or period strength of archival materials, particularly when inclusive dates are misleading.

COLLECTION

An artificial accumulation of materials devoted to a single theme, person, event, or type of document acquired from a variety of sources. A general term used to describe groupings of archival or manuscripts materials.

CONFIDENTIAL RECORD

Student files; personnel files; intellectual property; or any records that contain Social Security Numbers, Student ID numbers, bank account numbers, credit card numbers, etc.

CONTAINER LIST

A listing of the contents of all the boxes that comprise a collection, folder by folder; this listing may also include indications of which materials have been moved to oversize boxes or map drawers or transferred to other storage areas such as the photograph, memorabilia, or audio-visual collection. See also BOX INVENTORY.

CONTEXT

Context refers to the organizational, functional, and operational circumstances in which documents are created and/or received and used. Context plays an important role in informing researchers about events and actions that may have occurred just a few years or many years ago. SEE APPRAISAL

CORRESPONDENCE

Letters (administrative or personal), memoranda, postal cards, and electronic mail communications. Over the past fifteen years, however, electronic mail has become a primary means of communication. As in the paper-based environment, a system for the management of important communications needs to be established in the digital environment. See the procedures manual for email best practices.

CREATOR

Person, office or other entity that generates records.

CREATING OFFICE

See CREATOR.

CUBIC FEET

A standard measure of the quantity of archival materials on the basis of the volume of space occupied. For example, a typical 12 x 12 x 12 archives box occupies 1 cubic foot (cu. ft.).

DEED OF GIFT

A signed, written instrument containing a voluntary transfer of title to real or personal property without a monetary consideration. Deeds of gift to archives and manuscript repositories frequently take the form of a contract establishing conditions governing the transfer of title to documents and specifying any restrictions on access or use.

DESTROY

Destruction through recycling or placement in garbage receptacles.

DESTROY CONFIDENTIAL

Destruction via shredding.

DIGITAL RECORDS

Digital records are all records, regardless of their digital format, prepared, owned, used, in the possession of, or retained by university administrators, faculty acting in administrative capacities, and staff of university units in the performance of an official function.

DISPOSAL

A disposal process that results in the obliteration of records.

DISPOSITION

Materials' final destruction or transfer to an archive as determined by their appraisal.

DOCUMENT

A written paper, recording, photograph, computer file, or other item that bears the original, official, or legal form of something and can be used to furnish evidence or information. Letters to an individual, business reports, architectural drawings, photographs, videos, and computer files are all examples of documents.

ELECTRONIC MAIL (E-MAIL)

Any memo, letter, note, report, or communication between individuals and groups that is stored and/or transmitted in a format that requires an electronic device to capture and access.

ENCRYPTION

The process of rendering plaintext unintelligible by converting it to ciphertext that can be read only by those with the knowledge to decode the plaintext from the ciphertext.

EVIDENTIAL VALUE

The usefulness of records as the primary or legal evidence of an organization's authority, functions, operations, transactions, and basic decisions and procedures.

FILE FOLDER

Filing unit, preferably made from acid-free materials; titles of file folders are listed in the box inventory in a FINDING AID.

FINDING AID

General term used to describe the various research tools the Archives creates to provide information about its holdings; types of finding aids prepared by the department include BOX INVENTORIES (or CONTAINER LISTS) and COLLECTION GUIDES.

FISCAL VALUE

The usefulness of records for information about the financial transactions and obligations of an organization.

HISTORICAL VALUE

The usefulness of records for historical research concerning an organization's functions and development, or for information about persons, places, or events.

IN-ACTIVE RECORDS

Non-permanent or permanent records used rarely. See ACTIVE RECORDS for disposition recommendations.

INCLUSIVE DATE

The dates of the oldest and most recent items in a collection.

INFORMATIONAL VALUE

Factual data about the persons, events, problems, and conditions of the record creator, and which may be useful for historical research or other studies.

INTELLECTUAL CONTROL

A series of measures, such as box and folder inventories, card catalog entries, and indexes that enable users of records to find the information they need.

LEGAL VALUE

The usefulness of records to contain evidence of legally enforceable rights or obligations of the government or private persons.

LIFE CYCLE

The theory that the paperwork of an institution goes through distinct phases: records are created, used for some purpose, stored or filed for future reference, evaluated, and eventually disposed of or transferred to an archives for permanent retention.

MIGRATION

The process of moving data from one information system or storage medium to another to ensure continued access to the information as the system or medium becomes obsolete or degrades over time.

OFFICE OF ORIGIN

The office in which a given record or record series was originally created or accumulated. See CREATOR

OFFICIAL RECORD

An official record is a record that in law is legally recognized and judicially enforceable as evidence of an act or event.

ORIGINAL ORDER

The archival principle of not intermingling records from different creating bodies.

PERSONAL PAPERS

Personal papers refers to papers created or accumulated by an individual, belonging to him or her, rather than papers created by a university unit. Papers of members of the university faculty are considered personal papers. Further information on faculty papers is available within the forms section of the website.

PRELIMINARY INVENTORY

A type of finding aid that is created upon accession of new materials to an archive or manuscript repository. The preliminary inventory usually contains a box or folder level listing, but usually does not attempt to arrange items in a collection into series or other groupings. See also CONTAINER LIST.

PROCESSING

The activities of accessioning, arranging, describing, and properly storing archival materials.

PROVENANCE

The origin of records or original source of the materials in a collection. The section in a finding aid that describes how the University Archives acquired the collection in question

PUBLIC RECORD

Section **149.011** of the Ohio Revised Code, defines "Records" as including any document, device, or item, regardless of physical form or characteristic, including an electronic record as defined in section 1306.01 of the Revised Code, created or received by or coming under the jurisdiction of any public office of the state or its political subdivisions, which serves to document the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the office.

RECORDS CENTER

A records storage facility established to provide storage of inactive, permanent and non-permanent records before final disposition.

RECORD GROUP

A body of organizationally related records established on the basis of PROVENANCE with particular regard for the administrative history of the record-creating institution or organization. For example, University Archives record groups include the Board of Trustees and the Miller College of Business. For a complete listing of processed record groups in the University Archives, please [click here](#).

RECORD-KEEPING SYSTEM

Coordinated policies and procedures that enable records to be collected, organized, and categorized to facilitate their management, including preservation³, retrieval, use, and disposition.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Or RM, is the practice of identifying, classifying, archiving, preserving, and destroying records. The ISO 15489: 2001 standard defines it as "The field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including the processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records".

RECORD SUB-GROUPS

Smaller (than record groups) bodies of organizationally related records placed within a record group to correspond to the subordinate administrative units that collectively form the record group.

RECORDS RETENTION/DISPOSITION SCHEDULE

The RRDS is the form used to secure approval for the disposition of all public records. It describes the life cycle of records and their disposition after a retention period has ended.

RESEARCH VALUE

The usefulness of records for research by the government, business, private organizations, individuals, and scholars. See also HISTORICAL VALUE.

RESOURCE GUIDE

List of materials in an archive or manuscript repository that relate to a certain subject or theme. The Archives and Special Collections Research Center has created several resource guides; [click here](#) to view the complete list.

RETENTION

The process of holding documents for use.

RETENTION PERIOD

The maximum and minimum lengths of time that a record must be kept by law or policy.

RETENTION SCHEDULE

The timetable and description of a records series' lifecycle, including instructions for disposition. For University Records, the retention schedule takes the form of the Records Retention/Disposition Schedule (RRDS).

SCHEDULING

The process of analyzing and appraising the value of a given set of records, and then preparing a retention schedule showing the disposition of the records.

SERIES

A grouping of file units or documents arranged in accordance with a unified filing system or maintained by the records creator as a unit because of some relationship arising out of their creation, receipt, or use. For example, correspondence or meeting minutes are typical series designations within an archival/manuscript COLLECTION or RECORD GROUP.

TRANSFER

The movement of records from one custodian to another. Usually moving records from active or semi-active office files to off-site storage or to the University Archives.

UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

The University Archives is the repository for a broad range of materials, including official office records, printed publications, photographs, and memorabilia, documenting the history and present activities of a university.