



THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

Office of the Provost

January 25, 2001

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TO: Deans, Directors, and Department Heads
FROM: Timothy R. Sanford, Assistant Provost *TRSanford*
RE: Changes in records management procedures

As Chair of the University Records Committee, I was pleased to participate in a thorough evaluation of the Records Management Program last year. Two of the most significant findings from that review were that liaisons from your units to the Records Management Program thought that - 1) the records scheduling process was too complicated and lengthy, and 2) they did not have time to work on such schedules without additional help. To address those concerns, the Program has made some major changes in the way that records retention and disposition schedules are written on campus and in being able to offer some in-office help to you on a limited basis this spring.

Before continuing, let me remind you that **all records**, regardless of content and in whatever format (correspondence, e-mail, grade reports, personnel records, spreadsheets, etc.) **having to do with the business of the University are subject to the State Public Records Act**. Note that the term, public, refers to the records as belonging to the State; it does not imply that all such records are open for inspection by the public. This law requires that all university records be scheduled properly before they can be thrown away or transferred, if required, to University Archives. It is this scheduling process that has been revised.

The attached sheet, "Getting Started in Managing Your Records," outlines the new process that is being followed when the Records Management Program works with a unit to write a records retention schedule for that unit's records. The process is designed to move units into the scheduling process gradually rather than submersing them all at once. Also, a time line is indicated so that units will know what to expect and when. A few trial departments have gone through the process, and they report that it is a big improvement. I hope that you and your unit will find that to be true, also.

On a trial basis this spring as mentioned above, the Records Management Program is offering some assistance to you in getting your unit's records retention and disposition schedule written. Trained, temporary help is available to come to your office/unit and to help your staff inventory all of your records. The Program will share the cost with your unit on a 50/50 basis up to \$500. If interested, please contact Mr. Holt as shown below.

Getting Started in Managing Your Records For Those New to the Records Management Program

1. Appoint a Records Management Liaison for your unit if you do not have one already; an appointment form is available from the Records Management Program.
2. Have your liaison attend the "Introduction to Records Management" workshop as soon as one is scheduled after being appointed.
3. Complete the 'Step One Scheduling Form,' provided at the workshop, and return it to the Records Management Program within one week; you will get a response within seven days.
4. When received from Records Management, complete the more detailed 'Step Two Scheduling Form' by inventorying your unit's records (all types and all locations) and return within one week; again, you will receive a response within seven days.
5. Review the draft retention and disposition schedule that Records Management will send you and return it with any changes; again, please try to respond within one week; then, within seven days you will receive an information copy of the final draft schedule being sent to the Department of Cultural Resources in Raleigh for their review.
6. Sign-off (both the liaison and the director) on the final schedule forwarded by Records Management as soon as the schedule is returned from Raleigh (2-4 weeks); return the signed schedule to Records Management for final approval by the University and Raleigh; your schedule will be official when the approved schedule is returned from Raleigh.
7. If your unit drops out of the scheduling process for any reason before a signed schedule is completed, the Records Management Program will proceed to create a schedule for your unit and have it approved in Raleigh.
8. Note the week indicated by Records Management as the date for your unit's annual records review; this will be noted in the cover letter conveying the signed schedule to you; if a different week would fit your unit better, just notify Records Management.
9. Additionally, your liaison and other staff members, as appropriate, should participate in other training offered by the Records Management Program (www.unc.edu/depts/recman); and, on-site consultation by staff from the Records Management Program is available as needed.

January 1, 2001
Records Management Program
CB# 3926, 907 Wilson Library
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919-962-6402

If you have a retention and disposition schedule in effect for your unit, then this new process really does not have much effect. However, if you do not have an approved schedule and most university departments do not, then I ask that you contact Mr. Frank Holt, University Records Manager, at 2-6402 (recman@unc.edu), and begin the process. Also, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Holt, Ms. Amanda Baker, Records Assistant, (2-6402), or me (3-7991) if you have any questions.

Thanks for your help.

Encl.