Protocol for transferring records to the university archives

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Last revised:	February 8, 2017
Related policies:	Records Management Policy

A. Background and purpose

The Dalhousie University Archives serves as the University's corporate memory by identifying, preserving and making available **University Administrative Records** of enduring value, including textual, photographic, audiovisual and electronic materials. The Archives also acquires records of independent student, alumni and employee organizations, private papers from prominent faculty and alumni, and University publications. Together these records document the work of the University, and tell the story of the Dalhousie community and its people over time.

The University Archives is the repository of inactive University Administrative Records that have sufficient **archival value** to justify long-term preservation. Records can be transferred in paper and electronic form.

Individuals in the **office of origin** and in the University Archives have certain responsibilities that must be carried out to efficiently manage university records. Accordingly, the Archives has a "Protocol for Transferring Records to the University Archives" through which departments may liaise with Archives staff to arrange archives consultations and coordinate transfers.

B. Application

This protocol applies to paper and electronic university records. Offices should designate an individual to deal with matters relating to records management and archiving.

The protocol is intended to provide guidance to Archives staff and those individuals who have been identified as the main contact for departmental shared network storage folders and/or paper record filing systems.

C. Definitions

Archival value – the enduring administrative, historical, legal, fiscal, evidential, informational, intrinsic, or other value that justifies permanent retention of **University Administrative Records** in the University Archives.

Office of origin – The department or administrative unit in which a group of records is created or received, and accumulated, during the course of business.

University Administrative Records – mean records (regardless of format or medium) that support the administration of the University that are created, received, used or maintained by members of the University community in the course of activities undertaken on behalf of, or in the course of employment duties to, the University, and includes electronic records. Examples of such records include those pertaining to office administration, advancement activities, campus services, facilities and property, financial matters, university governance and committees, human resources, information management and technology, research administration, student academic history, student supports, and academic program administration.

D. Guiding principles

1. University Administrative Records are an asset of the University and shall be created, used, retained, preserved, and disposed of in accordance with the Records Management Policy.

2. Offices of origin and the University Archives share responsibility for the management of university records.

3. University records are created in electronic and paper form. Records created electronically should generally be preferred over paper copies.

4. Offices of origin should only transfer records that were created in the office. Offices should generally avoid transferring records that were received or otherwise accumulated by the office.

E. Archives consultation service

Individuals with designated responsibilities for active and semi-active records can contact the University Archives to arrange a consultation on records management and archiving activities.

Archives staff can:

- help identify records that should be transferred to the University Archives;

- provide instructions and training on how to prepare paper and electronic records for transfer to the University Archives; and

- provide basic guidance on how to organize and store active and semi-active paper and electronic records.

Consultations are not mandatory, but individuals must follow the procedures for transferring paper records (Section G) and electronic records (Section H).

Contact Information:

- For paper records consultations: archives@dal.ca

- For audiovisual and electronic records consultations: digital.archives@dal.ca

F. Assess and organize records

Note: These procedures apply to records in any format.

Individuals with designated responsibilities for active and semi-active records should assess and organize records before transferring material to the University Archives:

1. Assess the records and determine disposition and storage requirements. Refer to Appendices A and B of this protocol for guidance determining archival and non-archival records.

2. Organize archival records in a manner that reflects the office of origin's classification and filing procedures:

   o Maintain records series (e.g., keep all committee files together, all student files together, all course outlines together).

   o Maintain locally meaningful information such as file and folder naming conventions, unique identifiers, etc.

3. Determine total storage requirements of paper records to be transferred.

4. Determine file formats, software requirements, and total storage requirements of electronic records to be transferred.

G. Transfer paper records to university archives

Note: Paper records packed incorrectly, including those in photocopy paper boxes or hanging file folders, or transfers without inventories will be returned to the transferring office.

Office of origin – Pack records for transfer

1. Pack records in standard records boxes. University Archives recommends archival-quality boxes manufactured by vendors such as Bankers Box or Hollinger. **Do not pack files in photocopy paper boxes.** They do not fit on the shelving in the Archives.

2. Leave documents in their original file folders. Pack folders into the box with the folder labels clearly visible when the box lid is open.

3. Remove documents from binders or hanging files and place in file folders as necessary. This may require procurement of file folders. University Archives recommends archival-quality file folders manufactured by vendors such as TabuFile.

4. Fill each box with files. File folders should be packed in original sequence (e.g.,

alphabetical order, chronological order, etc.). Files should not be warped or floppy inside the box. The box should not bulge.

5. Label each box with department or unit name, box number and date of transfer.

Office of origin – Create file list(s) and complete transfer form

1. Create a file list for each box. The purpose of the file list is to:

    a. facilitate future access requests from the office;
    b. provide information to the Archives that will help ensure fulsome accession records are created for each transfer; and
    c. provide information to the Archives that will help ensure the records are appropriately secured.

2. File lists should contain, at a minimum, the following information:

    a. Box number
    b. Folder number
    c. Series or classification of folder
    d. Title of folder
    e. Date(s) of creation (provided in two columns)
    f. Optional notes

    Ensure that commonly used search terms are used in the description of each file (e.g. names of people or committees, dates, type of document, etc.).

3. Complete a records transfer form (available on University Archives website). **Two copies of the transfer form must be signed by the individual authorizing the transfer.**

4. Send scanned copy of the signed transfer form and file list(s) to archives@dal.ca as email attachments.

5. Place both signed transfer forms in first box. One copy will be returned to the office of origin after it is countersigned by the individual authorizing acceptance of the records into University Archives storage.

6. Place printed file list inside each box.

7. Maintain a copy of all transfer forms and file lists to facilitate access to records after they have been transferred to the University Archives.

Office of origin – Physically transfer records to the University Archives

1. Contact the University Archives to arrange a delivery time.

2. Send the boxes via Facilities Management transportation services to:

> Dalhousie University Archives
> 5th Floor, Killam Memorial Library
> 6225 University Avenue
> Halifax, NS B3H 4R2

University Archives – Receive and accession transferred files

1. Receive boxes from Facilities Management.

2. Contact transferring office to acknowledge receipt of transfer.

3. Assess boxes and liaise with office of origin as necessary.

4. Accession material and place boxes in University Archives storage.

5. Sign both copies of transfer forms when accessioning is complete.

6. Retain one copy of signed transfer form.

7. Send one copy of signed transfer form and copy of the accession record back to office of origin.

H. Transfer electronic records to the university archives

Note: Offices must grant Archives staff access to an "archives transfer" folder to enable electronic record transfers. Electronic records prepared incorrectly will not be accepted.

Office of origin – Submit electronic records transfer request

1. Complete an online electronic records transfer request form available on the University Archives website.

2. Request an "archives transfer" folder from Information Technology Services and grant permissions to digital.archives@dal.ca. The "archives transfer" folder must be created as a top-level folder in the office of origin's NAS share drive.

University Archives – review transfer request and determine response

1. Acknowledge receipt of transfer request.

2. Review transfer request.

3. Determine response (accept transfer; more information required; transfer cannot be accepted at this time).

Office of origin – Prepare records for transfer

1. Create sub-folders in the "archives transfer" folder that mimic the office of origin's active file directory.

2. **Move** archival records from the active file directory into the "archives transfer" folder. **Files must be moved out of the active file directory**.

3. Do not include semi-inactive electronic records that will eventually be deleted.

4. Send notification to digital.archives@dal.ca that files in the "archives transfer" folder are ready to transfer. Notifications should include confirmation that electronic records identified in the transfer request form have been **moved** into

the "archives transfer" folder.

University Archives – Receive and accession transferred electronic records

1. Acknowledge receipt of notification that "archives transfer" folder is ready for processing.

2. Assess contents of "archives transfer" folder and liaise with office of origin as necessary.

3. Use digital archiving tools to create a detailed inventory of files and folders in "archives transfer" folder.

4. Use digital archiving tools to package the contents of the "archives transfer" into one or more "bags" that conform to the BagIt File Packaging Specification and transfer the "bags" to University Archives digital storage.

5. Accession the transferred material.

6. Send a printed copy of the accession record and inventory back to office of origin.

7. Authorize office of origin to delete files in the "archives transfer" folder.

I. Archives storage considerations

The University Archives does not have adequate space in the Killam Memorial Library for storage of all physical University Administrative Records. Archives storage space is, therefore, reserved for University Records scheduled for permanent retention and is allocated at the discretion of the University Archivist.

The University Archives does not provide physical storage for inactive records that are scheduled to be destroyed after their retention requirements (e.g., payroll records, receipts and invoices, etc.).

The University Archives does not provide digital storage for inactive electronic records that are scheduled to be destroyed after their retention requirements.

J. Administrative structure

1. This protocol falls under the authority of the University Librarian.

2. The University Librarian delegates authority for this protocol to the University Archivist.

3. Archives staff shall prepare and maintain accurate records of all records accessioned into University Archives storage.

4. Offices of origin are responsible for knowing what records they have placed in University Archives storage.

Document control

Version	Date	Author	Version Notes
Version 1	September 13, 2016	Creighton Barrett	Merges and replaces "Guidelines for Identifying University Records" and "Guidelines for Transferring University Records to the Archives" documents written by Jennifer Lambert.
			Incorporates definitions from the University Records Management Policy and terms adapted from *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology* published by the Society of American Archivists.
			Provides new guidance on transferring electronic records.
			This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-

			NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.
Version 2	February 8, 2017	Creighton Barrett	Minor formatting revisions and corrections to references provided in Section E.
			Revisions to procedures in Section H for Archives staff receiving transfers of electronic records.
			This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Appendix A – Examples of archival university records

The following types of materials can generally be considered archival and may be transferred to the University Archives by the office of origin:

- Committee records, including agendas, meeting minutes, and reports

- Academic program administration records, including course syllabi

- Charters and by-laws, minutes and proceedings, and final reports of departments, schools, committees or task forces

- Publications, including newsletters, handbooks, annual reports, program announcements, directories, catalogues, brochures, posters, websites and press releases

- Records that document decision-making processes, including policy and procedure documents and emails

- Records that document changes to faculty, department or unit structures, including organizational charts

- Records that document program, curricula or project development and review, including self-study and accreditation reports

- Correspondence, including email, and subject files of faculty, department and program heads, as well as of senior administrators

- Histories of departments, schools, and faculties

- Photographs, audio and video recordings, architectural drawings and maps

- Special events records, such as those documenting relationships with the community, government or other institutions

Appendix B – Examples of non-archival university records

The following types of material will *not* be accepted by the Archives without prior consultation:

- Exact duplicate copies of anything

- Routine correspondence (e.g., requests and acknowledgments)

- Records of routine matters (e.g., requests for leave, purchase orders, receipts)

- Reference files or research materials, including news clippings, publications, and form letters from other offices of origin

- Rough drafts of publications, articles or reports

- Blank forms, letterhead, or other stationery

- Digitized files of paper records when the paper records are the official copy

- Copies of commercial software and operating system software