



Category:  
Legal and Compliance

Responsible Office:  
[University Counsel](#)

**Policy Title:**  
Records Retention and Disposition

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This policy item applies to:  
State-Operated Campuses

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## Summary

Retention and disposition of official records of the campuses of the State University of New York are governed by the NYS Arts and Cultural Affairs Law. Such records may not be destroyed unless in conformity with the [General Retention and Disposition Schedule for New York State Government Records](#) with respect to categories of state government records included therein or with the [State University of New York Records Retention and Disposition Schedule](#) with respect to education and other SUNY-specific records. Requests to destroy paper records after transfer from paper to digital form must be approved by the State Archives unless such dispositions are pre-approved under the SUNY Records Retention Schedule for that category.

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## Policy

### Retention and Disposition of Official State-operated Campus and SUNY Records

- A. In accordance with Section 57.05 of the NYS Arts and Cultural Affairs Law, official records of the state-operated campuses of the State University of New York and SUNY System Administration must be retained and may not be destroyed unless pursuant to applicable records retention schedules. For SUNY-specific records (for example, student records and hospital records), campuses shall adhere to the SUNY Records Retention and Disposition Schedule (SUNY Schedule) (see Appendices section). For records not covered by the SUNY Schedule and which involve common types of State agency records (for example, financial, personnel, technology), campuses must adhere to the General Retention and Disposition Schedule for New York State Government Records (State Schedule).
- B. The SUNY Schedule dictates minimum retention requirements. Campuses wishing to establish retention schedules with shorter retention periods must seek approval of the State Archives through the SUNY Records Management Officer.
- C. Periodically, campuses or the System Administration may decide to replace official records in paper with electronic or digital copies. Most records in the SUNY Schedule have been pre-authorized for replacement in the SUNY Records Retention Schedule such that paper records which have been scanned or otherwise converted may be destroyed prior to the end of their retention period. If not pre-authorized, replacement and

destruction of paper records can occur only upon approval by State Archives. Such approval requests shall be made by the SUNY Records Management Officer upon request of the campus concerned. Campuses intending to replace paper records with electronic or imaged copies are required to ensure that:

- (1) the images will accurately and completely reproduce all the information in the records being imaged;
- (2) the imaged records will not be rendered unusable due to changing or proprietary technology before their retention and preservation requirements are met;
- (3) the imaging system will not permit additions, deletions, or changes to the images without leaving a record of such additions, deletions, or changes; and
- (4) designees of the State University of New York will be able to authenticate the imaged records by competent testimony or affidavit which shall include the manner or method by which tampering or degradation of the reproduction is prevented.

D. Campuses shall utilize appropriate means to ensure compliance with the applicable schedules and retention periods. Records that have reached the end of their retention period shall be destroyed by appropriate means depending on the contents and nature of the records giving due consideration to the confidentiality of the information contained therein. Notification that the records are subject to a litigation hold or are otherwise relevant to a legal action or audit shall result in suspension of routine destruction activities until the records are no longer needed as determined by University Counsel.

### **Records Management**

SUNY's Records Management Officer (RMO) is currently the Director of Compliance. Each campus should designate a local records management officer and notify the SUNY RMO of such designation. It is the responsibility of the campus RMO to report annually, by September 1 of each year, to the SUNY RMO on disposition actions taken by such campus during the previous academic year and to maintain the campus inventory of records. Requests for approval of retention schedules with shorter retention periods should be submitted by a campus through their local RMO to the SUNY RMO for transmittal to State Archives.

### **Community College Records**

Records maintained by the Community Colleges operating under the program of the State University of New York are governed by one of two schedules established by State Archives. [MI-1](#) schedule (for all miscellaneous governments) is to be followed by Adirondack, Columbia-Greene, Corning, Fulton-Montgomery, Jamestown, North Country and Tompkins-Cortland Community Colleges and the Fashion Institute of Technology. [CO-2](#) schedule (for county governments) should be followed by all other Community Colleges.

### **Archival and Historical Records**

In order to preserve records of historical and archival value, certain categories of records are to be retained permanently. Among these are Presidents' annual reports, minutes of campus councils, governance organization minutes or handbooks, inaugural or commencement records and important documents generated by or for the campuses such as strategic plans, accreditation reports, etc. Campuses should adhere carefully to the schedules for such records, retain them in a safe place and ensure their preservation when they are no longer needed on a daily basis.

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## **Definitions**

In support of this policy, the following definitions are included:

**Records** - all books, papers, microforms, computer-readable tapes, discs or other media, maps, photographs, film, video and sound recordings, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by State University of New York or its campuses in pursuance of law or in connection with the transaction of University business and retained by the University as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities. Library or museum materials made or acquired and preserved solely for

reference or exhibition purposes, extra copies of documents preserved only for convenience of reference, and stocks of publications and of blank forms shall not be deemed to constitute records.

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## Other Related Information

[NYS Archives web site](#)

[SUNY Compliance Website Records Retention Webpage](#)

[SUNY Email Retention Guidance](#)

[Records Retention and Disposition at SUNY Campuses Guidance](#)

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## Procedures

In support of this policy, the following links and/or references to related procedures are included:

[SUNY Procedure Document No. 6610](#) - Legal Proceeding Preparation (E-Discovery) Procedure

[SUNY Procedure Document No. 6608](#) - Information Security Guidelines, Part 1: Campus Programs & Preserving Confidentiality

Schedules for Community Colleges:

[MI-1](#) schedule (for all miscellaneous governments) is to be followed by Adirondack, Columbia-Greene, Corning, Fulton-Montgomery, Jamestown, North Country and Tompkins-Cortland Community Colleges and the Fashion Institute of Technology.

[CO-2](#) schedule (for county governments) should be followed by all other Community Colleges.

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## Forms

Where applicable, this section contains links and/or references to forms as they relate to this policy:

[Instructions for Completing and Submitting Records Disposition Authorization Forms](#) (REC-3, REC-4, and REC-5):

[REC-3](#)

[REC-4](#)

[REC-5](#)

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## Authority

Where applicable, this section contains links and/or references to the authority governing this policy:

[NYS Arts and Cultural Affairs Law Section 57.05](#)

[Commissioner's Regulations 8 NYCRR Part 188](#)

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## History

This section contains links and/or references to the history relevant to this policy:

Memorandum to Presidents, dated April 1, 2010 regarding Records Retention Policy & Schedules

Memorandum to Presidents Vol. 92, No. 5, dated October 5, 1992 regarding Campus Records and Archives

Memorandum to Campus Business Officers from Brian T. Stenson dated May 19, 1997 regarding General Retention and Disposition Schedule for New York State Government Records

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