



Mount Holyoke College Records Retention Policy

In the course of accomplishing the work of the College, a wide variety of written material is created in both paper and electronic forms. Records retention policies and regulations are identical regardless of the form in which the records exist—paper or electronic. There are two important categories of material that must be retained and disposed of with particular care—records deemed to have historic value and records governed by regulation.

Material of historical interest should be retained in perpetuity to preserve important information about the College. These materials are the purview of Archives and Special Collections, whose responsibility it is to develop policies regarding the definition and retention of historic records.

In order to comply with various federal and state regulations, many College records must be kept for specified periods of time. This establishes the minimum period for which records must be retained. In addition, accomplishing the work of the College may in some instances require that records be retained longer than the minimum required by statute. Consistency in handling such records is important and departmental policies should be established and then adhered to. Once the records have served their purpose and the regulatory requirements have been satisfied, these materials should be disposed of in an appropriate manner. Records containing personal or confidential information must be destroyed by shredding or otherwise permanently removing the information. Destruction of records in a manner inconsistent with College or departmental policy can result in a liability for the institution and possibly for the individual.

Because the College does not have a centralized records management function, each department is responsible for the retention and disposal the records it generates or receives. The following schedule <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/lits/network/doc/policies/privacy-security/retentent.sched.xls> identifies the various documents that are subject to regulation, the statutory retention requirement, the College's retention policy and the office of record. Once materials have reached the end of their regulatory retention period, the College Archives and Special Collections should be consulted to determine if they have historic value.

In many cases, multiple copies of records exist. The office of record defines the department that is officially responsible for retaining and, if appropriate, disposing of the materials. Other copies of the materials represent working copies and can be retained or disposed of at the discretion of the user, with appropriate consideration to the safeguarding of private and confidential information. An example of this is Board of Trustees materials. A number of offices have copies of minutes and other Board materials. However, the office of record is that of the Secretary to the Board, and that is the area responsible for insuring that the

materials are complete, retained and disposed of at the appropriate time and consulting with Archives and Special Collections about which represent permanent records of the institution.

**THE Campus Privacy and
Security Committee
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