POLICY 1.30 – University Records and Archives

Policy Category: General

Effective Date: November 22, 2001

Supersedes: (NEW)

GENERAL

1.00 The University of Western Ontario is committed to the efficient and effective management of its records and the preservation of its institutional memory through the establishment of a University Archives.

2.00 For the purposes of this policy, the term "record" means any information, however recorded, whether in manuscript, printed, mechanical or electronic form, and any copy thereof, but does not include a computer program or any other mechanism that produces records.

POLICY

Mandate

3.00 The University will establish a University Archives with the following mandate:

(a) to provide comprehensive records management services to the Board of Governors and Senate, Faculty councils, academic and administrative units, and committees of the University; and

(b) to identify, acquire, arrange, describe, preserve, promote the use of, and make available those University records and related archival materials from other sources which are of enduring historical, legal, fiscal and administrative value.

4.00 All records created, received, used or maintained by officers and employees in the course of their duties on behalf of the University are the property of the University. Officers or employees leaving their positions with the University shall leave all records for their successors. This applies to both temporary and permanent departures, including transfers within the University.

5.00 Notwithstanding section 4.00, the provisions of this policy do not apply to the records that are created or acquired by faculty members or other officers or employees pursuant to their individual responsibilities for teaching or research, unless the records are donated to the University Archives.

6.00 The University Archives is the designated repository for all permanently valuable records of the University that contain information about its history, organization, structure and functions.

Goals

7.00 The goals of the University Archives are:

(a) to assist with and promote the efficient and effective management of all records created, received, used and maintained throughout the University;

(b) to preserve the University's institutional memory by identifying, acquiring, and protecting its permanently valuable records;

(c) to assist with and promote compliance with the University Guidelines on Access to Information and Protection of Privacy and any statutory requirements relating to the collection, use, disclosure, retention and disposal of University records;

(d) to acquire and preserve records of affiliated institutions and campus organizations, personal papers of individuals, and collections of material from other sources that document the life of the University community;

(e) to provide adequate facilities and services for the storage and retrieval of semi-active records and the storage, preservation and use of archival records;

(f) to provide the information necessary to support current and future decision-making and to permit the University to meet institutional accountability requirements;

(g) to promote an understanding of the history, organization, structure, programs and functions of the University; and

(h) to encourage teaching and support research using archival records.

President's Advisory Committee on University Records and Archives

8.00 The University will establish a President's Advisory Committee on University Records and Archives (PACURA) with the following composition:

(a) Provost & Vice-President (Academic) (or designate)
(b) Vice-President (Operations & Finance) (or designate)
(c) Vice-President (Research) (or designate)
(d) Vice-President (University Advancement) (or designate)
(e) Vice-Provost (Academic Programs) (or designate)
(f) University Librarian
(g) Secretary of the University (or designate)
(h) President, Alumni Association (or designate)
(i) Internal Auditor
(j) University Archivist
(k) Two members appointed by the President

9.00 The Chair will be elected annually from among the members of the Committee and can hold that position for three consecutive one-year terms. The University Archivist will act as Executive Secretary to the Committee.

10.00 The terms of reference of the President's Advisory Committee on University Records and Archives are:

(a) to advise the President on the policies, activities and initiatives of the University Archives;

(b) to review and approve records management and archives operating policies developed to support implementation of specific components of the University Records and Archives Policy;

(c) to review and provide direction to the University Archivist on proposed program initiatives, the deaccessioning of existing archival holdings, or the potential acquisition of non-University materials that are of significant extent or value;

(d) to act as a liaison between the University Archives and those officers and employees of their respective academic or administrative units who are interested in or whose work is affected by the programs of the University Archives; and

(e) to support the University Archives in ensuring the preservation and use of the University's permanently valuable records.

11.00 The Committee is not responsible for overseeing the day-to-day administration or operation of the University Archives or for developing or implementing records management or archives procedures or practices.

12.00 The Committee must meet at least twice per calendar year, with meetings held at the call of the Chair.

13.00 The Committee must submit an annual report to the President outlining the activities of the University Archives over the past year.

Records Management Services

14.00 The University will, in the course of normal business, create and maintain adequate, reliable and usable records in order to protect and preserve its interests and support legal, fiscal, administrative and operational requirements. The effective management of these records and the maintenance of their associated records-keeping systems will be supported by records management policies, procedures and practices that should be integrated into the normal course of business.

15.00 The University Archives will provide the Board of Governors and Senate, Faculty councils, academic and administrative units, and committees of the University with specific records management services, procedures and practices that include classification systems to improve control and retrieval, semi-active records storage to reduce office storage requirements while ensuring records are available as long as required, vital records identification and protection, alternative media conversion and storage, electronic records management, and records retention and disposal schedules.

16.00 The University Archives will assist officers and employees in managing their records efficiently and effectively by providing a comprehensive advisory and training service.

Acquiring Archival Materials

17.00 The University Archives will acquire University records which document the University's history, organization, structure, programs and functions. To augment the information in these records, the University Archives may also acquire the records of affiliated institutions and campus organizations, the personal papers of individuals, and collections of material from other sources that document the life of the University community.

18.00 The University Archives will acquire records in all media formats, regardless of physical form or characteristics. However, this does not include the regular acquisition of artefacts or similar museum materials; these will only be acquired selectively if they relate directly to, and support the understanding, use and/or display of, a specific archival document.

19.00 The scope of acquisition is limited to the following categories of records:

(a) Records of the University: Records created, received, used and maintained by the Board of Governors and Senate, Faculty councils, academic and administrative units, and committees of the University that are of enduring historical, legal, fiscal and administrative value, particularly those that document the functions, policies and decisions of the University;

(b) Records of Affiliated Institutions: Records of those affiliated institutions, such as colleges, hospitals, or research institutes, that wish to enter into mutually acceptable internal transfer agreement, that document their relationship to the University;

(c) Records of Campus Organizations: Records of faculty, student or alumni clubs, groups, societies and other associations that document the life of the University community;

(d) Papers of Individuals: Papers of faculty, staff or other individuals associated with the University that document the life of the University community; and

(e) Collections: Archival materials collected by individuals or organizations that document the history of the University or the life of the University community.

20.00 With the exception of University records, which are the sole purview of the University Archives, the acquisition of other archival materials will be carried out in cooperation with, and in consideration of the mandates of, other formally constituted archives. Items offered to the University Archives that appear to be more appropriately acquired by another archives will be referred to that institution for review.

21.00 The University Archives will acquire records by the following means:

(a) Internal Transfer: Transfers of official records will be received from the Board of Governors and Senate, Faculty councils, academic and administrative units, and committees of the University through the application of approved Records Retention and Disposal Schedules or, for non-scheduled records, by direct transfer from the creating unit. Where an agreement with an affiliated institution has been implemented, the records of that institution will also be acquired by this means.

(b) Donation: Donations of the records of campus organizations, personal papers, or collections will be accepted in accordance with terms negotiated by the owner and the University Archivist and documented in a formal donation agreement. All materials donated to the University Archives become the property of University.

(c) Loan: Short term loans of records of campus organizations, personal papers or collections will be accepted only for the purpose of making copies for reference purposes, where it has proven impossible to negotiate formal donation, or preparing and mounting a public display of archival materials. The original material loaned for copying will not be accessioned and will be returned to the owner as soon as the copying is completed and verified. Long term loans that do not involve the formal transfer of ownership will not be accepted.

(d) Purchase: Purchase of records which have been alienated from the University, records of affiliated institutions or campus organizations, personal papers or collections will be made only if it proves impossible to acquire the material by any other means and the items may otherwise be lost. Purchases may include direct sales or bids at auctions. All purchases are subject to the availability of funds and/or prior budget approval.

22.00 If requested by a donor, an appraisal of the fair market value of the donated material that is being kept by the University Archives may be determined. The appraisal will not be carried out until after the material has been formally acquired by the University. This process will be conducted in accordance with the regulations of the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board, National Archival Appraisal Board, and established University practices.

23.00 At the discretion of the University Archivist, acquisition of materials other than University records may be carried out actively (identifying potential sources and soliciting donations) or passively (responding only to offers to donate). If a potential acquisition involves material of significant extent or value, details of the proposal and its implications will be submitted to the President's Advisory Committee on University Records & Archives for review and direction.

24.00 In special circumstances, the University Archives may consider acquiring materials that are outside the normal scope of acquisition activity in order to support research in a particular field. However, all such potential acquisitions must be submitted to the President's Advisory Committee on University Records & Archives for approval or referral, as appropriate, on a case-by-case basis.

Deaccessioning Archival Materials

25.00 Archival material in the possession of the University Archives may be permanently removed from its holdings through the process of deaccessioning if it is determined that it is no longer appropriate for the material to be retained.

26.00 All proposals to deaccession archival material must be submitted to the President's Advisory Committee on University Records & Archives for approval or referral, as appropriate.

27.00 Information about deaccessioned material will be kept by the University Archives and made available upon request.

Loans and Returns

28.00 Original materials in the University Archives do not circulate. If the temporary loan or return of material is requested, copies will normally be substituted for the originals.

29.00 At the discretion of the University Archivist, original materials may be loaned or returned to the originating office or donor for a specified period of time. Permanent loans or open ended returns are not permitted. Original material that has been loaned to the University Archives for copying or display purposes cannot be loaned to a third party without the express permission of the owner.

Access to Archival Materials

30.00 Unless otherwise specified below, the holdings of the University Archives are available for research and reference use by staff, faculty, students, alumni, researchers and the public.

31.00 University records transferred from their originating office to semi-active storage as part of the records management service have not been accessioned by the University Archives and do not form part of its archival holdings. These records remain the property of the originating office. All access requests received from anyone other than designated staff of the originating office will be referred to the unit head.

32.00 Restrictions on access to the holdings of the University Archives will be limited and specific and apply as follows:

(a) Records of the University: Access is open to all authorized staff from the originating office. For all other users, both internal and external, access is determined by the unit head of the originating office in accordance with the University Guidelines on Access to Information and Protection of Privacy, any applicable federal and provincial legislation, and any other relevant internal agreements and documents.

(b) Records of Affiliated Institutions: Access is subject to any restrictions agreed to by the University Archivist during negotiations with the originating institution.

(c) Records of Campus Organizations: Access is subject to any restrictions agreed to by the University Archivist during negotiations with the creator and/or donor of the records.

(d) Papers of Individuals: Access is subject to any restrictions agreed to by the University Archivist during negotiations with the creator and/or donor of the papers.

(e) Collections: Access is subject to any restrictions agreed to by the University Archivist during negotiations with the creator and/or donor of the collection.

(f) Unprocessed Material: Access to any unprocessed official University records, records of affiliated institutions or campus organizations, personal papers or collections may be restricted at the discretion of the University Archivist, pending a review to ensure that no personal or other confidential information is contained in the documents and to ensure that access is otherwise permitted in accordance with (a) to (e) above.

(g) Fragile, Valuable or Rare Material: Access to originals may be restricted at the discretion of the University Archivist in order to protect them from damage or loss, in which case copies will be substituted for reference purposes.

33.00 Details of all access restrictions will be described in the appropriate archives finding aids.