



Name of Policy: University Records Policy

Policy #:

Responsibility: Dean of Libraries and Archives

Approving Authority: President

Original Approval Date: February 3, 2025

Date of Most Recent Review:

A. OVERVIEW

Acadia's University Archives is responsible for two distinct collections of records and additionally serves as the Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada's (CBAC) designated repository for Baptist churches in Atlantic Canada. The two collections of records owned by Acadia are as follows:

- (1) Archives of the Annapolis Valley/Minas Basin area
- (2) Archives of Acadia University and Affiliates

For a detailed description of these collections, see the Library Collection Development Policy.

The goals and objectives of the University Archives include:

- (1) Preserving and providing access to institutional and community records of value to Acadia and the broader community;
- (2) Providing reference services to assist operations;
- (3) Promoting knowledge and understanding of the history and origins of the University and communities in the Annapolis Valley through teaching and outreach;
- (4) Serving scholarship and research;
- (5) Preserving context of records and ensuring their, reliability, integrity, and authenticity.

B. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to

- (1) establish a framework for acquiring and preserving Acadia University records;
- (2) to define roles and responsibilities relating to the preservation of institutional records of enduring value;

- (3) to define generally applied access restrictions for institutional University records.

C. SCOPE

This policy applies to Acadia University institutional records created and received by Acadia offices and departments. This policy does not apply to private records donations relating to Acadia University, including faculty records or records produced by institutions affiliated with Acadia University but not under the purview of the Acadia University Board of Governors. This policy also does not apply to records related to teaching and research.

D. POLICY STATEMENT

1. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.1 In the absence of a comprehensive records management program, the University faces significant challenges in effectively managing its records. These challenges include inconsistent record-keeping practices across departments, potential loss of valuable institutional knowledge, and difficulties in ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. Recognizing these challenges, it is critical for University departments and the Archives to work collaboratively and establish clear roles and responsibilities.

Archives staff and University offices and departments will work collaboratively to identify records of enduring value for permanent preservation. The Archives can provide guidance on the kinds of records that should be permanently preserved. Archives cannot determine retention or disposition of documents that will not be transferred to the Archives. The Archives is not responsible for active or semi-active University records.

Acadia University offices and departments are responsible for:

- Initiating requests to transfer records to the Archives
- Completing inventories of records for transfer
- Compliance with legal and regulatory requirements for active and semi-active records
- Completing transfer agreements to transfer custody of records from the originating office to the Archives



- Ensuring transitory records originating from their department or office are not transferred to the Archives
- Identifying privacy and access restrictions for records transferred to the Archives, in consultation with Archives staff
- Arranging transportation of large volumes of records to the Archives with physical plant after transfer agreements have been signed

The Archives is responsible for:

- Developing and recommending policies, priorities, and procedures
- Preserving records transferred from Acadia University offices and departments
- Maintaining transfer agreement paperwork
- Arranging and describing materials received from offices and departments according to archival standards
- Providing access to records and applying access restrictions

2. ACCEPTED RECORDS

2.1 The vast majority of institutional records are of short-term value. Only records with long-term value will be accepted by the Archives.

In the absence of a comprehensive records management program and published retention schedules for University records, the Archives will collect the following types of inactive records for long-term preservation:

- Executive files and correspondence
- Planning
- Policies and procedures (final only, no drafts)
- Project and program management
- Select memorabilia
- Select communications
- Governance documents (including minutes and working documents)
- Accreditation
- Program reviews
- Business continuity records
- Bylaws
- Collective agreements

Things we will not accept:

- Student records



- Personnel records
- Financial records
- Contracts at the departmental level

3. ACCESS AND RESTRICTIONS

3.1 Institutional records will be closed for a period of up to 50 years after the date of creation. These records may be accessed only by authorized staff from the office of origin for University business. Other University personnel may be given permission to access and/or duplicate records for University business with written permission from the Head or Director of the office of origin. Published items like speeches, policies, and public reports are open immediately after processing. Senate, Board of Governors, and other ad-hoc presidential committee meeting minutes and agendas are open immediately after processing. No access will be provided to those outside the office of origin until records have been processed by Archives staff and reviewed for restrictions.

Archives staff must comply with relevant privacy legislation, which may restrict access to records containing personal information.

Archives staff have access to all records to perform normal archival work on materials.

3.1.1 TYPES OF RESTRICTIONS

There are two types of restrictions that may be applied to University Records: general restrictions and specific restrictions.

General restrictions are applicable to classes of materials or kinds of information wherever they are found. Records may have general restrictions applied by an Archivist because of presence of personal information, confidential business and financial information, confidential employment, personnel, or student information, records related to investigations, or for compliance with provincial privacy legislation (FOIPOP). Access to original documents may also be restricted due to the fragility of records, in which case, duplicates may be created.

Specific restrictions are restrictions specified by the transferring office or donor and apply to a specific body of material, usually for a specific length of time. Information about specific restrictions will



be found in the transfer agreement or the accession record. General restrictions supersede specific restrictions.

External researchers using university records are required to complete a research agreement. This information will not be shared with anyone outside the Archives.

4. PROCESSING

4.1 Archives staff relies on departments to submit records inventories at the time of transfer to help expedite the process of making materials accessible to researchers. University offices and departments are asked to identify personal information and restrictions upon transfer.

University records will be minimally processed at a file level. Access restrictions are applied during processing at a file level. We do not redact individual items. Digital University records will ordinarily not be rearranged or have duplicates removed.

During processing, Archives staff may identify materials that are not of enduring value. Those materials will be returned to the department via Physical Plant at the department's expense. Archives staff cannot dispose of University records.

5. DEACCESSIONING

5.1 Over time the Archives has accumulated legacy departmental records that are not of enduring value. The Archives may, in consultation with departments and offices on campus, deaccession University records. Archives staff will flag material for discard and return material to departments and offices. The archives retains information about records that are deaccessioned.

E. DEFINITIONS

(1)	Active records:	Records currently in use and frequently accessed. They are needed for ongoing business operations and are kept in a location that allows for easy retrieval.
(2)	Inactive records:	Inactive records: Records no longer in active use and not needed for ongoing business operations. They may be retained for legal, regulatory, or historical reasons but they are not



		accessed regularly. Inactive records may be stored in the archives where they can be preserved but are not easily accessible for day-to-day operations.
(3)	Record:	Recorded information created, received, or maintained by an organization or individual in the normal course of business.
(4)	Retention:	Policies and practices governing how long records are kept before they are destroyed or sent to the archives for permanent preservation.
(5)	Semi-active records:	Records not actively used on a daily basis but may still be needed for reference or compliance purposes. Semi-active records are usually stored in a less accessible location but must be retrievable when needed.

F. RELATED POLICIES

- Vaughan Memorial Library Collection Development Policy

G. RELATED LEGISLATION

- *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*

H. REVISION HISTORY

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Description of Change	Sections	Person who Entered Revision (Position Title)	Person who Authorized Revision (Position Title)
02/27/2025	Formatting		Ciaran Purdome (Digital Archivist)	Jennifer Richard (Dean of Libraries and Archives)

