

## **Managing Records in College Offices Policy**

December 11, 2007

### **Policy:**

Individual offices will work with College Archives to develop and use an organized, cost effective, system to manage records throughout their life cycle (creation, use, maintenance, and ultimate disposition) using the Connecticut College Records Retention Schedules in this document for guidance.

### ***Background:***

A goal of a records management program is to achieve efficient and economic control of the active information materials in an office and dispose of inactive records with no administrative or historical value in a sensible and systematic way. Participating in the College Records Management Program will save offices time, money and resources while improving efficiency and protecting the college from unplanned loss or retention of records.

An organized system of managing records is economical because it saves time during retrieval, and prevents lost files and filing duplicate records. An efficient filing system, a sound records classification system and appropriate filing equipment can solve most common records management problems caused by space limitations, lack of standard language or system and cost issues.

A balance between the needs of a department or office and established records management principles is a priority of the College Records Management Program. This can be accomplished by College Archives staff and college department office staff working together to establish guidelines that are appropriate for their needs. Destroying, recycling or removing historically significant inactive records to the College Archives according to established schedules allows more effective use of active records and minimizes potential legal problems by maintaining the records that need to be kept for the required length of time.

It is important for institutions to establish recognized records retention schedules as legal issues arise from keeping records too long as often as for destroying records too quickly. Minimum retention ranges for College records are established by federal and state authority. To comply with lawful maintenance of records, offices should follow guidelines established by the State of Connecticut (see authorized retention tables at <<http://www.cslib.org/retstate.htm>>).

The College Archives can centrally manage inactive records more efficiently than individual offices, particularly if the inactive records will eventually be transferred to the Archives for permanent retention. The Archives staff should be contacted for advice on performing a records survey to determine the needs of College offices. Inactive records are always available to the offices of origin, and records retrieval is a standard process. The College Archives and the original office will develop specific retention schedules relative to an office's needs.