The purpose of the Records Management Program is to institute a structured and organized system of record keeping that ensures records are retained as long as required for administrative, legal, and fiscal purposes, and to encourage the systematic disposal of records that are no longer needed.

Instituting a structured system of record keeping is directed by the CUNY Records Retention and Disposition Schedule, which has been adapted from the Records Retention and Disposition Schedule MI-1 issued in 2006 by the State Archives program of the New York State Education Department pursuant to Section 57.25 of the Arts and Cultural Affairs Law and Part 185, Title 8 of the Official Compilation of Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York. If you wish to review the original document, you may access it here: [http://sps.cuny.edu/filestore/2/1/0/2_39804f05652d43d/2102_468e893a6881fcb.pdf](http://sps.cuny.edu/filestore/2/1/0/2_39804f05652d43d/2102_468e893a6881fcb.pdf)

This Schedule has been broken down into specific department schedules. These schedules indicate the minimum length of time that college and University officials must retain their records before the records may be disposed of legally. All CUNY records must be retained in accordance with the retention periods and guidelines specified in the Schedule and in any related policies, procedures, guidelines, or directives that CUNY has issued or may issue in the future.

As required by the CUNY Records Management Program, CUNY SPS has identified the Academic Operations Team, and specifically Mary Hannigan, as the Records Management Coordinator. The Records Management Coordinator’s role is to coordinate the proper retention and disposition of records at the college and to report annually on the disposition of records at the college to the University Records Management Coordinator. The functions of the Records Management Coordinator are separate from those of the Records Access Officer at the college. At some colleges all of these functions may be performed by the same individual, however, the Records Access Officer for CUNY SPS is provided through CUNY’s Office of Legal Affairs.

### DOCUMENT RETENTION SCHEDULE

Many of the items on the Schedule are broad and describe the purpose or function of records rather than identify individual documents and forms.

Retention periods on this Schedule apply to one “official” copy designated by the college or the University, regardless of physical form or characteristic (paper, microfilm, computer disk or tape, or other medium), unless otherwise stated. No matter what the medium, college and University officials must ensure that the information will be retained for the specified retention period.

Duplicate copies of records created for administrative convenience, including copies maintained on different media (paper, electronic, etc.), should be disposed of when no longer needed, except where retention is specified elsewhere on this Schedule. As a reminder, duplicates, as unofficial records, are outside the document retention system, but when being destroyed must be shredded if they contain any of the following:

- social security numbers
- drivers licenses or other government-issued identification
- credit card, bank account and other financially related numbers
- user IDs with passwords
- students records (including grades, GPAs, roster information, etc.)
- health records

---

Updated: September 4, 2014
INITIAL ASSESSMENT

To begin the preparation of each department’s document retention schedule, an initial assessment meeting is held with the Records Management Coordinator (“RMC”), the department’s director (and/or his/her representative), and CUNY’s University Records Management Specialist. These meetings are approximately one hour in length, during which the University Specialist reviews the program and learns which documents the department maintains.

Following the assessment meeting a customized departmental schedule is developed by the University Records Management Specialist which is sent to the SPS RMC to review with the department director.

After the initial assessment has been concluded, RMC sends a follow- up email to the department representative detailing the next steps in the process. Included with this e-mail will be the procedures, schedules, and forms.

When a new department is created and/or an existing department undergoes reorganization, a new assessment will be conducted.

DOCUMENT DESTRUCTION AND STORAGE DETERMINATION

Following the initial assessment, and thereafter twice a year (at end of fall and spring semesters) RMC will assist all department representatives with the assessment of documents that may no longer be needed. Documents will fall into one of the three categories: keep, discard, or store for later destruction. The following guidelines assist in making the determination:

Ownership
There is only ONE original “official” document. Essential questions –
• Who is the keeper of the original “official” document?
• Where is this version of the record?
• Do I have ownership of this record (as the keeper of the official document) or is this simply a duplication of the official document?

Format
The official document may be electronic or paper and may remain in the format in which it was created. It is not necessary for an electronic document to be printed out – if it was born electronic it may remain electronic.

Official Systems
• It is essential that electronic documents be kept in an official CUNY system. Once scanned to an official system (such as CUNYfirst) the scanned version may be the official record. If you elect to have the scanned version act as the official copy you should destroy the paper copy as soon as verification is complete.
• Any official document kept on disk, flash drive, etc. must be moved to a network drive.

Missing Records
Documents that appear on the schedule but that CUNY SPS does not have should not be retroactively created.

Unofficial Documents
• CUNY’s retention policies refer only to the official document.
• Duplicates of the official document should be kept only “while needed,” and then discarded.
• A duplicate should never be kept longer than the official document.
• Duplicates and other unofficial documents that are to be discarded may be sent to the shredder – no documentation is needed.

Official Documents
• The destruction of official documents, both paper and electronic, that have passed their retention period must be recorded on a Certificate of Destruction.
The RMC will assist the departments with the following procedures.

1. **Documents ready for destruction**
   a. **Review and label the material**
      i. sort by document type and years, then determine retention periods;
      ii. separate material by “item” (group of similar documents with same destruction date) and place in containers;
      iii. label each container in Sharpie on outside with the following information for each unique item in the container:
         - Department
         - Type of Document
         - Years
         - Destruction Date
   b. **Prepare Certificate of Destruction**, listing by item. This document may include many different items within the department, but all items on one Certificate of Destruction will have the same department and the same destruction date;
   c. Certificates of Destruction reviewed and signed by the department director (or his/her designee) to ensure that material is accurately described;
   d. RMC signs certificates of destruction and obtains signature of Academic Operations Director (NOTE: these two signatures are at the bottom of the document and only signed for documents that have reached their destruction period);
   e. Certificate of Destruction is scanned and maintained electronically by the Office of Academic Operations;
   f. a pdf of the Certificate of Destruction is sent to department;
   g. RCM will arrange with Facilities for removal and shredding of the material to be destroyed.

2. **Documents not needed for day-to-day operations, but still within retention period**
   a. **Review and label material** as described in step 1.a;
   b. **Prepare a Certificate of Destruction** as described in step 1.b;
   c. Give a hard copy of the Certificate of Destruction to department director (or his/her designee) as described in step 1c;
   d. Place the signed hard copy of the Certificate of Destruction in a protective sheet and file in binder, by destruction year and, within that binder, by department. This is the official document and is maintained in the Office of Academic Operations;
   e. RMC will make arrangements to move labelled storage containers from department to storage room;
   f. Should a department need access to any documents awaiting destruction in this manner, the department will notify the RMC, who will then retrieve the documents from storage;
   g. Once archived materials have reached their destruction date, the RMC will retrieve those items from storage, pull the Certificate of Destruction from the binder, and then follow the procedures outlined in #1 d.,e.,f., and g. above.

---

**PROCEDURES FOR ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS**

The destruction of an electronic document that has been designated the official version should also be recorded in a Certificate of Destruction.

Follow steps 1.b, c, d, e, and f above.