COURSE OBJECTIVES: WHAT YOUR WILL LEARN

This course provides a survey of fundamental records management concepts and methods as they apply to the operating records maintained by businesses, government agencies, and other organizations. At the end of the course, you should understand:

• The purpose of records management and its distinctive role in an organization's information management activities.
• The scope and content of a systematic records management program and the types of information management problems that records management can effectively address.
• The relationship of records management to other information management activities and business operations, including computer systems analysis, librarianship, and archives.
• The work steps required to prepare and implement retention schedules for operating records in a business, government agency, or other organization.
• The characteristics of micrographics systems and their role in records management programs.
• Methods of identifying and protecting an organization's vital office records.
• Basic filing system concepts and methods for office records.

COURSE OUTLINE

Topic 1: Introduction
  Definitions of key terms
  Role of records management as an information management discipline

Topic 2: Record Retention Schedules
  Definition and purpose of retention schedules
  Inventorying records: methods and procedures
  Retention criteria
    Legal issues in record retention
      Legally-mandated recordkeeping requirements
      Retention of records for use as evidence
  Operational issues in record retention
    Document life cycle concepts
    Estimating the useful life of records
    Secondary value: retaining records for research purposes
  Implementation issues
    General vs. program specific schedules
Approving retention schedules
Implementation responsibilities
Modifying retention schedules
Compliance auditing

Topic 3: Record Centers
Definition and role in record retention
Typical facilities and services
Preparing records for transmittal
In-house vs. commercial record centers

Topic 4: Micrographics in Records Management
Definitions
Advantages of micrographics
Types of microforms and their records management applications
Production of microforms: Source document microfilming and COM
Microform display and printing equipment
Microform retrieval concepts and methods

Topic 5: Vital Records
Definitions: vital vs. important records
Setting up a vital records program
Identifying vital records
Assessing risk
Implementing protection plans

Topic 6: Filing Systems for Office Records
Introduction to filing concepts
File arrangements and their applications
Alphabetical arrangements
Numeric arrangements: serial and digit variants
Subject arrangements
Soundex filing
Other
Selecting filing equipment and supplies

Topic 7: Advanced Topics
Managing electronic records
Automated document retrieval systems and methods
Basic concept: indexing vs. filing
Electronic document imaging systems
Text retrieval/document management systems

ASSIGNED READING


The assigned reading is as follows:
Week 1 – Chapter 1 and 2  
Week 2 – Chapter 2 and 3  
Week 3 – Chapter 3  
Week 4 – Chapter 4 and 5  
Week 5 – Chapter 6 and 7  

It is recommended that you read the assigned chapters after each class session as a way of reviewing the material presented in class. At each class session, you will also receive lengthy handouts that present the topic for that class in an organized outline format plus some additional supplemental materials not contained in the textbooks. You will be expected to review these handouts and your notes at the end of each session.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

Your grade in this course will be determined by two factors: (1) a take-home final examination, which will be described later in the course, and (2) completion of written assignments described below. The purpose of the assignments is to allow you to examine specific topics in greater depth than can be covered in class.

Your grade will depend on the number of written assignments you choose to complete. To qualify for the grade of "A" you must complete 7 of the assignments described below. To qualify for a grade of "B" you must complete 5 of the assignments. All students must complete Assignment #1. Each written assignment involves the preparation of a report of other document. The due date and submission method for assignments will be announced in class. No assignments will be returned. Make a copy for yourself prior to submitting your assignments.

You must select from the following assignments. Substitutions are not permitted, but the assignments can be narrowed, where appropriate, to suit individual interests. All students must complete assignment #1.

1. Record Retention. Many government agencies and other organizations make their retention schedules available on the Internet. Because these schedules are often based on extensive legal and other research, they are useful reference sources for organizations that are preparing retention guidelines for specific types of records. Assume that you are in such an organization and are asked to do retention research for the following commonly encountered types of records:

- Master personnel files maintained by a human resources department
- General ledger
- Invoices submitted to an organization for payment
- Engineering drawings for buildings that the organization owns or occupies
- Workers compensation case records
- Routine correspondence in subject files or other general office files
- Financial audit reports, prepared by internal or external auditors
- Purchase orders and related documents
- Litigation case files
- Minutes of a Board of Directors, Board of Trustees, or other governing body
- Contracts and other legal agreements
- Budget files
- Postal records, such as certified mail receipts
- Records relating to property insurance claims
- Video recordings created for public safety or surveillance purposes

For each of these record types, you are to cite retention periods presented in 3 retention schedules prepared by a government agency or other organization. Your report should indicate the source for each retention period cited. Note that it may be necessary to consult more than three retention schedules to cover all of the record types listed above. This assignment is required of all students.

2. **Searching the CFR.** Minimum retention requirements for the following types of records are specified in the Code of Federal Regulations. For each type of record, cite the applicable passage from the CFR and indicate the retention period prescribed in the regulation:

   - Financial records for federally-funded grant projects
   - Institutional Review Board meeting records
   - Records related to research projects involving laboratory animals
   - Material safety data sheets for hazardous substances
   - Donor records maintained by a hospital blood bank
   - Mammography records produced by a mammography facility where no problem is detected.

3. **Records Management in Government.** Describe records management operations and activities in a government agency. Your report can report on a federal government agency, such as the National Archives and Records Administration (www.archives.gov), which has authority over all federal agencies, or a specific agency, such as the Environmental Protection Agency (www.epa.gov/nrmp) or the Department of Defense (www.dtic.dla.mil), which has its own records management policies and procedures. State and local government records are usually subject to the authority of state archival agencies. Some examples include the New York State Archives (www.archives.nysed.gov), the New Jersey Department of Archives and Records Management (www.state.nj.us/state/darm), the Connecticut State Library (cslnet.ctstateu.edu/opra.htm), the Virginia State Library and Archives (www.vsla.edu), the Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives (www.kdla.state.ky.us), and the Georgia State Archives (www.sos.state.ga.us/archives). You can also do a report on records management operations in government agencies in other countries. Examples include the Library and Archives Canada (www.collectionscanada.gc.ca), the National Archives of the United Kingdom (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk), and the National Archives of Australia (www.aa.gov.au). Your report should discuss the legal authority for the agency's records management operations, the scope of its records management
programs, and the types of records management services it performs. A report can be submitted for two different government agencies and will count as two assignments completed.

4. **Records Storage Vendors.** Describe the products and services of a commercial record storage company that provides offsite storage for inactive records. Your report can deal with an international company with multiple locations, such as Iron Mountain or Recall, or with a record storage provider that serves one region or locality, such as metropolitan New York. Your report should describe the company, discuss the number and locations of storage facilities it operates, summarize the types of services it offers, and (where possible) give examples of typical customers.

5. **Filing System Vendors.** Describe the products of a vendor that markets filing cabinets, supplies, or related products for in-office storage of paper records or engineering documents. Examples of such vendors include Smead Manufacturing (www.smead.com), Tab Products (www.tabproducts.com), Esselte (www.esselte.com), and Steelcase (www.steelcase.com). You can use Internet search engines to identify other vendors. Your report should discuss the types of filing products and related services that the vendor offers. This assignment can be submitted for two different vendors and will count as two assignments completed.

6. **Micrographics Vendors.** Describe the products of a company that manufactures and/or sells microfilming products, such as camera and duplicating films, microfilm cameras, computer-output microfilm recorders, readers, reader/printers, or microfilm scanners. Examples of such vendors include Eastman Park Micrographics (www.epminc.com), Canon (www.canon.com), KonicaMinolta (www.konicaminolta.com), Indus International (www.indususa.com), Staude (www.e-staudes.com), Crowley (www.thecrowleycompany.com), e-Image Data (www.e-imagedata.com), and Nextscan (www.nextscan.com). Your report should discuss the types of products and related services that the vendor offers. This assignment can be submitted for two different vendors and will count as two assignments completed.

7. **Records in the News.** Prepare a list of citations with summaries for articles related to records management issues that are published in the New York Times and/or Wall Street Journal during the semester. The articles can deal with any aspect of records management: growth of paper files, theft of records, concealment of records in legal cases, destruction of records, the value of office space, alternatives to paper files, etc. For each article, your citation should include the title of the article, the newspaper in which it was published, and a brief summary.

8. **Records Management in a Specific Organization.** Based on site visits and/or reading, describe the records management policies and practices of a specific company, government agency, academic institution, hospital, or other organization. Your report should consider the company's retention practices, its programs to protect vital records, its use of microfilm and offsite storage, and any advanced records management initiatives, such as the implementation of electronic document imaging technology. You can do this assignment twice, for two different organizations, and it will count as two assignments completed.
9. Records Management and Archives. Prepare an annotated bibliography of articles, books, and other publications dealing with the relationship of records management and archives. The cited items can deal with any facet of the relationship: similarities and differences in records management and archival practice, the need for records management involvement by archivists, conflict between the two fields, etc. Your bibliography should contain at least 15 articles representing a total of 100 pages of reading. Each entry should include a full bibliographic citation in the format of your choice plus a summary of main points for the cited work.

PALMER SCHOOL OBJECTIVES FOR STUDENT LEARNING

This course satisfies the following student learning objectives:

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the global policies and trends of significance to the library and information profession.

Students will distinguish among formats of information and determine appropriate methods for their selection, description and classification to enhance information retrieval.

Students will demonstrate principles and guidelines for assessment and evaluation of information services.

Students will understand the variety of information systems and technologies that facilitate the management and use of information services.

OUT-OF-CLASS WORKLOAD

The out-of-class workload for this course is a composite of textbook reading, review of in-class notes, preparation of assignments, and the take-home final exam. The estimated out-of-class workload is 137 to 155 hours for the B grade and 159 to 185 hours for the A grade. The estimated out-of-class workload is calculated as follows:

- The anticipated out-of-class workload for textbook reading and review of in-class notes is 56 hours for the semester.

- The anticipated out-of-class workload for written assignments the B grade is approximately 72 to 90 hours. The anticipated workload for the A grade is 92 to 120 hours.
• The anticipated out-of-class workload for the take-home final exam is 6 hours, including preliminary preparation and time to complete the exam.

On average, each of these assignments will require approximately 12 to 15 hours to complete. Assignment #1 will likely take longer. You may complete these assignments at your own pace, but you should work on them steadily throughout the semester. All assignments are due at the end of the semester. For a grade of A, you should complete 1 assignment per 12 days on average. For a grade of B, you should complete 1 assignment on average per 16 days on average.