



DUKE UNIVERSITY RECORDS RETENTION GUIDELINES

STUDENT RECORDS

Effective July 21, 2004

The following records retention guidelines provide recommendations for the disposition of Duke University student records. Those records represent many facets of each student's career at Duke and are generated as part of the admissions process, to document academic achievement and student advisement, and to track student financial transactions.

The official copy of student records resides in the PeopleSoft® Student Administration system, which Student Information Services and Systems (SISS, <http://www.sissoffice.duke.edu/>) maintains. Other copies of student records may exist in traditional formats like paper or microfilm/fiche. These guidelines apply to student records and data stored on any and all media.

Privacy

In accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 20 USC §1232g), students may inspect their education records. In addition, FERPA limits disclosure to others of personally identifiable information from education records without the student's prior written consent. Finally, FERPA provides students the opportunity to seek correction of their education records where appropriate. For more information on FERPA and the release of students' information, visit <http://www.registrar.duke.edu/>.

Some student records contain private health information and are subject to the provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA, Public Law 104-191). For more information on HIPAA and the protection of private health information, visit <http://www.dukehealth.org/Privacy/HIPAA>.

Using the Retention Guidelines

The Retention Guidelines identify *minimum* retention periods for several categories of student records. Those categories include registration and academic progress records; admissions records; certification documents; publications, reports, and statistical data; FERPA documents; federal disclosure records; and financial aid records. Student records not identified in the guidelines should not be disposed of without first consulting the [University Registrar](#) and the [University Records Manager](#).

Following the minimum retention period, the records in question should be destroyed using a method that preserves the confidentiality of the information. (This excludes records identified for permanent retention.) Duke University maintains contracts with several shredding facilities; visit Procurement Services' website at <http://www.procurement.duke.edu/> for more information.

A series title and brief description of the contents of each series identifies the information or data to be disposed of following the recommended retention period. DO NOT dispose of any student records or data if an investigation, legal action or proceeding, audit, or program review is forthcoming or in progress.



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The University Records Manager, the University Registrar, and record guardians in Duke University's departments and schools will review the retention guidelines for student records periodically and will issue revisions as necessary.

If you maintain student records that are not identified in these guidelines, visit <http://www.lib.duke.edu/archives/rm/> or call 919-684-6181 for assistance.

Off-site Storage

In most cases, offices responsible for maintaining student records do not have adequate space to store them beyond one or two years following the student's departure. If records must be moved to an off-site storage location, consider the following needs:

- Access and retrieval, including frequency of retrieval, emergency access needs, and potential costs associated with getting to the records;
- Environmental conditions that provide stable and friendly conditions for the records;
- Security systems that prevent unauthorized access to the records;
- Filing systems that permit the rapid retrieval of records via a logical index, box list, or similar finding aid; and,
- The overall physical and intellectual control over the records for which you are the guardian.

Official Transcripts

Students' official transcripts are one of only a few student-related records identified for *permanent* retention. The University Registrar will work with SISS and the University Archives to implement measures to ensure the long-term accessibility, reliability, and accuracy of those records.

Access to Student Records

Students' official transcripts will be open seventy-five (75) years after graduation or departure from Duke University.

Abbreviations and Definitions

ADM—Undergraduate or Graduate Admissions Office
CFR—Code of Federal Regulations
FIN—Undergraduate or Graduate Financial Aid Office
INT—International Office
IRS—Internal Revenue Service
PMAC—Pre-Major Advising Center
PRA—Pratt School of Engineering
PRO—Applicable Professional School (Law, Business, Medical, etc.)
PS—PeopleSoft Student Administration System
REG—University Registrar or Applicable School Registrar
ScFIN—Applicable School Financial Aid Office
TRIN—Applicable Department in Arts & Sciences and Trinity College



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Administrative Value—The usefulness of a record in the conduct of the office's business

Minimum Retention—The minimum amount of time a particular series of records should be retained

Permanent—An indefinite retention period; signifies that the records have sufficient value or importance to justify keeping them in perpetuity

Records—All recorded information, regardless of its physical form or characteristics, created or received pursuant to the transaction of University business or in the fulfillment of its educational, administrative, business, or legal obligations.

Duke University Records Retention Guidelines

Category Description: Student Records

Primary Heading: Admissions Data for Applicants Not Enrolling (Whether Accepted or Rejected)

Series Title	Content	Minimum Retention	Notes
Acceptance letters	See Series Title	1 year after application term	IRS, Revenue Procedure 75-50, section 7 ADM, PRO, PS
Application for admission	May include personal statements, letters of reference, transcripts from other colleges, etc.	1 year after application term	IRS, Revenue Procedure 75-50, section 7 ADM, PRO, PS
Correspondence, relevant	Correspondence relevant to student's acceptance or rejection	1 year after application term	IRS, Revenue Procedure 75-50, section 7 ADM, PRO, PS
Entrance exam reports/test scores	Could include ACT, SAT, LSAT, MCAT, GRE, etc.	1 year after application term	IRS, Revenue Procedure 75-50, section 7 ADM, PRO, PS
Letters of recommendation	May also include other evaluative records	1 year after application term	IRS, Revenue Procedure 75-50, section 7 ADM, PRO, PS
Placement tests records/scores	See Series Title	1 year after application term	IRS, Revenue Procedure 75-50, section 7 ADM, PRO, PS
Prospective Students	Contact and demographic data on prospective students who do not enroll	1 year after date received	ADM, PRO, PS
Transcripts--high school or other colleges	See Series Title	1 year after application term	IRS, Revenue Procedure 75-50, section 7 ADM, PRO, PS

Primary Heading: Admissions Data for Applicants Who Enroll

Series Title	Content	Minimum Retention	Notes
Acceptance letters	See Series Title	5 years after graduation/date of last attendance	PMAC, PRA, PRO, PS, REG, TRIN
Application for admission or readmission	May include personal statements, letters of reference, transcripts from other colleges, etc	Reference letters: until student matriculates Remaining records: 5 years after graduation/date of last attendance	PMAC, PRA, PRO, PS, REG, TRIN
Correspondence, relevant	Correspondence relevant to student's admission or enrollment	5 years after graduation/date of last attendance	PMAC, PRA, PRO, PS, REG, TRIN
Entrance exam reports/test scores	Could include ACT, SAT, LSAT, MCAT, GRE, etc.	5 years after graduation/date of last attendance	PMAC, PRA, PRO, PS, REG, TRIN
Letters of recommendation	May also include other evaluative records	Until student matriculates	ADM, PRO
Placement tests records/scores	See Series Title	5 years after graduation/date of last attendance	PMAC, PRA, PRO, PS, REG, TRIN
Transcripts--high school or other colleges*	See Series Title	5 years after graduation/date of last attendance	*Some documents from institutions in other countries may be originals and therefore difficult or impossible for the applicant to replace. PMAC, PRA, PRO, PS, REG, TRIN

Primary Heading: Documents for International Applicants Not Enrolling

Series Title	Content	Minimum Retention	Notes
Records of international students who do not enroll	May include: Copy of certificate of eligibility for F-1 visa status (form I-20, which also includes a statement of educational costs); Copy of Alien Registration Receipt Card (form I-551); Copy of "arrival-departure" record (form I-94); Copy of certificate of eligibility for J-1 visa status (form DS-2019); Statement of financial eligibility; Correspondence	1 year after application term	These records are maintained separate from the admissions process. 8 CFR 214.3 (g) 22 CFR 62.10 (h) INT

Primary Heading: Documents for International Applicants Who Enroll

Series Title	Content	Minimum Retention	Notes
Records of international students who enroll	May include: Copy of certificate of eligibility for F-1 visa status (form I-20, which also includes a statement of educational costs); Copy of Alien Registration Receipt Card (form I-551); Copy of "arrival-departure" record (form I-94); Copy of certificate of eligibility for J-1 visa status (form DS-2019); Statement of financial eligibility; Correspondence	3 years after graduation/date of last attendance (F-1) or 1 year after graduation/date of last attendance (J-1)	*There is no upper limit for international students on student visas. These records are maintained separate from the admissions process. 8 CFR 214.3 (g) 22 CFR 62.10 (h) INT

Primary Heading: General Records Related to Admissions and the Admissions Process

Series Title	Content	Minimum Retention	Notes
Annual reports	Annual statistical reports concerning admissions activities, enrollment statistics, etc.	Administrative value ends	Transfer one copy to University Archives; retain one copy ADM, PRO
Recruitment materials	May include brochures, catalogues, etc. dealing with admissions, programs, and scholarships	3 years after application term	Transfer one copy of each item to University Archives IRS, Revenue Procedure 75-50, section 7 ADM, PRO

Primary Heading: Registration and Academic Progress Records

Series Title	Content	Minimum Retention	Notes
Academic action records	Concerns actions such as academic probation, leave of absence, dismissal, etc.	5 years after graduation/date of last attendance	No recommended retention period is given for disciplinary action documents, except that they be retained while in force in a file separate from the student's academic record (AACRAO). PRA, PRO, PS, REG
Correspondence, relevant	See Series Title	5 years after graduation/date of last attendance	PRA, PRO, PS, REG
Course change records	May include add/drop forms and related records	1 year after date submitted	PRA, PRO, PS, REG
Credit/no credit approvals (audit, pass/fail, etc.)	Signed request forms	1 year after date submitted	PRA, PRO, PS, REG
Curriculum change requests and authorizations	See Series Title	5 years after graduation/date of last attendance	PRA, PRO, PS, REG
Declaration of intention to receive degree	May also be known as Application for Graduation Certification	5 years after graduation/date of last attendance	PRA, PRO, PS, REG
Grade/progress reports	See Series Title	1 year after date distributed	PRA, PRO, PS, REG
Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE)	Evaluation of medical students' academic/professional performance	Permanent (with transcript)	Unique to Medical School
State Bar verification forms	Forms from other states' bar boards used to verify presence or absence of disciplinary actions against students	Permanent (with transcript)	Unique to Law School
Transcript requests	To and from students or other colleges	1 year after date submitted	PRA, PRO, PS, REG
Transcripts	Official course and grade records, including grade changes	Permanent	PRA, PRO, PS, REG
Transfer credit requests/reports	See Series Title	5 years after graduation/date of last attendance	PRA, PRO, PS, REG

Primary Heading: Federal Student Financial Aid and Institution-Based Financial Aid Documents

Series Title	Content	Minimum Retention	Notes
Annual statistical and summary reports	Annual statistical reports created for US Department of Education or University	Permanent	Transfer one copy to University Archives; retain one copy FIN
Awards, grants, fellowships, scholarships (including Federal Work Study and Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants)	Applications, transcripts, evaluative records, award letters, etc.	Unsuccessful applicants: 3 years Successful applicants: 5 years after graduation/date of last attendance	Federal Work Study: 34 CFR 675.19 Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant: 34 CFR 676.19 FIN, ScFIN
Fiscal records: title IV, HEA programs	Records used to account for receipt and expenditure of title IV, HEA program funds; includes, but is not limited to, Student Aid Report or Institutional Student Information Record, application data, eligibility documentation, etc.	5 years if not being audited	Fiscal records outlined in 34 CFR 668.24(b) FIN
Program records: title IV, HEA programs	Concerns eligibility to participate in, and administration of, HEA programs	5 years if not being audited	Program records outlined in 34 CFR 668.24(a) FIN
Student loan records (campus based)	May include correspondence, applications and eligibility records, award letters, deferment forms, payment schedules/histories, promissory notes, origination documents, tax records, etc.	3 years after loan repaid, canceled, or assigned to Dept. of Education if not being audited Health professions loans—5 years after loan repaid, canceled, or assigned to Dept. of Education if not being audited	Student Assistance General Provisions: 34 CFR 668.24 Perkins Loans: 34 CFR 674.19 Health Professions: 42 CFR 57.215 FIN, PS
Student loan records (external, such as FFEL, PLUS, Stafford, and Direct loans)	Copies of loan applications, correspondence	3 years after graduation/date of last attendance	FFEL: 34 CFR 682 Stafford: 34 CFR 682 Wm. D. Ford Direct: 34 CFR 685 FIN, PS

Primary Heading: Student Advising Records

Series Title	Content	Minimum Retention	Notes
Advising records (advising file)	May include progress reports, statements of academic interests, essays, advisor's notes, student's photograph	1 year after graduation/date of last attendance	PMAC, PRA, PRO, PS, TRIN
Advising records (Dean's file)	May include the admissions folder, course withdrawal approvals, approvals for leave of absence, student's photograph	See "Admissions Date for Applicants Who Enroll" or "Registration and Academic Progress Records" for retention of records received or created separate from advising activities. Remaining records: 1 year after graduation/date of last attendance	PMAC, PRA, PRO, PS, REG, TRIN