

Student Affairs Records Policy of The Graduate School

Date Effective: December 4, 2013

The Graduate School seeks to maintain graduate student affairs records in compliance with legal requirements, institutional needs, and university policies.

Definitions

Graduate Student Affairs File:

A Graduate Student Affairs file consists of records relating to the hearings and arbitration process pertaining to requests for deviation from the expected academic program or assistantship, and/or the possible violation of academic and behavioral standards involving graduate students and postdoctoral scholars. Records of a Graduate Student Affairs File include, but are not limited to:

- Written correspondence pertaining to graduate student affairs issues of scholarly integrity, termination of status, academic dismissal, complaint, reporting of romantic relationships, time to degree, leave of absence from studies or assistantships, and other behavioral concerns
- Formal requests for a graduate hearing, along with all submitted documentation
- Relevant electronic records associated with student affairs categories (Printed)
- Audio recordings of hearings*

*Note: Audio recordings of hearings are not filed with the above records as their record retention is much shorter. For more information, see procedural section titled record destruction.

Responsibility

As of the fall of 2013, newly generated student affairs records are maintained separately from other student education records at the University by the Student Affairs Division of The Graduate School, under the supervision of the Associate Dean (whether for Storrs and the regional campuses or the Health Center).

Scope of Policy

This Policy applies to all post-baccalaureate programs under the jurisdiction of The Graduate School. This includes all programs on the Storrs and regional campuses, social work, and fields of study at the Health Center. Those post-baccalaureate programs not falling within the scope of this policy include law, medical, and dental.

Use and Release of Student Affairs Records

Generally, information from the files is not released without the written consent of the student. However, certain information may be provided to individuals within or outside the University who have a legitimate legal or educational interest in obtaining it (Please refer to the federal

policy on the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974](#), as amended, as well as the corresponding [UConn FERPA policy](#)).

Student Affairs Record Procedure of The Graduate School

Organization of Files

With the exception of audio records, student affairs records are maintained within a single (physical) file by individual student, organized by issue and chronologically by date of receipt. Electronically born records (e.g. email) are printed and retained in paper format for the life of the file. Once physically filed, the electronic record is considered a duplicate and is not subject to retention requirements.

As of the fall of 2013, audio recordings are maintained electronically, organized chronologically.

Throughout its record life cycle, a student affairs file may be considered active, inactive or deemed permanent. Inactive files become eligible for destruction after the files' minimum retention period has been met and there are no litigation holds.

Active: The status of a file during the student's arbitration process (including an appeal when applicable).

Inactive: The status of a file after a resolution is made but before the minimum retention period of 5 years following separation from the university is met. This status is only applicable when the resolution did not result in dismissal or termination.

Eligible for Destruction: The status of a file after the minimum retention period has been met (follows inactive status).

Permanent: The status of a file affiliated with a student that has been academically dismissed or terminated from status. This includes files of students that were dismissed though won their appeal or were able to return to The Graduate School for some circumstance. The file has a permanent retention period.

Security of Files

Files are locked with limited access granted only to the appropriate personnel.

Destruction of Files

Inactive Student Affairs files have a minimum retention period of five (5) years from the date of separation from the university. Audio recordings are used for appellate purposes only, and are retained only until the appeal process within The Graduate School is completed. Both types of records require destruction approval. If a litigation hold occurs during any stage of the destruction process, the pertinent records may not be destroyed. Permanent records (defined above), do not qualify for destruction and must be maintained permanently.

The destruction procedure should be applied semi-annually for audio hearings. An annual review of physical files should also occur to determine what files are eligible for destruction. Additional destruction reviews are acceptable when addressing older files that have met minimum retention requirements, however a establishing a schedule will regulate records disposition in the future. The destruction process is as follows:

- 1) Identify records that have met the minimum retention requirement.
- 2) Remove identified records, box and store in a secure location.
- 3) Request disposition (destruction) approval by using Form RC-108. On the form, you are required to document:
 - a. The volume of records pending destruction (1 standard box= 1 cubic foot)
 - b. The date range of the records
 - c. The corresponding record retention series found on the General Retention Schedules
 - d. The proposed date of destruction
 - e. The record custodian (university official responsible for the records)
- 4) After receiving disposition approval and verifying that any of the files are free from litigation holds, shred the records and retain Form RC-108. Central Stores offers shredding, though an external state contracted vendor may be used.

Version Control

Graduate School Student Affairs retains the official (authoritative/master) record copy of student affairs records. However, certain information may be provided to individuals within or outside the University who have a legitimate legal or educational interest in obtaining it, including the student. Duplicates maintained outside of the official file (e.g. stored email inboxes or shared drives) are expected to be destroyed no later than 5 years after the student has separated from the University. Duplicate copies do not need to be approved for destruction.