

Union College Archives

What Can I Throw Away?

All duplicate copies, masters, and supplies should be eliminated from the files after first making sure a good copy of records remain. The following items are usually without value and can be discarded once their useful life is past:

- Announcements (keep announcements in form of a program if generated by your entity)
- Applications (except admissions and employees)
- Appointments, letters and memos setting up appointments
- Ballots (be sure to keep record of final vote)
- Budget draft papers (keep the final copy)
- Checks, canceled
- Class materials: textbooks, workbooks, handouts, etc., but keep syllabi and course outlines
- Copies of widely circulated documents, including e-mail: agendas, lists, minutes, manuals, reports, and memoranda, unless your office is the office of origin
Copy or final draft for publication (programs, calendars, reports, etc.—after publication)
- Covering letters and memos
- Directives and instructions received
- Drafts—once the final paper, report, program, budget, publication, etc. has been issued or published.

Note exceptions: Those drafts which could add significant insight into the creator's thought processes as he/she worked on the material, especially speeches, addresses. Major planning documents, save preliminary discussion documents, background reports, and drafts which contain substantive differences from the final version.

- Financial records, routine and interim—a year old: cash receipt, delivery slips, purchase orders, requisitions, invoices, statements of telephone calls, etc.
- Forms, blank (send 2 copies to the archives)
- Invitations and notices for events not hosted by your department
- Invoices after payment
- Letters and memos setting up appointments
- Memoranda asking for comments (after comments have been received)
- Multiple copies of a single original document—keep only two for the archives
- Off-campus periodicals and publications, e.g. catalogs, newsletters, bulletins, reports, manuals, magazines, books, etc.

Note: unless there is a clear connection of them with the officer of the entity.

- Orders, financial: textbooks, teaching materials, office supplies, etc.
- Payroll deductions, authorizations and notices, time cards
- Proofs for publication (after publication—see also Draft)
- Property/equipment inventories and related forms (including releases)

- Routine acknowledgments, circulars, notifications, requests, reminders
- Receipts
- Releases
- Reservations and Confirmations for meetings, travel, etc.
- Sales literature received from vendors
- Travel requests, arrangements, tickets, reimbursements
- Work orders, papers (from plant service and outside vendors)
- Worksheets