

Archival Records Policy

Policy number: 126
Policy owner: University Archivist

Date of initial publication: June 17, 2024
Date of latest revision: Not applicable

SECTION I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish university-wide guidelines for the designation and management of archival records of the University of St. Thomas.

SECTION II. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This policy governs all St. Thomas archival records. The expectations set forth in this policy apply to all St. Thomas students, employees (faculty, staff and student workers), student clubs and organizations, and all schools, colleges, divisions, departments and other units.

SECTION III. DEFINITIONS

When used in this policy, the following terms have the following meanings:

- a. **Archival record** means a record that has enduring historical value to St. Thomas, including (i) the categories denoted as archival records in the [record retention schedule](#); and (ii) any other data the university archivist or president designates as an archival record from time to time in accordance with applicable policy.
- b. **Record** means any recorded information created or received in the course of conducting St. Thomas operations, that is in a category of data required to be retained for any period of time under this policy. Records may be in any recorded format, including but not limited to electronic and physical documents and communications, film and print graphics, and audio and video recordings. Records do not include collections, duplicates, reference data or transitory communications.

SECTION IV. DESIGNATION AS ARCHIVAL RECORD

University records will be designated as archival records by either the university archivist or the president, in accordance with applicable professional standards and best practices. Records may be designated as an archival record based on one or more of the following considerations:

- The record or its form is historically significant.
- The record provides valuable context for significant St. Thomas transactions, decisions, initiatives, communications or other significant activities.
- The record has permanent historical value to St. Thomas for another reason.

SECTION V. CATEGORIES OF ARCHIVAL RECORDS

As a guideline, the following categories may be considered archival records:

- a. **Primary documents generated or maintained by the St. Thomas president or members of the President's Cabinet**, including policies, reports, speeches, publicity materials, formal memoranda, files relating to material transactions, and institutionally significant external correspondence.

- b. **Significant external publications of St. Thomas and its schools, colleges and other units**, including:
 - catalogs, newspapers, yearbooks, and literary magazines; and
 - institutionally significant newsletters, brochures, programs, and alumni publications.
- c. **Significant internal publications of academic and non-academic administrative units**, including:
 - annual reports, final grant reports, policies and symposia and colloquium files; and
 - institutionally significant self-study reports, planning documents, newsletters and publications, and external correspondence.
- d. **Final meeting materials and approved minutes** of the St. Thomas Board of Trustees, advisory boards, the Faculty Senate, faculty committees, and university committees.
- e. **Institutionally significant materials and approved minutes** of ad hoc committees, task forces and working groups.
- f. **Institutionally significant films, audio recordings, video recordings and photographs** produced by St. Thomas.
- g. **Undergraduate student government** approved meeting minutes.

The St. Thomas Record Retention Schedule also identifies categories of records considered to be archival records. For questions about whether specific records should be designated as an archival record, contact the university archivist.

SECTION VI. RETENTION OF ARCHIVAL RECORDS

Archival records must be transferred to the university archivist as soon as practicable after the record is no longer in active use by the unit that holds or manages the record. Upon transfer, archival records will be accessioned to the university archives and retained permanently. It is recommended that units review records annually to determine whether it holds inactive archival records that should be submitted to the university archives.

If an archival record is needed for current St. Thomas operations or activities, the record should not be transferred to university archives and must be managed as an active record in accordance with the university's Data Management Policy.

SECTION VI. USE OF ARCHIVAL RECORDS

Archival records that have been accessioned to the university archives may be accessed, used, shared and moved only as determined by the university archivist or president. Confidential archival records, and original and sole copies of archival records, may not be transported or transferred off campus except in accordance with rules established by the university archivist.

In general, records in the following categories will be maintained confidentially, with access granted only to St. Thomas administrators with a legitimate business need to review the records, or to individuals authorized by St. Thomas to prepare a historical account of St. Thomas or a St. Thomas leader: records related to material transactions, records detailing ongoing relationships with external entities or individuals, records of St. Thomas presidents until twenty-five years following their death, and Board of Trustees records.

SECTION VIII. DEACCESSION OF ARCHIVAL RECORDS

Archival records may be deaccessioned by the university archivist in the ordinary course of archives management, based on evolving professional standards and best practices and institutional interests, including but not limited to the availability of archival preservation resources.