Title: Case Study 10(3) – University of Victoria, Office of the University Secretary (USEC): Policies, Procedures and Tools for E-mail Management and Preservation in a Governance Unit

Case Study Report

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Case Study Report

A. Overview

The Office of the University Secretary (USEC) at the University of Victoria (UVic) was established in 1963, then called the Registrar’s Office. In 1990, the name was changed to the University Secretary’s Office. USEC is the corporate secretariat to the governance bodies of the University and is responsible for University-wide elections, senior advisory committees and matters relating to Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act compliance.

This case study examined policies, procedures and tools for the management and preservation of e-mail within USEC. Although e-mail is the primary means of conducting business activities at USEC, management of e-mail documents is unregulated and is left to the discretion of each employee.

The main objectives of the case study were to:
- devise e-mail guidelines for USEC staff; and
- implement a new classification plan—one that mirrors the University’s existing directory of records—to improve the management of USEC’s e-mails.

B. Statement of Methodology

The methodology used in conducting research for the UVic case study is known as Action Research. Action research is a collection of participative and iterative methods, which pursue action (in this case, the creation of e-mail management guidelines) and research at the same time. As a matter of course, action research forges collaborations between community members and researchers in a program of action and reflection toward positive change. Action research makes extensive use of case study methodology and of direct communication and interaction with subjects of the research, who are at the same time participants and contributors in the research activity.

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1 This report reflects the context and situation at USEC at the time this case study began. It is acknowledged that there have been changes at USEC in terms of functional duties of staff, staff turnover, and policy development that may be not be reflected in this report.

This case study served as one part of the tri-university study of e-mail management and preservation studies for InterPARES 3 (IP3). The other test-beds originally participating in this study were the Facilities Development Department (and subsequently, the Human Rights Office) at Simon Fraser University and the School of Music at the University of British Columbia (UBC).

The tri-university case study was designed to examine three different contexts common to all universities. UVic would examine e-mail management in a governance unit, UBC an academic unit, and SFU an administrative support unit.

The GRAs worked closely with the University of Victoria’s archivists (hereinafter “the Archivists”) to complete this study. As required by the procedures of InterPARES 3 (IP3), the GRAs gathered information through semi-structured interviews with the Archivists and USEC employees. Data was collected about USEC, how staff managed their e-mail, and the functional and institutional meaning of the materials.

C. Description of Context

Provenancial

Though officially called the Office of the University Secretary (USEC), this test-bed is also known as the “Registrar’s Office.” According to its administrative history:

the Registrar’s Office was originally established in 1963 with responsibility for acting as university secretary, and [for] student registration and records. In 1976, the functions were split into two offices: Registrar (secretary to Board and Senate) and Administrative Registrar (student records). In 1990, the name was changed to the University Secretary’s Office, but the term “Registrar” is still often appended to the position.

USEC is the corporate secretariat to the governance bodies of the University. USEC is responsible for University-wide and Convocation elections, senior advisory committees (e.g., planning and priorities committee, executive search committees) and matters relating to the
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, [RSBC 1996] c. 165. More specifically, USEC has several roles mandated by the University Act, [RSBC 1996] c. 468. Section 7 of the University Act outlines USEC’s convocation responsibilities, saying “The roll of the convocation must be continued and kept up to date by the registrar,” and Section 10 declares, “The registrar is the secretary of the convocation.” Sections 64 and 65 of the University Act also outline the responsibilities of the registrar: “There must be a registrar, who must keep the records and perform the duties that the board or senate may require. The registrar is the secretary of convocation, the senate and of each of the faculties, but has no right to vote as such.”

USEC does not presently have its own stated, office-specific mission. It operates within the larger mission of the University. This mission is expressed in the Strategic Plan as follows:

The University of Victoria enriches its students and society by creating knowledge, fostering academic and experiential learning and serving communities in British Columbia, in Canada and around the world. We build on the strength and diversity of our people—students, faculty, staff and alumni—to strengthen our position among the best universities in Canada, recognized for excellence in teaching, learning, research, artistic creativity, professional practice and service to the community. We are committed to:

• providing a high-quality learning and research environment, both in and outside the classroom
• integrating teaching, learning, research and community engagement across the disciplines
• employing our core strengths to benefit our external communities—locally, regionally, nationally and internationally—and promoting civic engagement and global citizenship.
• promoting the development of a sustainable society through our programs of education and research and the stewardship of our own financial and physical resources
• collegial forms of governance that provide appropriate opportunities for all members of the university community to participate
• environments for work and study that are safe, supportive, inclusive and healthy, foster mutual respect and civility, recognizing that people are our primary strength
• public and internal accountability.7

The organizational chart (Appendix A) shows the position of USEC within the larger university hierarchy and illustrates that the University Secretary reports to the President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Victoria. USEC has been characterized as “a relatively

6 University of Victoria, Office of the University Secretary, “Office Profile,” op. cit.
7 Ibid.
small unit." It consists of the University Secretary (Registrar), the Assistant University Secretary, three administrative support staff and a University policy review officer (two year contract). The Equity & Human Rights Office reports to the University Secretary for operational matters; it reports to the President on policy issues. Though an executive administrative office, USEC has the status of a Vice-President. The University Secretary is an ex officio member of the University’s Planning and Priorities Committee, as well as the Senate Committee on Planning, where s/he acts as secretary.

USEC manages the University Policy Manual and is subject to its policies and procedures, including the Policy on University Policies and Procedures. Although it is not the authorizing authority for any policy, USEC plays a central role in the formation of many; it is leading an initiative to revise the Policy Manual, based on a functional classification system. There are also groupings of policies that affect USEC as a senior administrative office, its signing authorities, and its requirements for maintaining policies.

USEC is a member of the Association of Registrars of the Universities and Colleges of Canada. It is also involved with the National Association of University Board Chairs and Secretaries (NAUBCS); in fact, the current University Secretary of UVic serves as one of NAUBCS’ Directors at Large.

**Juridical-Administrative**

The University of Victoria (UVic) was established as a university on July 1, 1963. Its predecessor, Victoria College, had been affiliated with McGill University and the University of British Columbia and, in 1956, had absorbed the Provincial Normal School (Victoria, B.C.). The governance structures and high-level functions of UVic are defined and characterized by the University Act, which applies to all universities in British Columbia, including UVic.

The University of Victoria is defined as a public body by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. All records generated and received by UVic, including any of its

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9 Ibid.
11 As described in InterPARES 3, TEAM Canada Plenary Workshop 01, 26-27 November 2007, “Case Study Proposals,” 18.
12 Information relayed during a personal telephone interview with University Archivists on 17 January 2008.
13 Further information about this organization’s purposes and bylaws can be found at http://www.arucc.unb.ca/index.htm.
14 Unfortunately, NAUBCS’ Web site is under construction, so further information cannot be retrieved at this time.
departments and offices are, therefore, subject to this Act. Additional laws under which the test-bed is governed include the *University Foundations Act*, [RSBC 1996] c. 471, provincial and federal financial acts, and other general laws, such as those pertaining to childcare facilities and Worksafe BC.

**Procedural and Documentary**

The Office of the University Secretary creates, receives and maintains both paper and digital records to carry out its duties. There does not appear to be a formal policy at this time that dictates which records must be retained in hard copy, but there is an unwritten practice of printing key records, while many other records continue to reside digitally.\(^{16}\)

Because USEC serves as the repository of information and data on all matters relating to the Board of Governors, the Senate, the Foundations and their standing and ad hoc committees, it not only deals with its own records, but also those paper and digital records of these governance bodies.\(^{17}\)

The primary activities in USEC related to the relevant records are secretariat activities to the governing bodies and their committees. As well, its activities include management of Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy compliance; liaising with Government; producing the Board of Governors’ Handbook and University Calendars; managing Convocation applications; publishing cards, programs, and diplomas for Convocation; as well as activities related to the Convocation Roll.\(^{18}\) In addition, “[t]he office oversees the organization of the University policy manual and maintains an updated version on the web.”\(^{19}\)

In its role as the secretary of the university’s governance bodies, USEC creates and maintains administrative records, minutes, dockets and photographs of the Board of Governors, the Board of Governors’ Committees, the Senate, the Senate Committees, the Faculties and the Foundations at UVic. USEC is also involved in creating and maintaining files related to legal matters, such as contracts, leases, agreements and legal advice, and for elections—creating and maintaining records related to Web vote and other related functions.

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17 University of Victoria, Office of the University Secretary, “Office Profile,” op. cit.
18 University of Victoria, “Directory of Records.” Available via the search interface at [http://venus.library.uvic.ca/FMRes/FMPro/?-db=directory%20of%20records&-format=ZSearch.htm&-lay=WebSearch&-max=1&-token=25&view](http://venus.library.uvic.ca/FMRes/FMPro/?-db=directory%20of%20records&-format=ZSearch.htm&-lay=WebSearch&-max=1&-token=25&view) (Accessed 1 February 2008). Please note that the search was performed by entering “University Secretary” in the “Primary Offices” field.
19 University of Victoria, Office of the University Secretary, “Office Profile,” op. cit.
There are a number of policies related to management procedures for records at UVic that affect USEC. For example, the Policy for Complaint Records (#3660) lays out what constitutes as confidential records and provides detailed directions for staff members to follow when maintaining and storing them.\textsuperscript{20} It is interesting to note that the directions pertain to handling of hardcopies of these records and do not appear to provide provision for digital copies. There is also a policy that addresses access to inactive records, the Procedures for Access to University Records (Archives).\textsuperscript{21} Other relevant policies include:

- #6030 Responsible Use for Information Technology Services
- #1150 Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures
- #4400 Policy Regarding Access to Student Records
- #8010 Privacy Policy of University of Victoria Foundation

The University Secretary is the chair of the University Records Management committee. The University Archives maintains a Web site that provides guidelines for recordkeeping and Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy issues.\textsuperscript{22} No one person in USEC was identified as responsible for records maintenance; this instead appears to be the responsibility of each employee. Administrative staff have portfolios of responsibilities (e.g., one person responsible for Board of Governors, another for Senate). As previously mentioned, employees have information about recommended filing systems, but in terms of some records, such as e-mails, most maintain records in their own idiosyncratic foldering systems.

On the records management side, the most relevant include \textit{Guidelines for E-Mail Management} and \textit{Guidelines for Managing Transitory (Temporary) Records}. There is a close relationship between the University Archives and USEC that inevitably aids records maintenance on a larger scale.\textsuperscript{23} On the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy side, guidelines include:

- FOI Guidelines for Recordkeeping (Audits, Competition Files, Confidential Records, Course/Instructor Evaluations, Faculty Information, Filing, Internet-based Distance Education, Mailing Lists, Salaries and Positions and Student Records);
- Guidelines for Accessing and Protecting Information about Students;
- Protocol for Maintaining Records of Hiring, Search or Selection Processes; and
- Access to Personal Information in Electronic Systems.

\textsuperscript{22} See http://gateway.uvic.ca/archives/records_management/info_bulletins/default.html.
\textsuperscript{23} Telephone interview with University Archivists, 17 January 2008.
There is a classification and retention and disposition schedule for records at UVic titled the “Directory of Records” (DOR). Although employees are encouraged to use folders related to the formal ones designated by DOR, many individual users maintain their own filing systems (often alphabetical and/or subject-based) both for paper and digital records.

The documents created from the activities of USEC include minutes, agendas and dockets of governing bodies and their committees and subcommittees. In addition, USEC produces records related to verification of graduates at convocations as well as the degrees themselves, namely graduation diplomas and certificates of graduation. Of course, e-mails regarding any of USEC’s activities are produced as well. Starting November 2008, USEC will no longer produce diplomas and certificates (this responsibility will be transferred to the office of the Registrar and Director of Enrollment Services).

A search of the DOR reveals that additional documents include the Board of Governors’ Handbook, the Senate Handbook, photographs, published calendars, calendar case files, applications for graduation cards, convocation cards, convocation programs, convocation election ballots and envelopes, convocation roll, convocation election files and convocation roll case files. This information from the DOR does not reflect the recent change of responsibilities (i.e., the office of the Registrar and Director, Enrollment Services, handles most calendar functions).

There are a number of records related to legal matters, including contracts, leases, agreements, land titles records of legal actions and judgments and legal opinions. Both union and non-union labour relations records are created and maintained, such as employee group relations, arbitration and appeal case files. The Provincial Ombudsman case files are also created and maintained by USEC, as are student appeal case files.

Freedom of Information requests, privacy complaint case files and Human Rights case files are created and maintained at USEC. UVic’s Policy Manual is also produced by USEC and the digital, Web-based copy available to the public on the UVic Web site is maintained and updated by them.

**Technological**

All employees in USEC currently use PCs. The test-bed’s computers are all connected through a network and can access a shared drive where digital records may be stored. Many
digital records, however, as mentioned earlier, appear to be managed on individual hard drives. All employees using the Exchange accounts access their e-mail using Microsoft Outlook 2003.

Employees in USEC create mostly textual records. Some graphic records are created, mainly for cards, programs, handbooks and the like. The majority of the textual digital records are probably in Microsoft formats and .pdf, but the graphic records can be in a variety of different formats, such as .jpeg and .gif.

The digital entities being studied for the purposes of this research project are the e-mails created and received by the Office of the University Secretary. E-mails, of course, are comprised of the e-mail communication itself and any of its attachments. Because of the nature of e-mail, almost all of USEC’s activities can be expected to result in the creation of e-mails. During initial discussions, no activities appeared to stand out as predominantly accomplished through e-mail, nor do any activities seem to stand out as inappropriate for e-mail. As such, any of the activities previously mentioned can be expected to relate to the creation of e-mails.

At the time of this case study, e-mail management and use was guided by The Recordkeeping Guidelines issued by UVic Archives which included “Guidelines for Managing E-Mails.” These are only non-binding guidelines and many employees continue to use idiosyncratic methods of maintaining their e-mails and e-mail attachments.

USEC has had some past experience with e-mail technological obsolescence. There have been changes in e-mail software and the software used for attachments. At UVic, e-mail was originally used on Macs using Eudora e-mail management software. The University now uses Microsoft Outlook 2003 on PCs but USEC has been using PCs the whole time and thus has enjoyed greater continuity. How this experience with technological obsolescence has affected current practices and policy and will affect future practices and policies is not clear.

As of November 2007, USEC’s e-mails are now maintained on a Microsoft Exchange server. (Given the recent use of the new e-mail system and the migration of e-mails that occurred with its implementation, at the time of this study, no staff members mentioned any concerns about missing or corrupted e-mails.) Using this system prevents users from needing to download messages to their desktops and allows them to access their e-mail (and folder structures) using either Outlook 2003 or a Web-based interface. Staff receive 500MB of disk space on their

Exchange accounts; however, at the time of this study, it was unclear how much space any one employee had already used in the first six months. If needed, staff members may apply for more space. In addition to e-mailing, the Exchange server also gives users the opportunity to share calendars and task lists. Backups of the server occur on a nightly basis and are performed by a division within the Computing and Systems Service Department.

D. Narrative Answers to the Applicable Set of Questions for Researchers

Per the procedures of the InterPARES project, the GRAs collected data about the records, recordkeeping system, and the policy-making and disseminating procedures at UVic. The following narrative provides a summary of answers to each of these question sets. Readers interested in the complete set of questions and responses should consult the Bibliography section of this report for the citations of these documents.

As previously mentioned, USEC generates e-mails for to most of its activities. These activities include secretarial support for the governing bodies and their committees; management of Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy compliance; liaising with Government; producing the Board of Governors’ Handbook and University Calendars; managing Convocation applications; publishing cards, programs, and diplomas for Convocation; as well as activities related to the Convocation Roll.25 In addition, “[t]he office oversees the organization of the University policy manual and maintains an updated version on the web.”26

In its role as the secretary of the university’s governance bodies, USEC creates and maintains administrative records, minutes, dockets, and photographs of the Board of Governors, the Board of Governors’ Committees, the Senate, the Senate Committees, the Faculties, and the Foundations at UVic. USEC is also involved in creating and maintaining files related to legal matters, such as contracts, leases, agreements, and legal advice. USEC is also responsible for elections and creates and maintains records related to web vote and other related functions.

Generally speaking, incoming e-mails are automatically saved to the inbox and each USEC employee will decide whether to move them to an appropriate folder in his/her e-mail application. Sent e-mails are automatically saved to the sent folder. Some employees will move the sent e-mail into the appropriate folder along with other e-mails relating to the activity. E-mail

25 University of Victoria, “Directory of Records”; available from http://fplib.uvic.ca/FMRes/FMProv Internet, accessed 1 February 2008. Please note that the search was performed by entering “University Secretary” in the “Primary Office” field
26 University of Victoria, Office of the University Secretary, “Office Profile,” op. cit.
attachments accompany their respective e-mail in these instances. Some employees print selected e-mails, creating a duplicate paper version of the record, which is filed and maintained in the USEC office. When e-mail attachments are downloaded on the USEC employee’s desktop, they are typically saved to the shared drive, and sometimes to the desktop. Attachments can also be printed, though it is unclear how frequently this occurs.

Alterations to e-mail, while infrequent, do occur. Subject lines are sometimes changed. For example, following a series of emails discussing possible meeting dates, the final e-mail’s subject line may be edited to reflect the determined date of the meeting. In other instances, if a sent e-mail’s subject line vaguely read “Informal Advice” the USEC employee change it to specify the contents of the e-mail. Other changes to e-mails sometimes occur when the e-mail is replied to or forwarded. These changes occur in the body of the e-mail, especially when side conversations enter the threaded e-mails. An e-mail may go from a two-way to a three-way conversation and then back to two again. In these cases, the USEC employee may delete some elements of the intermediate correspondence, especially if it contains irrelevant information. These changes are not recorded anywhere, per se. In the case of subject line alterations, the original subject line may appear somewhere in the e-mail thread, but changes to the e-mail’s body, however, may not be recorded anywhere.

It appears that in many cases, downloaded e-mail attachments are renamed when saved to the shared drive or desktop. Some employees make it a regular practice to save Word attachments as PDFs once in the final version. Again, these changes are not formally recorded, but one could go back to the original e-mail if it was saved and see what the name of the attached file was when it was received. If the e-mail with the attachment has been deleted, then only the sender would retain the original file name.

Regarding the filing and managing of e-mails, there is evidence that USEC has a recordkeeping system in place for its traditional records. Before 1994, university records were created and maintained, disposed of and preserved on an extremely ad-hoc basis. After the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act came into force in British Columbia, the Archives established the university-wide classification and disposition/retention schedule, the Directory of Records (DOR). It addresses both traditional formats and digital systems that were in use in the 1990s. The classification scheme was finished (12 functional sections) but not all retention rules were completed (Financial Management, Governance, Human Resources, Student
Records, and Student Services retention rules were approved 1995-2000; other sections have draft rules developed but not approved). In 2007, a preliminary plan for its revision was conducted by an Information Management consultant, but resources for moving ahead with this have not been found. On the whole, the DOR meets the Archives’ needs for managing transfer and disposition of many of the university’s vital records. Several *ad-hoc* dispositions are done per year for records that do not easily fall into DOR classifications; these *ad-hoc* dispositions require the University Secretary’s approval as well as the University Archivist’s.

Though employees are encouraged to use folders related to the formal ones designated by DOR, many individual users maintain their own filing systems both for paper and digital records. The e-mail foldering systems are primarily based on functional classification, with chronological breakdowns often by academic year. In cases when e-mail attachments are downloaded, they are saved on personal desktops or to the USEC shared drive, which have foldering systems of their own. No one person in USEC is designated as being responsible for records maintenance; e-mail management is the responsibility of each employee.

Despite the personalized nature of e-mail management, USEC employees need to have access to the records controlled by the recordkeeping system and their metadata. However, because USEC serves as the repository of information on all matters relating to the Board of Governors, the Senate, the Foundations and their standing and ad hoc committees, it not only deals with its own records, but also those records of these governing bodies. The member of these governing bodies may also need access to the records controlled by the recordkeeping system and their metadata. Ultimately, the Archives staff would need access as well.

In terms of the technical specifications, e-mails in Outlook 2003 are .msg files. Attachments, on the other hand, come in a variety of formats. Word and .PDF documents are the primary types of attachments observed, but employees also receive Excel files and images that come in a variety of formats (.TIFF, .png, .jpeg, .gif). The predominant format of attachments depends on the functions of the USEC position. For example, the Administrative Officer sends and receives mainly Excel attachments of voter lists in her function as Elections Officer. The secretary to the University Secretary, on the other hand, rarely sends and receives Excel attachments.

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27 When e-mail attachments are downloaded, it does not mean they are removed from the e-mail. In fact, USEC employees file the e-mail with the attachments in their foldering systems AND file downloaded e-mail attachments on the desktop or in the shared drive.
Metadata that is manually added to e-mail includes recipient(s) e-mail addresses and subject lines. Flagging of e-mails may also be considered added metadata. Beyond subject lines and ad hoc naming conventions for saved attachments, there does not appear to be any descriptive or other metadata schema or standards currently being used. Occasionally, the subject line is altered in replies and forwards and an attachment is renamed if it is downloaded and saved in a separate location. Users typically rely on the metadata automatically generated by the computer, including names, dates (received or sent), subject lines, and size.

At the time of this case study, the Archives exerted no control over e-mail preservation. Only Information Technology Services had control of the e-mails residing on the Exchange Server. The servers are backed up nightly. Moreover, there have been no serious discussion regarding the acquisition of e-mails by the Archives because it lacks the resources to address the sheer volume of e-mails being generated by USEC. The only e-mails that the Archives acquires are those printed and interfiled with USEC records that fall under the Archives collection mandate. Maybe within the next 10 years, this will change, but it is certain it will not happen in the immediate future.

Though the preservation of e-mails is not on the immediate radar of the Archivists, discerning new ways to improve e-mail management that may eventually facilitate the preservation of the messages was one of the main objectives of this case study. To accomplish this, the GRAs also collected information about how the Archivists would implement and disseminate new guidelines or policies at UVic.

There is a well-established process for policy creation at UVic. In November 2007, UVic approved the Policy on University Policies and Procedures, which outlines the context in which policies are developed at UVic and the Procedures Relating to the Policy on University Policies and Procedures.\(^{28}\) While adhering to these policies, the Archives forms records/archives policies in close collaboration with whomever necessary. For example, a draft Imaging policy was developed with the University Secretary’s Office, the Records Management Committee, and staff from the Administrative Registrar’s office, Finance, and Computing and Systems Services.

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Currently, sign-off on the Directory of Records rests with the President (after processed through Records Management Committee). However, authority for the draft Imaging policy has not yet been determined, though possible options include President or Vice-President Finance and Operations. Likewise, as part of this case study, the Archives worked closely with USEC to devise new e-mail guidelines, regularly soliciting feedback on the content and scope of the document.

Once the Archives creates new guidelines or procedures, the Archivists are responsible for implementing them. Some authority for implementation would derive from the USEC office because of Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy and some authority comes from the President. Individual offices across campus are responsible for their own implementation of any records classification and disposition.

Regarding the dissemination of the policies and procedures, the UVic archivists explain policies and processes (records transfer and disposition) to university staff when contacted. Cross-campus training has been conducted in the past but resources have not allowed this in recent years. Increasingly, records-related information and policies are being placed on the university’s Web site. Also, the University’s Human Resource Department has started to centralize training programs, such as the Administrative Certificate program, where the archivists may instruct staff in records management and privacy-related practices. Formerly, the archives used small publications or informal talks with individual departments. This enabled them to gain good relationships with several of the departments. This most frequently occurred in one-on-one settings, typically initiated by the departments having questions about certain records or FOI requests.

There is information available for all UVic staff through the Records Management Manual, which provides guidance on the Directory of Records at UVic and explains the process of transferring records to the Archives. The Archives has also created Record-Keeping and Freedom of Information Bulletins. The proposed upgrade to the UVic Library Web site may provide opportunity for further information to be made available to UVic staff on records/archives policy.

No one at UVic is assigned to auditing the implementation of records/archives policy. Institutional culture works against a regular audit activity. The University’s Internal Audit office refers offices to Archives when records management issues arise in the course of internal audit processes. Existing policies, procedures and standards control or influence records creation, maintenance, preservation or use to a certain but limited extent. In central administrative offices, Archives policies and procedures have a moderate degree of influence. Across faculties and departments, however, influence varies widely. Policies, procedures and standards need to be/are being updated.

E. Narrative Answers to the Project’s Applicable Research Questions

*How and when should these archives or programs prepare themselves for digital preservation?*

At the time of this case study, the UVic Archives did not have the capabilities to preserve digital records. Yet, this case study indicates that archives, such as UVic’s, need to start preparing for digital preservation through the development of policies and procedures that help govern the management of digital records during their active and semi-active stages. These actions will ensure that recordkeeping principles and controls are in place in the event that the Archives does gain the ability to preserve digital records.

*What are the nature and the characteristics of the relationship that each of these archives or programs should establish with the creators of the records for which it is responsible?*

The Archives need to have a positive working relationship with records creators, as well as executive support; the processes, outcomes, and responsibilities necessary for the long-term preservation of digital records must constantly be articulated and communicated to these stakeholders. The UVic case study demonstrated that collaborating closely with USEC facilitated the creation process of new guidelines, which will increase the likelihood that the guidelines will have a positive reception by USEC staff.

Unfortunately, there is only a certain limit to which an archives can stress the importance of better management of digital records, especially in an academic environment where departments, offices, faculty and staff may have higher levels of autonomy than in other businesses. The organizational culture in an academic environment is diverse and complex and
comprises a wide spectrum of professions and subcultures such as academic and non-academic positions.\textsuperscript{30} In such a culture, decision-making processes involve negotiation with different interest groups. As such, developing and implementing a coordinated records management programme that requires record creators to subscribe to standardised procedures and protocols present their own set of challenges. Even in the best of working relationships, if the creator does not foresee a problem or has the capability of remaining relatively independent of the archives, then digital preservation of those records will be haphazard at best.

\textit{What kind of policy, strategy and procedures should any such archives or program have in place to be able to control the digital records for which it will be or already is responsible from creation to preservation, and on what factors are these administrative devices dependent (e.g. a specific accountability framework and governance structure)?}

The UVic case study demonstrated that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to policy/guideline creation. As discussed in the Findings section of this report, two different e-mail guidelines were made for this case study, one a more formal document and the other a shorter, friendlier document. After receiving feedback from USEC, it was determined that the shorter, friendlier version would be received in better standing and staff would be more willing to adhere to its suggestions. Thus, when creating policy-related documentation, this documentation cannot be created in an archival vacuum and laced with terminology unfamiliar with its intended audience. The documentation must be created in collaboration with these people and they must be able to quickly review and understand it. It is acknowledged that certain types of policy-related documentation needs to contain certain requirements, but where flexibility is allowed, the shorter will always be better.

\textit{What knowledge and skills are required for those who must devise policies, procedures and action plans for the preservation of digital records in small and medium sized archival organizations or programs?}

It is essential that individuals responsible for the preservation of digital records be familiar with the technology involved in the creation and management of the digital records. Archivists need to be aware of the different file types that records may be saved in, as well as the different computer programs and hardware that will allow access to the records. Archivists need

to be cognizant of organizational culture issues within their organizations—square pegs of archival practices cannot be forced into round holes of organizational reality. Within the academic environment, there are multiple subcultures operating within the same and or different organizational units, which may be based on different occupational and/or professional groups. For example, the non-academic staff comprises technical staff, clerical staff and senior administrative staff and each group have their own unique values and work processes. While the records professional may understand the value of classification schemes, retention and disposition schedules, it must be acknowledged that not everyone in the organization will accept this body of knowledge or see its importance. To overcome this resistance, recordkeeping practices must, to a certain extent, be flexible. The difficulty is striking a balance between helpful but simplified guidelines and rigid procedures which accomplish benchmark objectives.

Recordkeeping should be as unobtrusive as possible. It may also be beneficial if clearly articulated procedures are created to help employees make new transitions between old and new recordkeeping management practices. Moreover, archivists need to be sensitive that different professional groups and record creators may understand, internalise and interpret records management concepts differently from the records management and archival science discipline. In some cases, archivists have to adopt multiple lines of communication strategies with different groups of stakeholders including senior management and line supervisors and pitch records management messages priorities differently to specific groups.

**F. E-mail Bibliography**

The following bibliography provides a selection of secondary literature on e-mail management and preservation, divided into seven sections: News Media, Case Studies, Records Management, Personal Information Management, Organizational Culture, Legal, and E-mail Standards & Guidelines.

*News Media*


Lukesh, Susan S. “E-mail and Potential Loss to Future Archives and Scholarship or the Dog That Didn't Bark.” *First Monday* 4, no. 9 (1999).


**Case Studies**


**Records Management**


Enneking, Nancy E. “Managing E-mail: Working Toward an Effective Solution.” *ARMA Records Management Quarterly* (July 1998).


**Personal Information Management**


Whittaker, Steve and Candace Sidner. “Email Overload: Exploring Personal Information Management of Email.” In *Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in


Organizational Culture


Legal


**E-mail Standards & Guidelines**


“E-mail Guidelines for Managers and Employees.” Collaborative Electronics Records Project (Rockefeller Archive Center, Smithsonian Institution Archives, 2006).


“Email Records Guidance.” Collaborative Electronics Records Project (Rockefeller Archive Center, Smithsonian Institution Archives, 2007).


**G. Glossary**

**Administrative E-mail:** Messages relating to the general and routine activities of the unit.

**Attachment:** A document that accompanies, or is “attached,” to an electronic message; attachments may appear in almost any format and be any size.

**Discovery:** The process of identifying, locating, securing, reviewing, and producing potentially relevant information and materials during the course of legal action.

**Directory of records (DOR):** A tool used by many records management programs that provides a global view of the records generated by a specific organization and divides this view into a classification scheme consisting of a set number of broad sections of related records.
Electronic mail (e-mail): A document created or received via an e-mail client; this data includes the header information, text body, metadata, and any attachments that accompany the message. Also known as an electronic message.

E-mail client: The e-mail software or program used to receive or send electronic messages; ex. Microsoft Outlook, Eudora, Microsoft Mail, Gmail, Hotmail.

E-mail management: Creating, receiving, sending, classifying, or destroying an e-mail.

E-mail preservation: The specific process of maintaining e-mails during and across different generations of technology over time, irrespective where they reside.

Transitory e-mail: An e-mail that has little or no documentary or evidential value and that need not be set aside for future use.

Working e-mail: See Administrative e-mail.

H. Diplomatic Analysis

This case study conducted a diplomatic analysis of scheduling a meeting of the Senate, a process done via e-mail by an employee of USEC who coordinates and facilitates Senate activities. Specifically, the analysis examined the first e-mail that the USEC employee sends inquiring about each Senate member’s availability. The e-mail is sent to the Senate members’ assistants.

The analysis demonstrated that the e-mail meets the requirements to be deemed a record. Its documentary form is fixed, its content is stable and it is affixed to a stable medium. Its stability is ensured by the Exchange server on which it resides and its relationship to other records within the e-mail application demonstrates an implicit or explicit archival bond.

The e-mail’s manifested form is useful for preservation because, in this specific instance, there is no attachment involved. A preservation plan would need to preserve the salient features of the e-mail, particularly elements like the subject line, recipient information, and sent/received date that allow it to be uniquely identified. To a much lesser extent, form must be considered in the preservation plan. This becomes more complicated in situations involving e-mail attachments. In these cases, the link between the e-mail and its attachment must be maintained and preserved.

I. Findings, Recommendations and Products

In a decentralized recordkeeping environment, that is, one where an electronic document and records management system (EDRMS) does not exist, the management and preservation of
e-mail may be analogized to herding cats.\(^{31}\) This case sought to address this challenge by focusing on one specific office at the University of Victoria (UVic). The University Secretary’s Office (USEC) is one of the offices that has a close relationship with the University Archives but also commands a fair amount of respect and authority throughout campus because of its responsibility for governance matters. It was hoped that if the Archivists could design and implement new e-mail guidelines in this office other departments and offices would be more willing to adopt them.

At the time of this case study the UVic did not have rules or guidelines for how USEC employees should manage their e-mail. This said, UVic did have some documents in place that apply to e-mail use,\(^{32}\) but this information lacked any specific stipulations for e-mail management, retention, disposition or long-term preservation beyond quick tips and common sense suggestions. To provide faculty and staff more guidance with regards to e-mail management, the Archivists and GRAs created an initial, informal, set of guidelines for USEC.\(^{33}\)

The guidelines were first presented at the November 2008 InterPARES TEAM Canada workshop, with USEC providing feedback on them shortly after the meeting. In the original version, the document discussed how employees could determine if they should keep or destroy an e-mail. Although USEC employees welcomed this advice, they stated that most of their messages fall somewhere in between—what were dubbed “purgatory messages.” In other words, staff sought more guidance for handling messages that should be retained for a short period of time (i.e., administrative messages and those forming part of what is commonly thought of as working files). It was requested that additional information be presented to help determine what types of messages should be kept for the appropriate periods of time.

The final comment that arose from this discussion with USEC focused on the notion of sharing messages and attachments. Staff frequently need to have access to certain e-mails and their attachments that were received by one or two of their fellow staff. Rather than forwarding

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33 Leah Pearse and Donald Force, “Case Study 10(3) – University of Victoria Office of the University Secretary – Policies, Procedures and Tools for E-mail Management and Preservation in an Administrative Unit: Workshop 02 Action Item 36 – E-mail Management Guidelines,” InterPARES 3 Project, TEAM Canada (v1.1, November 2008).
messages and encountering version control problems, USEC requested guidance for how to best save messages and their attachments to the unit’s shared drive as well as naming conventions for these files.

To accommodate these changes, the Archivists and GRAs worked to revise the original set of guidelines. This second draft was submitted for discussion at the InterPARES TEAM Canada workshop in May 2010. Following the workshop, the guidelines continued to undergo revisions based on some feedback received from InterPARES TEAM Canada members and USEC. At this time of this report, the guidelines were in the final stage of preparation and will be submitted for review by the University Records Management Committee and approval by the University Secretary who is the procedural authority for the Procedures for the Management of University Records (to which the guidelines will be attached) (Appendix B). While this development alone might be worthy of considering the case a success, the Archivists and GRAs also accomplished several secondary tasks.

In addition to altering the aforementioned guidelines based on the suggestions of USEC, at the November 2008 workshop, the InterPARES TEAM Canada working group had tasked the UVic archivists and GRAs with modifying the original set guidelines into a model set that each unit at the university could customize for its specific environment while making the document more professional in nature. At the May 2009 InterPARES TEAM Canada Workshop, the GRAs presented the “Model E-Mail Management Guidelines” (Appendix C). Ironically, the InterPARES participants argued that these guidelines appeared too professional and needed to be more user-friendly. As a result of the discussion, the GRAs and Archivists set aside this document in favour of revising the initial set of guidelines. Based on these developments, it is clear that any documentation that needs to be reviewed, understood, and acted upon by an audience unfamiliar with recordkeeping theory and terminology, needs to be relatively “simple” in language usage, appearance, and length.

Creating the two different types of e-mail guidelines led to another development within the case study. As the GRAs interacted with USEC staff the issue of e-mail attachments and their management arose as a major concern. For example, how is the link between the e-mail message

34 Leah Pearse, Donald Force, and Carolyn Downs, “Case Study 10(3) – University of Victoria Office of the University Secretary – Policies, Procedures and Tools for E-mail Management and Preservation in an Administrative Unit: Workshop 02 Action Item 36 – E-mail Management Guidelines – Updated for Workshop 06,” InterPARES 3 Project, TEAM Canada (v3.2, May 2010).
and its attachment maintained once the attachment is saved to the desktop or shared drive? Are these attachments renamed? Which attachment constitutes the original record? None of the e-mail best practices, example policies, or guidelines the GRAs considered when composing these documents offered any convincing advice for managing attachments and what should or, more importantly, should not be done with them.\textsuperscript{36}

To begin answering these questions, the GRAs started interviewing USEC employees in March 2009 to investigate how each staff member handled his/her attachments. The goal of the research was to identify trends and issues associated with these actions (see Appendix D for the list of questions the GRAs asked each employee). While the final report on the attachment study may be found in its entirety on the InterPARES website,\textsuperscript{37} its conclusion is worth repeating here:

Most USEC employees feel quite comfortable with the way they handle e-mail attachments, but recognize that they manage them inconsistently. Some of the issues they identified include inconsistent saving, printing, and naming practices, as well as a lack of systematic e-mail disposition (attachments are often saved for reference purposes but seldom deleted, even after the original message has been destroyed, due to the employee’s lack of time). The various locations and idiosyncratic naming conventions, not to mention the lack in confidence for when a message should, or should not be, printed has led to several employees failing to recall where they placed an e-mail attachment once downloaded and to which e-mail it originally belonged; this may be of particular importance in those cases where the attachment has been edited and needs to be reconnected with its initial message.

Based on these interviews, almost every employee expressed a desire to learn better practices and direction for managing their e-mail attachments. Due to the eagerness of USEC staff to work with the UVic archivists and InterPARES project, as well as, adapt new management methods, it is hopeful that this work will lead toward the development of a set of guidelines or best practices for handling attachments. These guidelines should emphasize how employees may be able to more consistently name their attachments, move them from one location to another, and which messages (and their attachments) should be printed and filed.\textsuperscript{38}

As a result of this research, the GRAs devised a set of procedures that USEC staff should follow when addressing e-mail attachments (see “Saving E-mails and Attachments” section of the e-


\textsuperscript{37} Leah Pearse and Donald Force, “Case Study 10(3) – University of Victoria Office of the University Secretary - Policies, Procedures and Tools for E-mail Management and Preservation in a Governance Unit: E-mail Attachment Study,” InterPARES 3 Project, TEAM Canada (v2.3, April 2010).

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., 7.
These guidelines do not intend to be the be-all-end-all position on e-mail attachment management; rather, they function as a reference point for employees to increase the likelihood that attachments may be handled in a more consistent manner.

As early as May 2008, this case study had an action item stipulating that the Archivists were to “implement the University’s existing directory of records (classification plan) with respect to the Office of the University Secretary’s e-mails (i.e., classify the e-mails according to the plan).” From the outset, the e-mail guidelines reflected this objective by including a section referring readers to the university’s Directory of Records (DOR) (see “E-Mail Organisation and Storage” section of the e-mail guidelines found in Appendix B). This portion of the guidelines advised the users to consider mirroring their e-mail folder structure to the DOR, a process intended to establish some uniformity among the employee’s e-mail organizations in order to improve the identification of messages for retention, disposition, and long-term preservation.

During the Summer of 2008, the Archivists and GRAs undertook a pilot project with the one USEC staff to determine the feasibility and usefulness of creating a crosswalk between the user’s e-mail folder structure and the DOR. While the findings of this project have been articulated elsewhere, the pilot project was deemed a success. As a result, the Archivists and GRAs aimed to conduct the crosswalk with six other USEC employees.

Due to the various sizes of e-mail inboxes, crosswalking the remaining employees’ inboxes with the DOR did not proceed as smoothly (or as quickly) as the pilot project. Of the six employees originally targeted, the crosswalk was only conducted on three of these inboxes. Overall, the process did not allow for the Archivists and GRAs to perform the heavy amount of lifting without interfering with each employee’s daily schedule. In other words, to properly map each inbox to the DOR, the Archivists and GRAs needed to meet with each employee and

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39 A GRA also created a procedural document instructing staff how to convert e-mails into PDF documents using Adobe Acrobat X Pro (v.10) and saving the PDF documents to a location external to their e-mail client (e.g., computer’s desktop or shared network drive).

40 “TEAM Canada Plenary Workshop #02: Action Items and Decisions,” InterPARES 3 Project, TEAM Canada (v1.2).

41 Readers are reminded that the DOR is the principal tool of the records management program at the University. The DOR functions as the global view of the records generated by the University and divides this view into a classification scheme consisting of (at the time of this case study) 12 broad sections of related records. The classification scheme arranges records according to the functions of the University and identifies these groups by a block numeric system for their efficient access and retrieval.

42 Leah Pearse and Donald Force, “Case Study 10(3) – University of Victoria Office of the University Secretary - Policies, Procedures and Tools for E-mail Management and Preservation in a Governance Unit: Workshop 02 Action Item 35 – Implementation of the Directory Records to the University Secretary Office’s E-mails,” InterPARES 3 Project, TEAM Canada (v2.3, April 2010).
systematically go through his/her inbox to verify that the name of the folder contained messages pertaining to its title.43

The DOR crosswalk process was facilitated by the GRAs receiving a printout of each staff member’s folder list (Appendix E). The GRAs then placed the list in an Excel document (Appendix F) which better enabled the Archivists and GRAs to determine how each folder and/or subfolder best mapped to the DOR. Once completed, the Archivists and the GRAs met with the USEC employee to ascertain if the folder’s name reflected its contents (and vice versa). Notes were taken during this meeting to determine the appropriate action with the folder (e.g., if it should be deleted, if its contents could be merged, if it needed to be named, etc.). To minimize the amount of time the Archivists and GRAs interacted with each employee, the Archivists and GRAs intellectually constructed the new inbox structure on paper and then passed this information on to the staff member, whereby, he/she could implement the list at his/her convenience or with the assistance of the Archivists.

The crosswalk helped show employees that many of their messages and folders could be deleted at no risk (either their retention period had expired or the employee was no longer responsible for that function). Despite reassuring employees on several occasions that it was okay to destroy certain messages, employees still expressed a great reluctance to cull messages.44 Examining the inbox folder structures helped the Archivists realize that the revisions to the DOR may be needed to better reflect changes at USEC. Given the personalized nature of employee’s inboxes, it was determined that a direct one-to-one crosswalk between the inbox folders and the DOR would be unproductive. The Archivists felt best to try to map as many folders to the top-level of the DOR and allow users to create their own sub-folders.

Several months after two staff had implemented and used their new classification structure, there were generally positive remarks. While both employees expressed some difficulty in adapting to the new structure (with one employee creating a hybrid of her own system and the DOR), they admitted that the reduction in folders helped facilitate the classification of e-mails because the new structure is “organized in a logical order, as opposed to

43 As indicated in its report, this process was not as tedious in the pilot project because the staff member’s inbox had a limited number of folders and, to a certain extent, had a folder structure in place that closely aligned with the DOR.
44 It was not the intention of the project to collect empirical data about this process, in other words, the number of folders/messages before the crosswalk versus the number of folders/messages after the crosswalk. It is unclear how many folders and messages were deleted using this process, though each person the Archivists and GRAs met with did result in fewer folders and messages.
the ad hoc system I used to create folders previously.” Another employee said that while it may take a few extra seconds to determine where to place a message, the new structure “makes my email seem less cluttered.” While the reduction in folders helps classify messages, it hinders browsing for messages when they are needed for reference purposes:

the one thing I’ve noticed is that I’m putting a lot more things in one folder, instead of creating sub-folders for every specific topic. I think this is both good and bad. It means there’s a lot more emails in one folder, which can make browsing difficult. On the other hand, it means I don’t have tons of subfolders – these were clogging up my folder structure and making it difficult for me to figure out where to file things.

Though the process made employees aware that culling messages is something that should be done on a regular basis, this is an extremely difficult hurdle to overcome. One employee said that she would like to “purge the e-mails I no longer need” during the summer, but she admitted that this may be easier said than done because she tries “to keep many of my emails for reference purposes, but this can get a bit overwhelming.” Another employee expressed a minimal amount of interest attempting to destroy messages: “I delete only junk mail, drafts or mail that isn’t relevant to me or my position. Otherwise, I file everything away just in case.”

The work with USEC employees shows that applying retention and disposition schedules to e-mails in a decentralized environment is a formidable challenge for records professionals. Despite efforts to “simplify” classification structures, the act of deleting messages (or saving the messages with the notion of their long-term preservation in mind) is an act that most employees lack the time or confidence in undertaking. While the notion of a classification structure is to facilitate this process, it is ultimately up to the user to determine if the message may be deleted and most employees err on the side of caution and avoid pressing the delete key.

In addition to the aforementioned work, this case study undertook one other sub-project. At the November 2008 TEAM Canada workshop, the participants discussed what infrastructure archives require for ingesting and preserving e-mails. Like many other archives, the University of Victoria Archives will not have the capability to ingest and maintain control of e-mails in electronic format in the foreseeable future. In January 2009, the GRAs met with the Archivists to discuss if the University Secretary Office’s local area network (LAN) could serve as a trusted digital repository (TDR). The parameters of the TDR would be based on the Canadian General Standards Board’s “Electronic Documents as Documentary Evidence Standard” (CAN/CGSB-
72.34-2005). Readers interested in this component of the project should consult the complete report;\textsuperscript{45} in short, the analysis found that the LAN cannot function as a TDR because of the lack of controls over how the records on it are accessed, managed, and even destroyed:

Not only is it important that the records themselves be carefully managed to ensure their authenticity over time, but the system in which they reside must also be monitored and considered trustworthy. Only when both criteria are satisfied may the electronic records have a stronger chance of being used as evidence in a Canadian court of law.\textsuperscript{46}

This case study may be considered a success. The study created new e-mail guidelines based designed with the assistance of USEC employees which may encourage their use and adoption by other offices and departments throughout the University. Also, the case study also took the initial steps toward mapping USEC employees’ inboxes to the Directory of Records (DOR). While this process took much longer than anticipated, it helped encourage staff to think twice about their e-mail management and cull messages in accordance to retention and disposition requirements. Initially, it was believed that a straight convergence of inbox folders to the DOR would be possible, but the GRAs and Archivists realized that a compromise was necessary to avoid employees from ignoring the recommendations and reverting back to their personalized classification schemes. Moreover, the DOR-related work also helped the Archivists determine areas where the DOR needed to be updated.

Overall, the achievements of this case study may be contributed to several factors. Foremost, the they are due to the employees with whom the Archivists and GRAs collaborated. Due to the nature of the office’s responsibilities, USEC staff need to be well organized and disciplined in their records management habits. Staff need to be able to file and access electronic documents (including e-mails) in an effective and efficient manner; to do otherwise would compromise some of the senior administrative functions of the University. While none of the staff explicitly said they experience e-mail overload or found its management as being detrimental to their daily duties, they all seemed willing to be able to learn a new system or tweak their current system in a way that would further facilitate the management of their e-mail. As indicated in the e-mail attachment study, employees welcomed guidance for how to handle

\textsuperscript{45} Donald C. Force and Leah Pearse, “Case Study 10(3) – University of Victoria Office of the University Secretary - Policies, Procedures and Tools for E-mail Management and Preservation in a Governance Unit: Workshop 03 Action Item 24 – Framework for Trusted Digital Environment,” InterPARES 3 Project, TEAM Canada (v1.2, April 2010).

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., 8.
attachments and where to save their e-mails. But it is clear that a simple e-mail guideline sheet that lists “Dos” and “Don’ts” would not be sufficient, rather, the guidelines needed to be augmented with procedural documentation to that direct employees on how to satisfy the criteria listed in the guidelines.

This case study indicates that the creation of archival documentation that instructs users how to better manage their electronic documents, such as e-mail, needs to be a collaborative effort. The organization’s records professionals need to regularly communicate its practices and activities to the organization’s employees while soliciting their feedback on documentation aimed to facilitate how they manage their records. As previously mentioned, square pegs of archival practices cannot be forced into round holes of organizational reality, and coexistence depends on well-developed lines of communication and a positive willingness to make changes in recordkeeping habits and methods.

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Appendix A

Administrative Organization Chart
Appendix B

Guidelines for E-mail Management

PURPOSE
The use of e-mail at UVic, like the creation and use of other records, is meant to support the University’s teaching and administrative business. All e-mails created and received in support of this business are University records. Managing e-mail records therefore enables the University to meet its administrative needs, legal obligations and to retain its corporate memory. All records management activities are a legitimate part of daily work; making time to manage e-mails regularly can be more efficient overall and can actually assist in workload management. These guidelines are designed to facilitate this process.

UVic Records Management Policy
The university’s Records Management policy and procedures provide direction on the creation, use and disposition of university records, access to the records, and define authorities, responsibilities and accountabilities for records management. Please see the related materials section on page 4 for links.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy
The B.C. Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) applies to all records in the custody or under the control of UVic. The university is obligated to ensure that applicants receive any records to which they are entitled under FIPPA. If any university employee receives a Freedom of Information (FOI) request, that employee MUST NOT delete any e-mails responsive to that request. Contact the Associate Archivist, the Manager, Policy and Access, or the University Secretary’s Office for further information about FOI requests.

Do not use non-UVic e-mail accounts for university business. Confidential business information and personal information requiring privacy protection should not be maintained outside the university’s information systems.

Under FIPPA, the university must store and access personal information in its custody or under its control only in Canada, unless the individual the information is about has consented to the particular instance of storage and access in another jurisdiction. Many webmail services operate on servers based in the U.S. and use of those services for e-mail containing personal information would contravene FIPPA.

Create e-mails and organize files with access in mind. Be objective and factual when writing about individuals.
Set up unit practices for managing confidential e-mails, including the following: have an explicit statement of confidentiality in policy, procedure or notice within the process that produces the e-mail; have a written request for confidentiality from the sender (in addition to the usual e-mail footer); send e-mail only to those persons permitted by procedure to have access to the confidential information. Be aware that certain access provisions of FIPPA may take precedence over confidentiality.

**E-mail Security**

Ensure smartphones and mobile computing devices are, at a minimum, password-protected in order to protect your e-mail account from unauthorized access.

Do not open unexpected attachments, and never respond to an email asking for personal account information.

**GUIDELINES**

**What to keep**

You will need to keep many e-mail messages for certain lengths of time. The following checklist can aid in deciding which to keep.

- could the e-mail be used as evidence of an action or a decision about an individual, a program, project, etc.?
- does the e-mail contain information that will be used as a basis for future decisions?
- does the e-mail require or authorize an important course of action?
- does the e-mail approve formal policy or set a precedent?
- does the e-mail detail any obligations or responsibilities of the University?
- does the e-mail protect the rights or assets of the University or its stakeholders?
- is your unit primarily or jointly responsible for maintaining the original, authoritative record about the individual, program, project etc?

If the answer to any of these questions is ‘yes,’ the e-mail and any attachment(s) should be kept for its appropriate retention period. These messages are considered

**Action E-Mails**

If the answer to all of these questions is ‘no,’ then the e-mail should be deleted either when it is no longer useful, if it is transitory, or when its retention period is finished, if it is part of a working file.

Further examples of Action E-mails include: discussions and recommendations relating to programs, students, personnel and policies that are not of a routine nature; substantial information about the unit, its personnel, students or programs; and/or actions, decisions or commitments of the unit. Many messages related to projects, activities, or certain subjects may have a specific retention period; please consult the
Directory of Records (DOR) for this information (see Organisation section for more details).

**Working File E-mails**

Many e-mails will be neither action nor transitory messages. These can be thought of as part of “working files” and are e-mails that form part of a consultation, project, case file, or similar ongoing action or subject. They may lead to action e-mails or other action records.

These messages should be filed with action e-mails in the appropriate e-mail folder. If time permits, manage them by deletion when they are no longer needed to document an action or a decision; otherwise, apply the appropriate records retention period to the entire e-mail folder. See the sections below on organisation and disposition.

**Transitory E-mails**

These are only required for a limited period of time for the completion of an action, the preparation of an ongoing record, or are purely for informational purposes.

Transitory records may include: meeting arrangements, information about upcoming events, working drafts, holiday notices, and listserv messages.

**E-mail Organisation and Storage**

E-mail cannot be classified or disposed of purely based on its format as an electronic message. Furthermore, MS Outlook is not designed to meet international records management standards and therefore is not suitable to be used for long-term storage of e-mail records. Using folders based on function, subject, activity or project often makes for more effective management of e-mail. The second most useful method of foldering and sub-foldering is chronological. These types of organisation facilitate searching and retrieval; they also enable simple, annual disposition by applying retention/disposition rules to entire folders.

UVic’s records classification and retention plan, the Directory of Records (DOR), provides rules on how long to keep records and information and when to dispose of them. At a minimum, you can use the DOR to organize your top-level folders. The DOR arranges all University records by functional categories and supplies retention periods for them (if the retention period is blank, contact the Associate Archivist for guidance).

The 12 functional categories in DOR are:

- Administration
- Computing and Systems Services
- Governance
- Libraries, Archives and Museum
- Buildings and Properties
- Financial Management
- Human Resources
- Research
Safety and Security  
Student Records  
Student Services  
Teaching Programs

Organising by functional category, activity, or project and chronology is recommended over using only the inbox and sent folders. In this way, action and working file e-mails can be maintained in Outlook if necessary (for their retention period) while keeping the inbox and sent folder contents at a minimum.

DOR is available through the Archives website:  
http://library.uvic.ca/site/archives/records_management/dor_database/

**Saving E-mails and Attachments**

Depending on your unit and its responsibilities at the university, the e-mails you create may or may not be designated for permanent preservation by the Archives; the vast majority will not be. For a list of records series with permanent retention rules, please see Appendix C. These records series will contain, like all others, action, working and transitory e-mails. Working and transitory e-mails should be deleted prior to transfer to the Archives.

A document attached to an e-mail is usually a vital component of that e-mail. It is important that attachments are kept with or remain associated with any e-mail that is of long-term importance. See Appendix A for recommended steps to save e-mails to your network drive(s).

E-mails can be saved individually or by entire folders at a time.

We recommend that you do not use the “archive” function in MS Outlook and other programs. This converts e-mails into a format which is not suitable for easy access or long-term preservation, if needed.

See Appendix B for document naming conventions. Once an attachment is downloaded from the original message, its filename may need to be changed, especially in those situations where the original filename lacks a useful description. Editing this filename may be a way to maintain the connection between the downloaded attachment and the original e-mail.

**RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS**

In addition to these guidelines, please also refer to the following:
- Policy IM7700: Records Management Policy:  
  http://www.uvic.ca/shared/shared_usec/docs/policies/IM7700.pdf  
  o Includes the Procedures for the Management of University Records and Procedures for Access to and Correction of Information
- Policy IM7200: Responsible Use for Information Technology Services:
 RESPONSIBLE OFFICE

Archives and Records Management staff are available to assist you. We are located in McPherson Library/Mearns Centre. We are happy to visit your office to discuss records management.

Lara Wilson, University Archivist
(XXX) XXX-XXX / xxxx@xxx.xx

Jane Morrison, Associate Archivist (Records Management and Access)
(XXX) XXX-XXX / xxxx@xxx.xx

Acknowledgements

UVic Archives thanks the InterPARES Project—TEAM Canada, and the UBC Graduate Research Assistants who worked on the UVic case study for the development of these Guidelines, and the staff of the University Secretary’s Office for their participation in the case study. http://interpares.org/ip3/ip3_index.cfm

Appendix A

Saving E-mails and Attachments

These guidelines are designed to help users better control where they save and access e-mail messages and downloaded attachments while minimizing duplication and reducing version control mistakes.

[Forthcoming: instructions on saving individual messages and whole folders in PDF format]

Best Practices

• **Never** delete an attachment from its original e-mail.

• If the attachment is needed *and* the accompanying e-mail does not contain any information about the attachment *and* the message is transitory in nature (see above), you may save the attachment and delete the original e-mail with its attachment.

• Avoid downloading attachments if they only need to be reviewed. Using MS Outlook, documents may be previewed in one of two ways:
1. If the reading pane is on (the window area either below or to the right of the list of messages), then single left-clicking the attachment will show a preview of the document in the reading pane. Depending on the e-mail application’s settings, a user may be asked to verify the trustworthiness of the attachment before viewing. Only preview an attachment if it is from a reliable source. Note: Not all file types may be previewed; in these circumstances, if the attachment is trusted, it should be downloaded according to the procedures outlined below.

2. If the reading pane is not open, the message must first be opened (i.e., double-click it) and then single left-click the attachment.

- If an attachment needs to be downloaded for revision or reference, the following steps should be taken:
  1. If the reading pane is on:
     a. Double-click the attachment;
     b. Select “Open”;
     c. Once the document is opened, “Save As...” the document to the appropriate location and with an appropriate filename (see below for filename conventions).
  2. If the reading pane is not on:
     a. Double-click the message to open it;
     b. Double-click the attachment;
     c. Select “Open”;
     d. Once the document is opened, “Save As...” the document to the appropriate location and with an appropriate filename (see below for filename conventions).

Appendix B
Document Naming Conventions

This section offers suggestions for consistently naming filenames.

It is important to ensure that a downloaded attachment maintains a relationship to its original e-mail message. To sustain this link, the filename of the downloaded attachment should contain certain information.

Date
Include the date on which the document is first created or received, or modified with a major version number. This should be indicated by using the international standard format of YYYYMMDD with no spaces or extra punctuation.

For example, if you received an e-mail with an attachment that you downloaded on January 5, 2010, the date would be represented as 20100105.
**Subject**
The subject given to the filename should be as concise as possible. For example, use EmailManagement rather than University_of_Victoria_E-mail_Guidelines.

**Type**
Following the subject, the document’s type should be identified. This should be listed as an abbreviation. Units are encouraged to develop a document type list for their purposes. Suggested abbreviations include:

AGD (Agenda)  AGR (Agreement)  ARS (Action Request)  BRN (Briefing Note)
CPA (Cover Page)  CON (Contract)  DFT (Discussion Draft)  EXA (Example)
FRM (Form)  GRA (Grant)  GUI (Guidelines)  IDX (Index)
LTR (Letter)  LST (List)  MEM (Memo)  MIN (Minutes)
MTG (Meeting)  NTS (Notes)  PLN (Plan)  POL (Policy)
PRS (Presentation)  PRC (Procedure)  RPT (Report)  SCH (Schedule)
SPE (Speech)  SUM (Summary)  SUP (Supplement)

For example, use EmailManagement_GUI rather than EmailGuide_Procedures.

If this list does not contain document types that your office requires, develop and disseminate the additional abbreviations internally.

**Version Control**
Version control tracks changes to a document and it helps a user determine its currency and history (i.e., previous iterations and number of major changes). The version number consists of the letter ‘v’ (representing the word “version”) and two numbers separated by a dash (e.g., v2-1). The first number represents major changes, such as changes of decision, reorganization of content or presentation. The second number represents minor changes, such as corrections of typos, stylistic changes, minor additions or deletions.

In this example, the different components are as follows:
- 20100105 (date the e-mail with the attachment was received)
- EmailManagement (subject of the document)
- GUI (type of document; in this case, it is a guideline)
- v1-1 (the first minor modification of the first major version)

The complete filename will be: 20100105_EmailManagment_GUI_v1-1

**Appendix C**
List of DOR series with retention rules that include transfer to Archives, i.e. permanent preservation [FORTHCOMING]
Appendix C

University of Victoria Guidelines on E-mail Management (Revised)

Introduction
These guidelines outline the applicability of policies at the University of Victoria (UVic) and British Columbia law to electronic mail (e-mail). The guidelines also address e-mail practices facilitating its use and management.47

The use of e-mail at UVic, like the creation and use of other records, is intended to support the University’s functions. All e-mails created and received in support of this business are University records. Managing e-mail records therefore enables the University to meet its administrative needs, legal obligations, and to retain its corporate memory.

E-mail management, like all records management activities, forms a legitimate part of daily work and ultimately increases administrative efficiency by facilitating the identification and accessibility of records and by preventing the premature deletion of messages relevant to decision-making. Additionally, all messages and their attachments are discoverable when a legal review, such as a Commissioner's inquiry or litigation is initiated. Individuals are expected to make time to manage e-mails regularly as part of their roles and responsibilities as University employees. Any attachments to an e-mail message form part of the record and must be effectively managed as well. Attachments must be saved and remain associated with any e-mail that is of long-term importance.

UVic e-mail users are also encouraged to review and consider Information Systems’ “Better Practices for E-mail” (http://cass.uvic.ca/betteremail/). This document offers practical tips and suggestions for composing, using, and managing e-mails.

Purpose
The purpose of these guidelines is to raise awareness about the importance of properly managing electronic messages as University records.

Scope
These guidelines apply to all University of Victoria employees who create, manage, and save e-mails as part of their daily tasks and routines.

Definitions & Terms
Accountability: principle that individuals, organizations and the community are responsible for their actions and may be required to explain them to others.48

Authenticity: trustworthiness of a record as a record; i.e., the quality of a record that is what it purports to be and that is free from tampering or corruption.49

47 These guidelines have been based on two different standards: The Government of Canada’s “Electronic Records as Documentary Evidence” (CAN/CGSB-72.34-2005) and the International Association of Records Management’s “Requirements for Managing Electronic Messages as Records” (ANSI/ARMA 9-2004).
Classification (of records): systematic identification and arrangement of business activities and records according to logically structured conventions, methods, and procedural rules, represented in a classification scheme. See also Directory of Records (DOR).

Directory of Records (DOR): the principal tool of the records management program at the University of Victoria. DOR functions as the global view of the records generated by the University and divides this view into a classification scheme consisting of 12 broad sections of related records. The classification scheme arranges records according to the functions of the University and identifies these groups by a block numeric system for their efficient access and retrieval. The University’s DOR is available through the Archives website: http://library.uvic.ca/site/archives/records_management/dor_database/default.html. See also Classification (of records).

Disposition (of records): range of processes associated with implementing records retention, destruction or transfer decisions, which are documented in disposition authorities or other instruments. Also see Retention Schedule.

Electronic Message: document created or received via an electronic message system, including brief notes, formal or substantive narrative documents, and any attachments, such as word processing or other electronic objects, that may be transmitted with the message along with its descriptive transmission metadata.

Record: document made or received in the course of a practical activity as an instrument or a by-product of such activity, and set aside for action or reference.

Recordkeeping: function of capturing, storing and maintaining records and information about them, and the set of rules governing such function.

Records Management: field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of, and information about, business activities and transactions in the form of records.

Retention Schedule: comprehensive list of records series and/or classification titles, indicating for each series the length of time it is to be maintained. Also see Disposition (of records).

Transitory Record: record that is required only for a limited time to ensure the completion of a routine action or the preparation of a subsequent record.

Provincial Acts

Employment Standards Act (RSBC 1996, c. 113)

The purpose of this Act is: (1) to ensure that employees in British Columbia receive at least basic standards of compensation and conditions of employment; (2) to promote the fair treatment of employees and employers; (3) to encourage open communication between

49 “Authenticity,” InterPARES 3 Project Terminology Database.
52 “Record,” InterPARES 3 Project Terminology Database.
53 “Recordkeeping,” InterPARES 3 Project Terminology Database.
54 “Electronic Records as Documentary Evidence,” 12.
employers and employees; (4) to provide fair and efficient procedures for resolving disputes over
the application and interpretation of this Act; (5) to foster the development of a productive and
efficient labour force that can contribute fully to the prosperity of British Columbia; and (6) to
contribute in assisting employees to meet work and family responsibilities.

*Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (RSBC 1996, c. 165)*

This Act has been devised to make public bodies more accountable to the public and to
protect personal privacy by: (1) giving the public a right of access to records, (2) giving
individuals a right of access to, and a right to request correction of, personal information about
themselves, (3) specifying limited exceptions to the rights of access, (4) preventing the
unauthorized collection, use or disclosure of personal information by public bodies, and (5)
providing for an independent review of decisions made under this Act.

The Act applies to all records in the custody or under the control of UVic. The University
is obligated to ensure that applicants receive any records to which they are entitled under the Act.

If you receive a Freedom of Information (FOI) request, DO NOT delete any e-mails
responsive to that request. Contact the Associate Archivist or the University Secretary’s Office
for further information about FOI requests.

Also see Policy GV0235: Protection of Privacy Policy (below), which articulates how the
university complies with the privacy components of this Act.

**Related University of Victoria Policies**

UVic has developed policies addressing how the university upholds its responsibilities
for privacy and defines acceptable use of information technology services by university staff,
students, and faculty. The guidelines presented here should be considered within the context of
these policies and UVic employees have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with their
provisions.

*Policy 6030: Responsible Use for Information Technology Services*

([http://web.uvic.ca/univsec/pol_pro/pol-6000/6030CTUR.html](http://web.uvic.ca/univsec/pol_pro/pol-6000/6030CTUR.html))

This policy regulates the use of university information technology services and includes a section
that specifically addresses the use of e-mail. Therein, e-mails are defined as university records
subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. As such, they cannot be
deleted when a request for information has been initiated. It should also be noted that the
University reserves the right to access e-mail records which have not only been deleted by an
employee but which have been preserved centrally, for the purposes of recovering evidence
while investigating allegations of serious employee misconduct and managing actual or potential
civil litigation in which the University is or may become a party.

*Policy GV0235: Protection of Privacy Policy*

([http://web.uvic.ca/univsec/pol_pro/ProtectionofPrivacyPolicy.htm](http://web.uvic.ca/univsec/pol_pro/ProtectionofPrivacyPolicy.htm))

This policy articulates how the university complies with the privacy components of the BC
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Of particular note is the definition of
employee responsibilities to protect personal information, which includes personal information
contained in e-mails.
**E-mail Retention**

University employees have a responsibility to create and keep records that adequately record the University’s activities. Each employee will need to keep e-mails for a certain length of time. This length of time will depend on the content of the e-mail. Many e-mail messages may be transitory records, which are only required for a limited period of time for the completion of an action, the preparation of an ongoing record, or are purely for informational purposes.

In order to help determine whether an e-mail needs to be retained in the long term, the following questions should be considered:

- Could the e-mail be used as evidence of an action or a decision about an individual, a program, project, etc.?
- Does the e-mail contain information that will be used as a basis for future decisions?
- Does the e-mail require or authorize an important course of action?
- Does the e-mail approve formal policy or set a precedent?
- Does the e-mail detail any obligations or responsibilities of the university?
- Does the e-mail protect the rights or assets of the University or its stakeholders?

If the answer to any of these questions is ‘yes,’ the e-mail and its attachments should be kept. Not all e-mail messages will require long-term retention. Employees should consult the Directory of Records (see below for more information) to determine how long these messages need to be retained for legal purposes.

If the answer to all of these questions is ‘no,’ then the e-mail is transitory and should be deleted as soon as it is no longer useful (see section 5.3 of the “Responsible Use for Information Technology Services” policy). Most likely, these records include meeting arrangements, information about upcoming events, working drafts, holiday notices, and listserv messages, to name a few examples.

**E-mail Preservation**

MS Outlook and other similar e-mail programs are not designed to meet international records management standards and therefore are not suitable to be used for long-term storage of e-mail records. Therefore, users interested in preserving messages have to set up their own procedures, which may be based on three alternatives:

1) Converting individual messages into text files and preserving these files;
2) Converting individual messages or entire folders of messages into PDF documents using Adobe Acrobat Professional and saving these files to the LAN;
3) Performing and preserving regular e-mail backups.

**E-mail Attachments**

Forthcoming. New attachment management guidelines will be devised based on interviews with USEC staff.

**E-mail Management: Folders and Organization**

UVic employees should not rely on their e-mail program’s Inbox folder as a proper management strategy. Users are expected to create folders based on function, subject, activity, or project to
ensure effective searching, retrieval, and disposition. E-mails in the sent box should also be filed into these folders. UVic’s records classification and retention plan, the Directory of Records (DOR), is highly recommended to organize at least the top-level folders. The DOR arranges all University records by function. Contact the Associate Archivist for help on translating existing folder structures to a DOR compliant system.

The 12 functions in DOR are:

- Administration
- Computing and Systems Services
- Governance
- Libraries, Archives and Museum
- Safety and Security
- Student Services
- Buildings and Properties
- Financial Management
- Human Resources
- Research
- Student Records
- Teaching Programs

The University’s DOR is available through the Archives website: [http://library.uvic.ca/site/archives/records_management/dor_database/default.html](http://library.uvic.ca/site/archives/records_management/dor_database/default.html). Note: When determining the retention period for a given record, if the period is blank, contact the Associate Archivist for guidance.

**E-mail Disposal**

E-mail cannot be classified or disposed of purely by its format as an electronic message. It must be “filed” in some way so that it is associated with a function, subject, activity, project, or individual, allowing for easier disposition. The Directory of Records provides rules on how long to keep records and information, and what method to use when disposing of them. Additionally, the “Deleted Items” folder should be regularly cleared to complete the deletion process or they will still be subject to FOI and e-discovery.

**Contacts**

Archives and Records Management staff are available to visit your office to discuss records management. We are located in McPherson Library/Mearns Centre.

Lara Wilson, University Archivist
(XXX) XXX-XXX / xxxx@xxx.xx

Jane Morrison, Associate Archivist (Records, Access and Privacy)
(XXX) XXX-XXX / xxxx@xxx.xx
Appendix D

Questions Regarding the Management of E-mail Attachments

Name & Position:
Major Tasks:
Typical Attachments:

Note: “Downloading” is defined as the conscious process of saving an attachment to a specific location. It is possible to open an attachment without downloading it. Outlook has the option to “Preview” an attachment in the message window. Also, double clicking to open the attachment is considered a form of previewing (see “How do you download attachments?”).

1. Do you feel comfortable with the way you handle e-mail attachments?

2. Do you perceive e-mails with attachments any differently than e-mails without attachments? Do you give them any more importance/value? Do you attend to them quicker?

3. Where do you typically download attachments to? This may be a multiple-step process...
   - A person may download an attachment to his/her desktop, review it, edit it, save it, and then move it to a folder on the hard drive or the local area network.
   - A person can also right-click, “Save As”, and download the attachment to a specific location directly from the e-mail application.

4. How do you download attachments?
   - Right-click the attachment > “Save As”
   - Double click the attachment > Open ... Then what? Save As? Save? Close?
     - The reason for this is that if the attachment is just opened and the person forgets to “Save As”, the document automatically gets saved to a temporary folder on the person’s hard drive (for backup purposes). “Save As” allows the person to have more control over where the file ends up. Double-clicking and selecting “Save” serves the same function as “Save As”.

5. If you download an attachment and save it to your desktop/area network, do you rename the attachment? If so, how do you know which e-mail it belonged to?

6. If you download an attachment and edit the attachment, what typically happens next?
• Save new version to desktop/area network? If yes, do you use the same name or different name as the original name?
• If the file is saved as a new file, what happens to the first downloaded version?

7. If you download an attachment and save it to your desktop/area network, do you download its accompanying e-mail and keep the two together?

8. If you print an attachment, do you print its accompanying e-mail? Visa versa?

9. Say you downloaded an attachment and made no edits to it. After a period of time, you need to refer to that attachment. Where do you go to access the document, your e-mail application or where you saved it?

10. Do you ever delete an attachment from the original e-mail? If yes, why?

11. Do you ever download both the e-mail and the attachment to keep them together? If yes, what format do you save the e-mail and attachments in? HTML, Text, Outlook Format, Have no idea?
Appendix E

Folder List Example
### Appendix F

**Directory of Records (DOR) Crosswalk Process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Folder List</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Governance</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Board Apps Andric</td>
<td>Board Apps Andric</td>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>nothing new 2016 / Delete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chair Review</td>
<td>Chair Review</td>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>nothing new / Deny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Board Compensation</td>
<td>Board Compensation</td>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>nothing new 2016 / Deny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>GLE</td>
<td>GLE</td>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>nothing new 2016 / Deny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Media Reports</td>
<td>Media Reports</td>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>nothing new 2016 / Deny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>P475 2017</td>
<td>P475 2017</td>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>meeting arranged on 12/3/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Strategic Plan</td>
<td>Strategic Plan</td>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>University Level Committee -- Administration Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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