

Department of Information Studies, University of California, Los Angeles

INF STD 240: Electronic Records, Spring 2011*

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Course information:

*Number: INF STD 240
Title: Management of Digital Records
ID: 628-241-200
Quarter: Spring 2011
Location: room 121, GSE&IS Bldg.
Time: Mondays, 9am-12h30pm
Web site: <https://ccl.e.ucla.edu/course/view/11S-INFSTD240-1>*

Instructor information:

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UCLA catalog description:

Lecture, three hours. Introduction to long-term management of digital administrative, information, communications, imaging, or research systems and records. Topics include electronic recordkeeping, enterprise and risk management, systems analysis and design, metadata development, data preservation, and technological standards and policy development. Letter grading.

* This syllabus has greatly benefited from discussions with and from syllabi created by Professors Anne Gilliland, UCLA, Cal Lee, UNC Chapel-Hill, and David Wallace, U Michigan.

1. Course description

The enshrinement of the terms “hanging chads” and “birthers” into popular culture testifies to the traumatic character of our current transition from paper to electronic records. In both cases, the legitimacy of the most powerful office on Earth has been threatened by doubts over the authenticity of records supposed to testify truthfully, to a birth, to a voter’s intent. The remedies deployed to correct these technological failures – electronic voting machines, an Internet scan of Obama’s short-form certificate – have only signaled even more powerfully the loss of the ways by which documents convey their authority and authenticity, formally and informally.

This loss is a direct consequence of the current society-wide shift in the ways documents are created, communicated, classified, and preserved. Today, almost all documents are computerized at some point of their life cycle, and the integration of computing, imaging and printing technologies makes it easier than ever to scan, copy, alter, distribute, print and store high quality documents. If the moral authority of paper records has correspondingly diminished, the electronic documents replacing them appear to us even more malleable.

This has far-reaching consequences: paper (and paperwork) is essential to the day-to-day operation of the Nation State – from the constitution itself, to all manners of paperwork – but also to the operation of daily life – from birth certificates to purchase receipts. Furthermore, new genres of communication and documentary practices – emails, text messages, social media – with shifting contours and a fast mutating metabolism are already called to serve as historical and legal evidence.

If this wasn’t enough, access to electronic records is necessarily mediated by computing software and hardware and the preservation of their evidential characteristics presents significant challenges. For certain types of digital objects, there does not exist theoretical, technical, and/or practical consensus on the most appropriate (or even basic) records preservation strategy. Even when such strategies exist, the required behavioral, organizational, institutional and professional underpinnings are generally not yet in place for such strategies and technological solutions. Given this, electronic records management issues go beyond mere technological evolution of banal bureaucratic instruments. Their digitization inevitably entails the renegotiation of their power to testify truthfully, to apportion liability, to enforce accountability, to constitute individual and collective memory. As such, this process raises both profound theoretical and practical challenges, offering abundant professional and research opportunities.

In this course, we will familiarize ourselves with these challenges and opportunities, survey preliminary solutions, research, and initiatives. We will focus on four emergent issues – new genres, identity, preservation, and forgetting – and in the process, build up a set of concepts, tools and strategies

information professionals can use to help shape valuable and sustainable recordkeeping systems. We will however keep these ambitions in check by taking stock of the reality of our current electronic recordkeeping environment. We will focus on guerilla recordkeeping, in the context of institutions or individuals with limited means, budgets, resources, and expertise. As such, the course will focus on grasping the essentials of a rapidly moving field and prepare students to become effective in a broad range of recordkeeping contexts.

2. Goals and objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to identify the various types and functions of electronic systems created and maintained by organizations and individuals in the conduct of their activities; to discuss the roles of various stakeholders in the management of the electronic materials created by those systems; to frame and articulate to archivists and non-archivists the technical, theoretical, legal, and historical issues associated with the long-term administration of electronic records; and to demonstrate the relationship of archival science to other professions in this context. More specifically, students should be able to:

- o discuss differences between records and other forms of digital materials;
- o define the following terms or concepts: “electronic records,” “evidence,” “reliability,” “authenticity,” and “recordkeeping metadata;”
- o identify sources of warrant for electronic recordkeeping;
- o establish and present a business case for recordkeeping;
- o undertake a business process analysis and recommend records retention schedules for records of common or specific administrative functions;
- o identify and discuss a range of organizational variables as they might affect an institution’s programmatic strategies with regards to electronic records.

3. Course expectations

- o While neither course is required, I will assume that the fundamentals of records and recordkeeping have been reviewed in IS 431, “American Archives and Manuscripts,” and IS “Records Management.” I will also assume that fundamentals of digital preservation have been covered in IS “Digital Preservation,” and focus on those aspects most germane to records. For students unfamiliar with these topics, the supplementary materials listed will provided the necessary
- o Come to class prepared to discuss the readings. See “How to Read a Book,” (<http://pne.people.si.umich.edu/PDF/howtoread.pdf>). The reading load will be kept light.

- Forfeit the use of your laptop and other electronic devices during class time.
- Participate in discussions. In particular, speak up when you disagree. A classroom is a space for discussion, not just a lecture. This course will explore new and rapidly evolving issues. Often, little consensus has emerged as to the best course of action. You are thus particularly encouraged to question the assumptions of the readings, the instructor, and your fellow students, as long as you do so respectfully. In doing so, you will sharpen your ability for critical thinking, innovation, debate, and public speaking, skills fundamental to your future professional life.
- Written work should be of high quality. If you have concerns about writing, address them early. A useful resource is UCLA's Graduate Writing Center (<http://gsrc.ucla.edu/gwc/>).
- Assignments must be turned in according to the scheduled due dates. In particular, no incompletes will be given.
- If you feel that you may need an accommodation for a disability or have any other special needs, make an appointment to discuss this with the instructor. I will best be able to address special circumstances if I know about them early in the term. The website for the UCLA Office for Students with Disabilities (www.osd.ucla.edu) contains a wealth of useful information as well as official policies about this issue.

4. Course assignments

Grades will be assigned based upon the level of critical and original thinking, depth of analysis of real-life situations, professional presentation of assignments, and class participation. Class participation will count for 15%

1. Self-inventories

These are done individually. They are meant to be short – 2-3 pages single-spaced. The main objective is to get you to examine and discuss your current electronic recordkeeping environment and strategy.

- a. Draw up an inventory of your personal records and assets. Which ones do you hold on paper? Electronically? What are the categories of records? What are retention periods for each category? What are the implications (liability, identity) of losing access to these records? What is your current electronic records preservation strategy? (Due Week 4, 10%)
- b. Draw up an inventory of the records of your digital self (traces you've left in systems that you do not control). What policies govern the retention and disposition of these records (read the terms of service)? How can you preserve or dispose of them? Begin with a simple Google search, but don't forget images and videos, and also try other search engines and aggregators, e.g. claimid.com or spokeo.com. (Due Week 6, 10%)

2. Subjectification/Identity

Pick a tool from this list: <http://quantifiedself.com/self-tracking-links-to-get-you-started/>. You will need to keep a journal of your use of the tool and record data everyday, for the whole 10 weeks of the course. Forward me your choice by Week 3 for approval and be ready to present it to the group during class time. We will check in during week 7 for progress reports. Your journal will be due at the end of the term. With it, write a short (1000-1500 words) report that include some analytics (use screen shots). Reflect on your experience: has the quantification process changed your behavior, sense of self, etc? (Due Week 11, 25%)

3. Recordkeeping strategies

This is a more substantial endeavor, written in teams of two. Loosely following the DIRKS business process analysis framework, teams will gather information and analyze the existing recordkeeping situation, present findings, and propose recommendations. You will have the whole term to work on the issues. Final reports (about 5-6000 words) will be presented to the class Week 11 and due to the instructor at the end of the week (40%). I would like each topic to be covered by at least one group: please submit to me your top three choices by Week 3 so that I can assign topics to groups.

- a. Around the world, the development of the scientific “cyber-infrastructure” is leading funding agencies to request that researchers provide “data management plans.”¹ Interview researchers in GSE&IS and find out how they intend to meet this requirement. What kinds of data do they collect? What other documents should be preserved along with data? Prepare a report to the IS Faculty on this issue.
- b. Since 2010, GSE&IS has shifted to web-based course evaluations. What is the status of these documents under California public records law? What about the quantitative section (see <http://courseevals.uoregon.edu>)? What about statistics taken of these evaluations, e.g., mood (see <http://myedu.com>)? Prepare a report to the IS Faculty on this issue.
- c. The attached 2007 memo from Chancellor Block to faculty, “Important Information Regarding Public Records Obligations” reminds faculty that “Email communications that relate to University business are records that may be subject to disclosure under the CPRA. Emails may not simply “disappear” by a press of the “delete” button. Thus, I urge all University employees to carefully consider the tone and content of what they commit to Email or other tangible forms of communication.” Sure, but how **does** one

¹ See, for example, http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/SBE_DataMgmtPlanPolicy.pdf

delete an email then? How could faculty be certain? Write a report to the IS faculty.

- d. In their teaching and research activities, faculty generate and handle many different kinds of records, related to editorial activities, evaluation of student performances, peer-review, research data, and their own creative output. Draw up a records inventory for a faculty of the Department. Provide them with (a) a preservation strategy that meets both legal obligations and patrimonial needs and (b) an action plan to implement this strategy.
- e. Draw up a personal records inventory for a friend or family member. Provide them with (a) a preservation strategy that meets both legal obligations and patrimonial needs and (b) an action plan to implement this strategy.
- f. In the year 2013, as part of a general overhaul of the UC system, Chancellor Block has requested that each Department report on how it intends to become more “transparent.” Using the Information Studies Handbook as your starting point, investigate the record keeping practices of the Department and make recommendations to the Faculty.
- g. You have been hired by Alexandra Wallace’s family to help her put her life back together. What are the options available to Wallace to move forward? Write an action plan, with comparative cost/benefit analysis of different strategies.
- h. In the OASIS model of preservation, documents are preserved according to a three-part model, including the object’s representation information, its designated community, and “significant properties.” Apply the model to your inventory of personal electronic records and assets, identify potential migration strategies, including their costs, and discuss their impact on the evidential value of the records.

6. Course schedule

Week 1 (March 28): Cancelled

Week 2 (April 4): Introduction, overview, definitions

Readings

Gilliland-Swetland, Anne. “Electronic Records Management,” *ARIST* 39 (2005): 219-25.

Jeffrey D. Morelli, “Defining Electronic Records,” in Edward Higgs (ed.) *History and Electronic Artefacts*, Clarendon Press, 1998, pp. 169-183.

Discussion: overview of syllabus.

Week 3 (April 11): New Genres I – The curious case of email

Readings

- Email gets an instant makeover
<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/21/technology/21email.html>
- William Jones, "Email Disappears," Chapter 10 in *Keeping Found Things Found: The Study and Practice of Personal Information Management*, Morgan Kaufmann, 2007, pp. 270-297.
- Kang, Hyunmo, Catherine Plaisant, Tamer Elsayed, and Douglas W. Oard. "Making Sense of Archived E-Mail: Exploring the Enron Collection with NetLens." *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 61, no. 4 (2010): 723-44.
- Wallace, David A. "Electronic Records Management Defined by Court Case and Policy." *Information Management Journal* 35, no. 1 (2001): 4, 6-8, 10, 12, 14-15.

Supplemental

- Baron, Jason R. "The PROFS Decade: NARA, E-Mail, and the Courts." In *Thirty Years of Electronic Records*, edited by Bruce I. Ambacher, 105-37. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003.

Discussion/duo: choice of self-quantification activity/choices for final report.

Week 4 (April 18): New Genres II – Social Media

Readings:

- For a High-Tech President, a Hard-Fought E-Victory
<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/23/us/politics/23berry.html?ref=politics>
- Patricia Franks, *How Federal Agencies Can Effectively Manage Records Created Using New Social Media Tools*, IBM Center for the Business of Government.
- Joint Information Systems Committee, *The Preservation of Web Resources Handbook*, 2008.
- NARA, *A Report On Federal Web 2.0 Use And Record Value*, 2010.
<http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/resources/web2.0-use.pdf>
- NARA, NARA Guidance on Managing Records in Web 2.0/Social Media Platforms, October 20, 2010.
<http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/bulletins/2011/2011-02.html>

Browse:

- <http://www.cloudpreservation.com/>
- <https://www.arkovi.com/>

Discussion/due: self-inventory #1

Week 5 (April 25): Preservation I – Form, Content, and Context

Readings:

- Lavoie, Brian F. "The Open Archival Information System Reference Model: Introductory Guide." OCLC and Digital Preservation Coalition, 2004.
- David Bearman, Structural Formalisms in Documentation: Reflecting Function and Supporting Meaning, in Terry Cook (ed.), *Controlling the Past: Documenting Society and Institutions – Essays in Honor of Helen Willa Samuels*, Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2011, pp. 241-256.
- Drucker, Johanna. 2009. Entity to Event: From Literal, Mechanistic Materiality to Probabilistic Materiality. *Parallax*. 15(4):7-17.
http://elderfield.org/library/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/11685-entity_to_event_from.pdf
- G. Knight, M. Pennock, "Data without Meaning: Establishing the Significant Properties of Digital Research," *The International Journal of Digital Curation*, 1(4), July 2008.

Week 6 (May 2nd): Preservation II – Process

Readings

- DIRKS Manual (Part I, browse Part II & 3)
- Young, Jeanne. "Electronic Records Management on a Shoestring: Three Case Studies." *Information Management Journal* 39, no. 1 (2005): 58-60.
- Catherine Marshall, "Rethinking Personal Digital Archiving, Part 1 & 2: Four Challenges from the Field." *D-Lib Magazine* March/April 2008.
<http://www.dlib.org/dlib/march08/marshall/03marshall-pt1.html>
<http://www.dlib.org/dlib/march08/marshall/03marshall-pt2.html>
- Cook, Terry: Byte-ing Off What You Can Chew: Electronic Records Strategies for Small Archival Institutions:
http://www.aranz.org.nz/Site/publications/papers_online/terry_cook_paper.aspx

Supplemental

- Cal Lee, "Guerilla ERM: Lessons Learned from Some Time in the Trenches," http://www.ils.unc.edu/callee/guerrila_erm.htm
- Helen Smith, "Imperatives for Effective Electronic Recordkeeping: A Two-act Play," in Judith A. Ellis (ed.) *Selected Essays in Electronic Recordkeeping in Australia*, Australian Society of Archivists, 2000, pp. 17-30.

Discussion/due: self-inventory #2

Week 7 (May 9th): Identity I – Quantifying the self

Guest speaker: Michael Wartenbe, PhD student, IS Dept., UCLA.

Readings:

- Gary Wolf, "The Data-Driven Life," *New York Times Magazine*, April 18, 2010.
- Seth Roberts, "Self-experimentation as a source of new ideas: Ten examples about sleep, mood, health, and weight" (2004). *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*. 27 (2), pp. 227-288.
- Abigail J. Sellen and Steve Whittaker. 2010. Beyond total capture: a constructive critique of lifelogging. *Commun. ACM* 53, 5 (May 2010).

Supplemental

- Bell, G. and Gemmell, J. "A Digital Life," *Scientific American*, **296**(3): 58-65.

Browse:

The Quantified Self <<http://quantifiedself.com>>

Discussion/due: self-quantification mid-term reports

Week 8 (May 16th): Identity II – Personal Records

Readings:

- David S. Kirk, Shahram Izadi, Abigail Sellen, Stuart Taylor, Richard Banks, and Otmar Hilliges. 2010. "Opening up the family archive." In Proceedings of the 2010 ACM conference on Computer supported cooperative work (CSCW '10). ACM, New York, NY, USA, 261-270
- Kirk, D. S. and Banks, R. 2008. "On the design of technology heirlooms." In Proceedings of the International Workshop on Social Interaction and Mundane Technologies (SIMTech'08).
- David S. Kirk and Abigail Sellen. 2010. "On human remains: Values and practice in the home archiving of cherished objects." *ACM Trans. Comput.-Hum. Interact.* 17, 3, Article 10 (July 2010), 43 pages.

Supplemental

- William Odom, Richard Banks, and Dave Kirk. 2010. Reciprocity, deep storage, and letting go: opportunities for designing interactions with inherited digital materials. *interactions* 17, 5 (September 2010), 31-34.

Discussion: final reports

Week 9 (May 23rd): The Space of Non-Records – Oblivion

Reading:

- Jeffrey Rosen, “The Web means the end of forgetting,” *The New York Times Magazine*, July 21, 2010.
- Nick Bilton, “Erasing the Digital Past,” *The New York Times*, April 1, 2010.
- Blanchette, J.-F., “The Noise in the Archive: Oblivion in the Age of Total Recall,” in *Privacy and Data Protection : An Element of Choice*. (Serge Gutwirth, Yves Poulet, Paul De Hert, and Ronald Leenes, Eds.), pp. 25-38. Springer, 2011.
- David O. Stephens, “Records Retention and the Law,” chapter 7 in *Records Management: Making the Transition from Paper to Electronic*, ARMA International, 2007, p. 103-123.
- Slavoj Žižek, “Good Manners in the Age of WikiLeaks,” *London Review of Books*, Vol. 33, no. 2, pages 9-10. <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v33/n02/slavoj-zizek/good-manners-in-the-age-of-wikileaks>

Week 10 (May 30): Memorial day holiday

Week 11 (June 6th): Class presentations
