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To: John Blake, Diane Mclean, Andrew Gray, Susan Harper,
CC: Steve Smith, Randy Weaver, Mike Bates, Raye Ann Robinson
From: Russ O'Hare
Date: December 3, 2004
Re: Research Functional Area Digital Document Imagery Infrastructure Working Group Guidance

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The purpose of the Research Functional Area Digital Document Imagery and Records Retention Working Group is to develop and propose the requirements necessary for a digital imagery infrastructure RFP that is workable, practical, cost-justifiable, and meets the records retention requirements for the research mission no later than January 24, 2005. Recommendations for digital imagery infrastructure requirements will be made to the Chief Information Officer, Controller, and Digital Document Imagery and Records Management Steering Committee. The working group will also verify and update the interim records retention schedule for the grants and contracts functions.

Introduction

Implementing a digital document infrastructure and a records management program at the University of Alaska (UA) will promote economy, improve the security of permanent records, and bring efficiencies to its operations. Success in developing a comprehensive digital document infrastructure and a records management program will be a lengthy iterative process.

It is clear that the elimination of paper from major processes through digital imagery within the University system can reduce delays and the manual labor involved. With campuses spread across the entire state, this will simplify the operations and integration of the University system. There are two ways that paper may be eliminated: through the use of electronic forms and through converting paper into electronic, film, or optical disk through the use of digital scanners, camera, or some other medium.

Records and information are assets and should be managed just as the University manages its facilities, equipment, vehicles, and financial resources. Records can and do exist in a wide variety of storage media. One of the major objectives of a records management program is to identify and dispose of unneeded administrative records logically and legally. To accomplish this, records schedules are created. A records schedule is a document that describes the records and sets forth the retention time and conditions for each set of records. The use of retention schedules improves efficiency in the management of information, permits the timely destruction of nonpermanent or transitory records, reduces the need for on-site records storage, and enhances identification of permanent records for archival preservation.

Goals for a Digital Document Infrastructure and a Records Management Program

Digital Document Infrastructure

- Streamline review and routing of documents
- Provide necessary, secure access to documents
- Provide more accurate and timely processing of forms and documents
- Eliminate costly retention of duplicate information
- Increase service to students and expedite critical business processes
- Leverage information systems with rapid integration and data exchange
- Improve compliance and audit response capabilities
- Expedite the sharing of information across the university system
- Ensure the interoperability of systems and the potential for the images to be useable in the future
- Reduce the costs of storage, printing, and the need to keep paper originals
- Control the quantity and quality of records logically and legally
- Promote a cultural change at UA in the acceptance and use of electronic images instead of paper
- Increase service

Records Retention

- Control the quantity and quality of records produced by the University
- Establish and maintain mechanisms of control with respect to records creation
- Prevent the creation of unnecessary records
- Establish and maintain mechanisms of control for the effective and economical operations of an agency
- Simplify the activities, systems, and processes of records creation and of records maintenance and use
- Document and improve compliance with outside regulations and audit response capabilities
- Ensure efficient use of resources
- Business continuity is assured
- Preserve and dispose of records in accordance with the governing statutes
- Emphasize the prevention of unnecessary paperwork from the creation of and to the disposition of records
- Establish and maintain any other systems or techniques necessary to carry out an effective and efficient Records Management program
- Minimize the risk associated with retaining information beyond its usefulness
- Determine the storage media for the different types of documents based on their retention requirements
- Identify and ensure the preservation of vital records

Work Group Tasks for Planning Potential Conversions to Electronic Imaging

Planning for appropriate electronic imaging applications should include (Langemo, 2002):

- Work Group members must learn and understand the fundamentals of electronic imaging and successful processes for identifying applications and planning workable systems.
- Analyze the advantages, disadvantages, costs, and impact upon users, customers, and campuses of how work is being done now.
- Using the results of the analysis above, plan for new imaging applications and systems that will achieve the research objectives, can be cost justified, meet user needs, will integrate with banner and other information systems, and provide added value to management.
- Implement a quality imaging system to meet user needs and contribute to achievement of UA Strategic Plan 2009 goals in research excellence, technology, and to the management of a successful records management program.

Process for Planning Electronic Imaging Applications and Records Retention

- Conduct a complete physical records inventory of all media (digital, paper, film, other) within the enrollment management area and prepare a master records inventory.
- Identify vital records. A vital record is recorded information that must be protected in the event of an emergency or disaster because of severe consequences to the office and the university as a whole if the record is lost or destroyed. An example would be administration records for Grants and Contracts.
- Starting with the mission – critical units of grants and contracts methodically analyze the workflow/business processes of especially the high-volume work processes.
- Make sure to identify the high-volume repetitive business processes that may be candidates for conversion to imaging (such as processing applications).
- Learn and understand where access to documents and data is essential for the accomplishment of work and users served.
- Determine if internal user needs are being met. Determine user requirements.
- Remember that whenever rapid access to data and documents is essential and especially if rapid and simultaneous access to the same data and documents is needed at two or more locations carefully evaluate whether going electronic and converting to electronic systems should be accomplished. Valid user needs to access and use records should be a major influence on determining what the mix of record media should really be.
- Make a concentrated and determined effort to learn as much as possible about the fundamental, concepts, history, potential benefits, hardware, software, media, planning, cost, and related issues that are involved in implementing electronic imaging.
- Develop a feasibility study that includes identifying potential applications, prioritizes those applications, and determines their potential to affect positively enrollment management and the university's mission.
- System must integrate with Banner and should allow for the migration of Laser Fiche data.
- Carefully develop a plan for document indexing.
- Develop a system that can be used across the UA system and is scaleable.
- The system must have interoperability with existing UA systems and the potential for the images to be useable in the future.

Requirements by January 24, 2005

- Recommend the number of repositories and seats necessary in the system.
- Develop and propose the requirements necessary for a digital imagery system RFP.
- Review and update Interim Records Retention Schedule for functional area.
- Identify which documents are vital records.
- Provide citations for all records listed on the Records Retention Schedule.