

Email as a Record: building  
institutional support for  
email archiving at a small  
liberal arts college

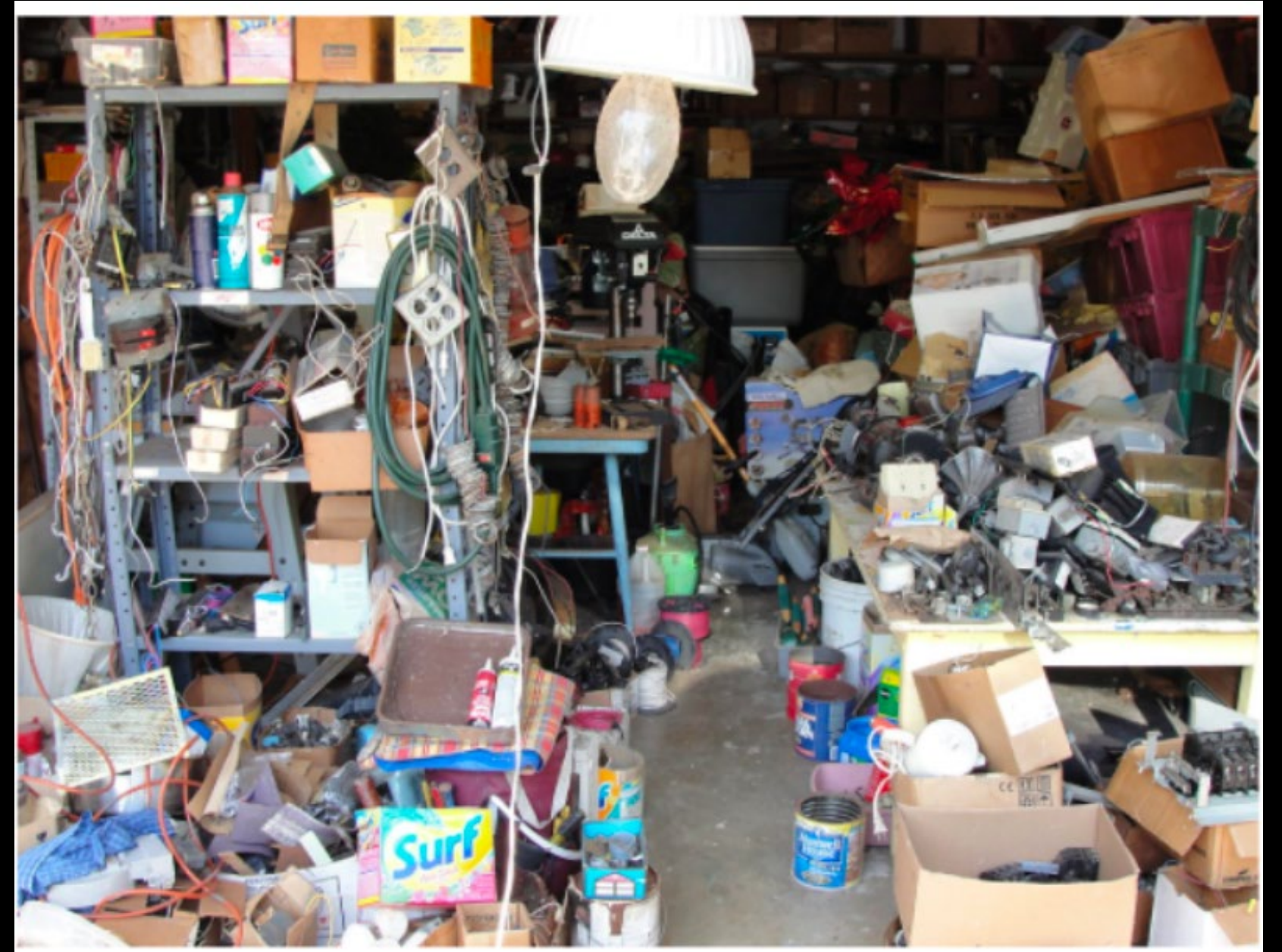
Jessika Drmacich, Williams College

July 2023

# Why are we here?

Feedback!!

- Email preservation and archiving does not mean keeping all email, because we can. Not all emails are records.
- Email archiving at Williams is working. How do I expand and share what is working?



Public institutions must follow state mandated records policies and schedules. Liberal arts colleges and private institutions have the ability to experiment, improve, and expand what good records management and institutional histories mean. This includes email archiving.

# Williams College and Background

- Private
- Small liberal arts college
- Highly selective
- Records management policy
- Campus priority to examine Williams institutional histories



**Definition:  
Capstone  
Approach for  
Email**

**The Capstone Approach is a method of email management that bases appraisal and scheduling on the account owner's role or position rather than individual email content, as a means of simplifying and automating management. (NC.gov)**



# Capstone works, except when it doesn't. Un-capstone-ing for diversity!

Hey Sisterhood,

I hope you are all doing well! I am emailing today on behalf of the Vista Board. They are having board elections, and they wanted to spread the word to Sisterhood about the self-nomination form. This is their message:

Vista is an affinity group that attempts to develop a sense of community amongst Latinx-identifying students on campus. Now that the year is ending and our seniors are leaving, it's time for a brand new board! Board members are usually responsible for organizing and executing various community and political events on behalf of our membership. Most recently, we have organized TAPSI housing, the Quince, parties, and keynote speakers. Although it is a huge responsibility, if you want to make changes or if you want

Capstone results in a lack of  
diversity in the historical  
record. How can we counter  
this?

# Williams is preserving a wide-range of email as record

**Maud S. Mandel** <msm8@williams.edu>

Mon, Apr 24, 9:08 AM



to WILLIAMS-PERSONNEL ▾

Dear Williams staff and faculty,

When I [announced our remote/flexible hybrid work pilot](#) last year, I explained that unit plans would be authorized on a pilot basis through June 2023. Senior Staff and I would then “assess the results, along with input from managers, and decide whether to continue as is or adjust course.”

I write today to confirm that remote/flexible work will become official college policy once the pilot ends in June. Staff should confer with their managers on any



# How to Make it Work!: Low-Barrier Email Archiving Toolkit for Small Institutions

- Records/ Information Management Committee: official or unofficial committee
- Records policy
- OIT and data management policies
- General records retention schedule
- Individual schedules
- Personal archiving
- How to do it!: Email Archiver Pro, accession and process, digital preservation. and access

# Records Policy

## WILLIAMS COLLEGE POLICY REGARDING THE MANAGEMENT OF COLLEGE RECORDS

Recognizing the need to ensure the preservation and availability of its official records for legal, fiscal, administrative, and historical purposes, Williams College hereby adopts the following Policy regarding the collection and preservation of these vital papers, records and documents.

This Policy serves as an introduction to the records management program at Williams, which is described in more detail through the retention schedules and guidelines that pertain to the records created and maintained by the college's administrative offices, academic departments, committees, programs and other units of the college. Such records retention schedules, developed in collaboration with the administrator or faculty member in charge of the unit, delineate what types of documents are maintained by the unit and in accordance with the Williams College General Records Retention Schedule, a copy of which is attached hereto. The unit specific schedules delineate the length of time they are to be retained in the office and, thereafter, whether they are deemed of permanent value or designated for destruction. Records retention schedules are updated in compliance with state and federal laws, as new types of documents are created and as administrative needs change.

"Records can be recorded  
in any physical form or  
medium, including  
hardcopy and electronic."

Official or Unofficial  
Information/Records  
Group

Records Manager/ Digital  
Resources Archivist

OIT Director

Library Director

OIT Head of Administrative  
Systems

College Counsel

President's office

Faculty member

# OIT and Aligning Data Policy with Records Policy

"College Records, as described in detail in the [Policy Regarding the Management of College Records](#), are vital for essential business workflows of the college. Some data, as containers of records, are historical or are legally required to be maintained for certain time periods. Data that fits either of these requirements must be preserved or disposed of in accordance with the college's records policy and the associated records retention schedule."

OFFICE FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

*Williams » Office for Information Technology » Policies » Data Governance Policy*

## Data Governance Policy

The purpose of data governance is to establish a culture that ensures that institutional data is both secure and available to those who should have access to it. The policies and procedures delineated below serve as useful guidance to data stewards, users, and seekers alike. Data is a vital institutional asset that must be used legally and ethically. Requests for data are subject to many considerations, including:



# General Records Retention Schedule

Email is an electronic form of correspondence. As such, it is subject to the retention guidelines developed by your office in cooperation with the Records Manager. If your office has yet to meet with the Records Manager, a good rule of thumb follows:

- Routine correspondence dealing with general administrative matters should be retained three years and then confidential disposition.
- Correspondence recording [significant transactions](#), projects, events, and operations should be transferred, in accordance to your unit's retention schedule, to the Records Manager for permanent retention. This transfer may happen annually or at separation from the college.
- The Records Manager preserves the staff, faculty, and student listservs. These may be disposed of.  
Recommendation- 1 year.

## Williams College General Records Retention Schedule

This general records retention schedule supports the **Williams College Policy Regarding the Management of Records** and provides guidance in the creation of office/departmental records retention schedules and for the management of certain types of records that are common to most offices at Williams College.

# Individual Records Retention schedules and Including Email

|                |   |  |           |                         |                       |
|----------------|---|--|-----------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Correspondence | 50 years; prior:<br>restricted to office of<br>origin | Correspondence<br>(includes all formats)<br>establishing policy,<br>procedure or<br>documenting<br>important subject<br>matter. Ex:<br>correspondence with<br>College Librarian. | permanent | transfer to<br>archives | text/txt, email, mbox |
|----------------|---|--|-----------|-------------------------|-----------------------|

# Personal Archiving and Curation: "Everyone is an Archivist"

## Declutter Your Digital Life! Personal Hackathon for Digital Sustainability + Space Organization 2020: Details

[DETAILS](#)[RESOURCES](#)

A hackathon is an event where a group of people come together to collaboratively solve problems, often involving technology.

### Why Should I Attend?

This hackathon will focus on organizing and decluttering our shared and personal digital spaces: Google Drive and williams.edu email. De-cluttering these digital spaces reduces environmental impact by minimizing energy usage.

# How To Do It: Williams' Low-Barrier Workflow



# Curate and Google Takeout

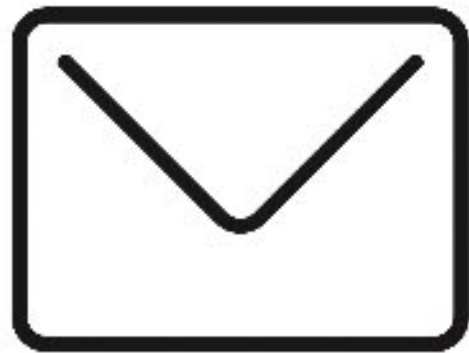
- Encourage self-curation and personal archiving using Records Policy and records schedules
- Transfer Google Takeout annually or when leaving institution

How do I transfer email records to the Records Manager?



- Organize email into Gmail folders (labels) by checking the email and using "move to" in Gmail menu.
- Follow directions for [Google Takeout](#).
- Share zip file with the [Records Manager](#).
- Before using Google Takeout, or if you have any questions, please reach out to the [Records Manager](#).
- The [Records Manager](#) can also help you with alternative workflows to organize and preserve your email.
- Remember to follow guidelines on this page as well as [records retention and disposition guidelines](#)!

# Email Archiver Pro



email  
archiver  
pro<sup>4</sup>

▶ Start All

✕ Stop All

# Accession, Process, and Digital Preservation

|   |        |                |
|---|--------|----------------|
| Gargoyle Society, 123rd delegation records, 2017-2018           | Series |                |
| Summaries and Reports, 2017- 2018                               | File   | Digital Object |
| Notable Email Correspondence With Gargoyle President, 2017-2018 | File   | Digital Object |

# Ideas for what is next?

ePADD for  
access

More all  
campus  
digital  
curation/  
personal  
archiving  
trainings

PDF  
specifications  
for email  
archiving



# Thank you and Questions!

- Ideas for dissemination?
- Data to collect?
- Formats or methods for building a toolkit?

# Links!

- Email Archiving at Williams Site

<https://specialcollections.williams.edu/recordsmanagement/email-management/>

- Williams Records Management Policy

<https://specialcollections.williams.edu/recordsmanagement/records-management-policy/>

- Williams Google Takeout Directions

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AdoPmAHuVH6vRIJ4nHwoInMdjAo5nQExcJH2uIMc44k/edit>

- Email Archiver Pro

<https://emailarchiverpro.com/>

- Williams and the Stockbridge- Munsee Partnership

<https://diversity.williams.edu/the-stockbridge-munsee-community/>