



*The College Of*  
**WILLIAM & MARY**

Special Collections Research Center  
Earl Gregg Swem Library

P. O. Box 8794  
Williamsburg, VA 23187-8794  
757-221-3094

### **Personal Papers of Faculty and Staff and the University Archives**

The University Archives in the Special Collections Research Center is the memory of the College of William and Mary, documenting its history from before the founding in 1693 to the present. The wide variety of materials collected by the University Archives relating to the College and its people through the years includes official as well as unofficial records. The personal papers of faculty and staff are a valuable source in any effort to document the College.

Sometimes it can be difficult to distinguish between personal/professional papers and university records. University records are governed by Library of Virginia and College of William and Mary policies. Retention and destruction schedules for university records are detailed in the General Schedules of the Library of Virginia available at <http://swem.wm.edu/scrc/RecordsManagement.cfm>. For further information regarding the management of these files and records, contact Amy Schindler, the University Archivist ([acschi@wm.edu](mailto:acschi@wm.edu) or 757-221-3094).

#### **Material the University Archives is interested in from faculty and staff:**

- Official College correspondence and files (outgoing and incoming correspondence related to departmental and university matters, committee minutes, reports)
- Professional correspondence and files
- Teaching material (including lecture notes, syllabi, and handouts)
- Personal and biographical material (including diaries, memoirs, correspondence, etc.)
- Publications (manuscripts, articles, works of art)
- Speeches
- Final reports of research, research notes (Due to wide variations in the nature of research data, it is best to consult with the University Archivist before discarding research notes and data.)
- Audiovisual material (audio and film recordings and all image formats)

#### **Material the University Archives does not need from faculty and staff members:**

- Financial records (detailed financial records, canceled checks, receipts)
- Other individuals' personnel records (including search committee material); note that personnel records have very specific retention and destruction schedules according to the Library of Virginia's General Schedules 103
- Reference material (articles, books, etc. written by other people)
- Records of students taught (grade books, class rosters, exams, papers, etc.); note that student records have very specific retention and destruction schedules according to the Library of Virginia's General Schedule 111
- Routine correspondence, especially non-personally addressed mail and routine letters of transmittal and acknowledgment
- Duplicates and multiple copies of publications, course materials; generally only the original and heavily annotated copies are of value

- Research notes and data if a summary of the data is available and transferred, bibliographic notes and notes on reading (Due to wide variations in the nature of research data, it is best to consult with the University Archivist before discarding research notes and data.)

Material should be transferred to the University Archives in the order in which it was maintained by its creator. It is generally not necessary for collections to be “organized” by creators before they are transferred to the University Archives as the original order of a collection can also be of interest to future researchers. A letter briefly identifying the material and describing the activity to which they relate should accompany the transfer.

### **A Note on Formats**

All information formats (e.g., published, typescript, audiovisual, and electronic data, such as computer disks and files) are appropriate for consideration for transfer. For documents in formats requiring any form of machine intervention, such as videotapes, kinescopes, and all computer files, consideration should be given to transferring the equipment needed to access the documents or, preferably, converting the documents to a format accessible to the Archives' users. Early consultation with the Archivist is strongly encouraged for all such materials.

Currently, the College does not have comprehensive guidelines and best practices for preserving and maintaining access to e-mail and other electronic records. Files may be retained in electronic or hard copy formats. As always, be sure to back-up your files on a server or on portable media such as CDs.

### **Privacy**

Due to federal and state privacy laws, student records, personnel records, medical records, or other records or research material containing personally identifiable information require special handling and may be restricted. In general, the University Archives does not retain such materials in personal papers. Such records should be segregated from other records, retained securely, and destroyed confidentially. Consult the University Archivist for further information.

### **Donating and Transferring Your Papers to the University Archives**

Faculty and staff are encouraged to donate their papers to the University Archives for the benefit of future researchers. The University Archives staff is available to advise individuals in preparing their personal papers for transfer, completing a deed of gift, and arranging the physical transfer of the papers.

### **Further Information**

This is intended as a general guide and because of broad variations in personal papers, it is advisable to consult with the University Archivist to determine how your own files relate to these guidelines. Exceptions often are made after a review of the conditions under which the documents were generated and their potential usefulness. Please contact the University Archivist for further information ([acschi@wm.edu](mailto:acschi@wm.edu) or 757-221-3094).

**WHEN IN DOUBT, DON'T THROW IT OUT!**