Records Retention and Management Policy

1.0 Purpose

Records created by the staff and faculty at the State University of New York College at Plattsburgh (hereinafter the College) in their administrative roles as they work to fulfill the College’s educational mission are essential to the efficient operation of the College, to preserve the College’s history, and, in some circumstances, are subject to legal requirements. Proper management of such records is therefore necessary.

The purpose of this document is to:

- establish a Records Management Policy that provides guidelines and mandates for the systematic control of records from creation to final disposition;
- define key concepts specific to College policy; and,
- describe a framework for implementing this policy through a records management program.

2.0 Revision History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Rev No</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Ref Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>New Document</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.0 Persons Affected

All College employees who either generate or have access to College records.

4.0 Policy

It is the responsibility of the State University of New York to comply with state and federal mandates. The College is committed to meeting its administrative, fiscal, legal, and historical obligations by systematically managing the records created in the course of the College’s academic and administrative operations.

The management of records includes appropriate practices for organizing records, securing confidential or sensitive information contained within records, effective archiving of records determined to have permanent or enduring value, and proper destruction of records deemed to have no permanent or enduring value once operational needs have been met and no legal considerations require retention.

The Records Management Officer is responsible for developing and administering a Records Management Program for the systematic control of records at the College. The Records Management Officer will provide information, training, and support to the campus in all areas of identifying, managing, retaining, securing and destroying official College records in accordance with the program. Additionally, the Records Management Officer will work with SUNY Legal Counsel to preserve documents which may be relevant to current or future litigation. All College employees shall assist the Records Management Officer in the enactment and maintenance of such litigation holds.
The Records Management Officer has a shared responsibility with Departmental Records Management Coordinators across campus to systematically control the records of the College from their creation to their final disposition.

Implementation of this policy will assist the College in meeting its operational and legal obligations and in preserving its historical records. Further, the College will benefit from the increased organizational efficiency that implementation of this policy will provide. This policy and relevant materials developed as part of the Records Management Program will be made available to the College community for their ongoing reference.

The College Records Retention Management Policy will comply with the SUNY Records Retention and Disposition Schedule and/or the New York Archives General Schedule. The SUNY Records Retention schedule holds precedence over other record schedules, unless there are Federal mandates.

If a record is not found in this schedule, the record’s retention period may be found in the General Record Retention and Disposition for New York State Government Records (2008) schedule for complying with legal, fiscal, and administrative requirements for records retention and provides advice on cost-effective management of records commonly found in all State entities. The schedule provides legal authorization to dispose of common records on a regularly scheduled basis. This policy applies to all records created at the College. Records created by employees of the College acting within the scope of their employment or in an official capacity are the property of the College. 

General Record Retention and Disposition Schedule guidelines are available on-line at: http://www.archives.nysed.gov/a/records/mr_pub_genschedule.shtml

The Records Management Officer will work with College offices and departments to explain the records retention schedules appropriate to each office’s circumstances for the preservation or disposition of official College records. The Records Management Officer, in consultation with Special Collections, will also develop a process for determining which College records have permanent or enduring value. Records deemed to be of permanent or enduring value will be transferred to the Special Collections Unit. 

Electronic records of permanent or enduring value will be archived in a way that appears best to allow future accessibility of their content. Routine data backup is not a substitute for the archiving of electronic records that have permanent or enduring value.

5.0 Definitions

Record

The life cycle of a record begins when it is created and ends at its final disposition whether that be destruction of the record or transfer of the record to Special Collections. Records are “information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organization or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of
Records are defined by content rather than by format. Records include those that are hard copy, electronic (including web pages), or any other format from which information can be retrieved.

Records include but are not limited to official College publications, fiscal data, official correspondence (including electronic correspondence), minutes of meetings, reports, and student and employee files. For the purposes of this policy, records are defined broadly to encourage consideration of the appropriate use and retention of all information created in the course of business.

Critical Records
“Critical records” are those records determined to contain essential information needed for operational continuity following a catastrophic event. The Records Management Officer will work with others at the College to determine which records are to be considered “critical records,” and to develop procedures that protect them and make them accessible and useable after such an event.

Departmental Records Coordinator
Each campus department record coordinator manages records and submits requests to dispose of state records to the campus Records Manager throughout the calendar year. The coordinator is responsible for obtaining training and information regarding College records management policies. The senior administrative officer in each division or department will assign a person this duty and will notify the Records Manager when a change is made.

6.0 Responsibilities
All College employees will comply with this policy and all procedures based on this policy.

The President and senior administrative staff of the College are responsible for communicating to the College’s employees the importance to adhering to this policy.

The Records Management Officer will be responsible for, but not limited to:

- Identification and preservation of “Critical Records” that are vital for the continuation of operations in the event of a disaster.
- Working with SUNY Legal Counsel to enact and maintain litigation holds for the preservation of documents and records which are or may be relevant to current or future litigation.
- Establishment of guidelines for the timely destruction of records no longer needed by the College.
- Organize and manage an inactive record storage room(s) for campus departments.
- Assisting departments with their records retention questions.
• Assisting departments through guidance on large record organization projects.
• Establishment of an inventory database or record keeping system to track the status of active and inactive record through destruction.
• Establishment of a records management training program for campus employees.
• Collaboration with other record managers to stay informed on the topic of records management and changes occurring in the industry.
• Establishment of a program for the transfer of College records with significant historical value to Special Collections