

Correspondence Guidelines:

Is it really just “correspondence”?

Is it “administrative” or “general” correspondence?

How do we retrieve “correspondence” files?

Is administrative correspondence “archival”?

(Please, no “miscellaneous”!)

1. Administrative Correspondence, state code 1.1.007

Incoming/outgoing and internal correspondence, on any medium, pertaining to the formulation, planning, implementation, interpretation, modification, or redefinition of the programs, services, or projects of the University and the administrative regulations, policies, and procedures that govern them.

Retention: 3 years

2. General Correspondence, state code 1.1.008

Non-administrative incoming/outgoing and internal correspondence, on any medium, pertaining to or arising from the routine operations of the policies, programs, services, or projects of the university.

Retention: 1 year

But wait.....

The Texas State Library provides this caution: “Correspondence” should be used *only* for correspondence that is *not* included or directly related to another records series that is listed on the University of Texas at Arlington records retention schedule.

For example, a memorandum that documents an appropriations request must be retained for the minimum retention period for appropriation request records; a letter concerning an audit would be kept for the period required for audit records, etc.

So we are directed to call correspondence that does not relate to a listed records series as “correspondence” and assign the retention assigned to correspondence – 3 years for administrative, and 1 year for general.

The contents of administrative correspondence files would then be related to or included in subjects that are not listed as official records, but nevertheless, they would still relate to formulation, planning, implementation, interpretation, modification, or redefinition of university programs, services, or projects or the administrative regulations, policies, and procedures that govern them.

General correspondence also would be not related to or included in any listed official university records, but they would still relate to or arise from the routine operations of the policies, programs, services, or projects of the University.

What records would meet the criteria for administrative and general correspondence?

All correspondence has a subject.... It is about SOMETHING. **"Correspondence" should be filed with a records series OR in a subject file.** Files categorized as "departmental correspondence", "general correspondence", or "administrative correspondence" simply state that the department corresponded about "something" ... and that is not how information is retrieved.

1. Does it belong with a listed records series? If so, provide the same retention as the record series and ensure that it can be retrieved with the other records in the records series.
2. If it does not belong with listed records series and still meets the criteria for general or administrative correspondence, then file it as correspondence related to a specific subject so that it can be retrieved by subject.