

General Policy on Access to College Records within the Archives

In recognition of both the value and the sensitivity of the records of Dickinson College, the Sub-Committee on Archives Policy of the Committee on Archives and Special Collections has developed and instituted the following policy regarding access to all college records held in the Dickinson College Archives.

Board of Trustees

Records of the business of the Board of Trustees (including, but not limited to, meeting minutes, committee reports, correspondence, and general files) shall be restricted for a period of 25 years from the date of creation of the records.

College President

Records of the College President and associated offices and departments (including, but not limited to, the records of president-appointed committees and commissions, correspondence, and general files) shall be restricted for a period of 25 years from the date of creation of the records. Exceptions and additional restrictions are listed below.

Personnel files maintained by the Office of the College President (i.e. files of college administrators) shall be restricted for a period of 50 years dating from the conclusion of the individual's status as an employee of the college.

Trustee files (i.e. those reflecting individual members of the Board of Trustees) shall be restricted for a period of 25 years following the death of the subject of the file.

Records of any ad hoc committees created for the purpose of conducting a search to fill a professional position on campus (e.g. a presidential search committee) shall be restricted for a period of 50 years from the date of creation of the records.

Dean of the College

Records of the Dean of the College and associated academic offices and departments (including, but not limited to, minutes of faculty meetings, committee reports, correspondence, and general files) shall be restricted for a period of 25 years from the date of creation of the records. Exceptions and additional restrictions are listed below.

Student academic records shall be accessible following the decease of the subject of the file. If the decease of the subject of the file cannot be positively determined, the student academic records shall be restricted for a period of 100 years from the date of graduation, or the date of separation from the college, of the subject of the file.

Records of the Faculty Personnel Committee, the Personnel Committee for Academic Professionals, the Academic Standards Committee, and the various Judicial Boards shall be restricted for a period of 50 years from the date of creation of the records.

Personnel files maintained by the Office of the Dean of the College (i.e. faculty and academic professional's files) shall be restricted for a period of 50 years dating from the conclusion of the individual's status as an employee of the college.

College Treasurer

Records of the College Treasurer and associated financial operations offices and departments (including, but not limited to, investment reports, bond issues, budgets, and records of gifts and bequests) shall be restricted for a period of 50 years from the date of creation of the records. Exceptions and additional restrictions are listed below.

Personnel records for students and college employees, as required by federal legislation, must be open to the subject of the personnel file upon request. A person may not remove or alter the contents of his/her file, but may add a written statement concerning any materials within the file about which he/she may take exception. Personnel files shall be restricted to all other users for a period of 50 years dating from the subject's termination of employment with the institution.

Dean of Educational Services

Records of the Dean of Educational Services and associated offices and departments (including, but not limited to, records regarding student clubs and organizations) shall be restricted for a period of 25 years from the date of creation of the records.

General Records

For those records which are scheduled for permanent retention within the college archives but are not addressed by the above stipulations, the following general restrictions shall be applied:

Personal Records - Personal records are those which contain information of a private nature about an individual or individuals. These may include, for example, student records (other than the permanent academic record), personnel records, and alumni records. Such personal records shall be restricted for a period of 50 years from the date of creation of the records.

Administrative Records - Administrative records are those which reflect the day to day management of the college, its policies and programs, its academic and social experiences. These may include, for example, academic departmental records, records of campus organizations, and ad-hoc committee records. Such general records shall be restricted for a period of 25 years from the date of creation of the records.

Public Records - Public records are those which were openly distributed and widely available at the time of their creation. These may include, for example, campus announcements, college publications, and annual reports. Such public records shall be open without restrictions from the date of creation.

Additional Access Concerns

All records of an academic or administrative department, regardless of the restrictions outlined above, shall be open to the ranking officer of that department or division, as well as any other college employees as deemed appropriate by that ranking officer.

All records are reviewed for material that may contain sensitive or private information. As a result, individual records or records series may have additional restrictions placed on them beyond that which is outlined above. Such additional restrictions will be determined by the College Archivist, in consultation with the appropriate departmental head or senior college officer, and documented.

Researchers may request that a limited amount of archival material be photocopied for them, at their own personal expense, by the Archives and Special Collections reference staff. Photocopy requests may be refused if a member of the staff determines that the procedure will cause undue harm to the materials.

Researchers desiring access to any restricted records may petition the head of the office of creation, or the ranking officer of that division, for permission to view specified materials. Such petitions must be submitted in writing, either in hardcopy or electronically. Photocopy requests for such records will be granted only at the discretion of the College Archivist.

Researchers wishing to publish college records must obtain, from the College Archivist, written permission to publish.