

Guide for Retention and Disposal of Student Records

The recommended minimal retention period as identified by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) is listed below:

Retention Schedule C

Registration and Attendance/Academic Progress Records

Representative Registration and Records Data/Documents	Recommended Minimal Retention Time
Academic action authorizations (dismissal, etc.)	5 years after graduation or date of last attendance
Academic records (including narrative evaluations, competency assessments, etc.)	Permanent
Advanced placement and other placement tests records/scores (e.g., ASSET, Compass, Accuplacer)	5 years after graduation or date of last attendance
Applications for graduation	1 year after graduation or date of last attendance
Applications for admission or readmission (reentry)	5 years after graduation or date of last attendance
Audit authorizations	1 year after date submitted
Changes of course (add/drop)	1 year after date submitted
Change of grade forms (update documents)	Permanent
Class lists (original grade sheets)	Permanent
Class schedules (students)	1 year after graduation or date of last attendance
Correspondence, relevant	5 years after graduation or date of last attendance
Credit by examination reports/scores (e.g., Advanced Placements, CLEP, PEP)	5 years after graduation or date of last attendance
Credit/no credit approvals (audit, pass/fair, etc.)	1 year after submitted
Curriculum change authorizations	5 years after graduation or date of last attendance
Degree audit records	5 years after graduation or date of last attendance
Disciplinary action documents	(see note 7)
Fee assessment forms	5 years after graduation or date of last attendance
FERPA documents	(see note 3)
Financial aid documents (see Retention Schedule H – Federal Aid Record Requirements)	3 years after annual audit has been accepted by the Department of Education (see note 5)
Foreign/international student forms (I-20, etc.)	5 years after graduation or date of last attendance (see note 9)
Grade reports (registrar's copies)	1 year after date distributed
Graduation lists	Permanent
Graduation authorizations	5 years after graduation or date of last attendance
Hold or encumbrance authorizations	Until released
Medical records	1 year after graduation or date of last attendance (see note 8)
Military documents	5 years after graduation or date of last attendance
Name change authorizations	5 years after graduation or date of last attendance
Pass/fail requests	1 year after date submitted
Personal data information forms	1 year after graduation or date of last attendance
Registration forms	1 year after date submitted
Transcript requests (student)	1 year after date submitted
Transfer credit evaluations	5 years after graduation or date of last attendance
Tuition and fee charges	5 years after graduation or date of

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	last attendance
Withdrawal authorizations	2 years after graduation or date of last attendance

Notes:

1. Any record recommended for permanent retention should be microfilmed for security even if the originals are retained. The microfilm should be stored and secured in an off-site location.
2. The recommended five-year retention period noted in the above schedule should begin with the date of graduation or the date, term, or semester and year of last attendance.
3. FERPA specifically requires institutions to maintain records of requests and disclosures of personally identifiable information except for defined "directory information" and requests from students for their own records. The records of disclosures and requests for disclosures are considered part of the students' educational records; therefore, they must be retained as long as the education records to which they refer are retained by the institution (see Retention Schedule F).
4. The VA regulations state that the following records must be retained for at least three years after termination of enrollment:
 - Grade reports and/or statements of progress (academic records)
 - Change of course forms
 - Transfer credit evaluation
 - Degree audit records

VA regulations require that all advertising, sales and enrollment materials (e.g., catalogs) used by or on behalf of the institution be retained three years after the termination of a veteran's enrollment. In addition, records of tuition and fees charged to and collected from students, grade reports and statements of progress (academic records), and previous education and training documents (transfer credit evaluations) be retained for three years.
5. Educational institutions that participate in federal, state, and private programs of low-interest loans to students must retain for three years after graduation or withdrawal students' records of academic progress, attendance, and courses studied according to an amendment of the General Education Provisions Act amended by the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law 103-382). In the event of an open audit, records must be retained until all questions are resolved.

In addition to keeping records of all financial aid the student receives, institutions will need a financial aid transcript for a transfer student.
6. The IRS requires that private schools retain copies of all admission and scholarship brochures, catalogs, and advertising materials for a period of three years beginning with the year after compilation or acquisition.
7. No recommended retention period is given for disciplinary action documents (see Section IV), except that they be retained while in force in a file separate from the student's academic record.
8. Although student records created and maintained by medical and dental schools are usually narrative assessments of academic progress or clinical practice, for purposes of this retention schedule, such records are in the same category as the academic record.
9. Immigration and Naturalization Service states that the school must keep a record used to comply with the reporting requirements for at least one year. Since many items included in foreign students' records are to be retained for at last five years, it is recommended that INS documentation also be retained five years.