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**Overview**

Records are the corporate and cultural memory that provide proof of actions and decisions, build a knowledge-base for reflection and learning, and form a perspective on today's society that we will pass on to future generations. As organizations create and maintain more of their records electronically, they are struggling to develop effective policies, systems, and practices to capture, maintain, and preserve electronic records.

This course examines the ways in which new information technologies challenge organizations' capacities to define, identify, control, manage, and preserve electronic records. Students learn how different organizational, technological, regulatory, and cultural factors affect the strategies, practices, and tools that organizations can employ to manage electronic records. Problems of long-term preservation and continuing access to electronic records are analyzed and addressed.

An accumulating series of organizational and institutional breakdowns across sectors implicate electronic records and provides the opportunity for a **concentrated focus on Records and Accountability**. Failures of accountability in private corporations (ENRON, etc.); governments (Iraq reconstruction, etc.); and international organizations (the UN Oil for Food Program, etc.) are ushering in important reforms that require a heightened awareness of the infrastructure for accountability and the significant role of authentic, reliable, and accessible records for these reforms to work effectively. The course will pay particular attention to the social, legal, and policy requirements for records and recordkeeping to support accountability. It will provide students with knowledge and skills to investigate recordkeeping requirements, to identify options for implementing such requirements, and to lead efforts to introduce accountability frameworks in a wide variety of organizations.

CTools: The official version of the Syllabus will be on CTools: https://ctools.umich.edu/. All course readings are available on CTools.
Course Objectives

This course introduces students to the conceptual, legal, social, and cultural issues and practical problems of managing electronic records and record-keeping systems. It builds upon basic methods of records management and information resource management. It acquaints students with techniques for ensuring that electronic records are captured, preserved and usable over time.

The course will provide students with:

- Familiarity with the role of electronic records in accountability and sensitivity to what can go wrong if recordkeeping systems are inadequate or fail.
- Knowledge of the legal, administrative, and financial issues related to electronic records and recordkeeping.
- Awareness of standards and best practices for creation, retention, authenticity, security, and accessibility of electronic records.
- Familiarity with systems, technologies, and tools that support electronic records management, and knowledge of criteria to evaluate their effectiveness.
- An understanding of the institutional variables (e.g., corporate culture, business activities, and information technology environments) that affect the implementation of recordkeeping and accountability requirements.
- Skills in evaluating information systems for compliance with recordkeeping and accountability requirements.

Most classes will consist of a lecture followed by a class discussion. Students are expected to read the required readings for each class, be prepared to discuss the issues they address, and raise questions pertaining to their content. Note: Active (and informed) participation in class discussions constitutes 20% of your grade. You are encouraged to question the assumptions of the readings, your instructor, and your fellow students. Ideas are presented in order for you to analyze and critique them.

Assignments
Active Participation in Class Sessions. Students are expected to complete all readings, provide insights, raise questions and issues for clarification, and participate actively in the class sessions (20%).

Short Essay: Philip Bantin in “Electronic Records Management: A Review of the Work of a Decade and a Reflection of Future Directions” (assigned Week 1 January 12) outlines many of the important debates among archivists and records managers about electronic records during the 1990s. After reading this article thoroughly, select one issue and write a short 5-page essay that summarizes the debates (in your own words) and presents your own position on the issue. Note: For each issue, Bantin cites many other articles and reports. Please locate and read at least three of the sources that he cites (and that are not assigned readings for this course) to build your own position on the issue. Some of these sources are available online, but you will have to use the library to find many of them. Due: Week 3 (February 2) (15%).

Midterm Exam: (Take Home). Around the midpoint of the course we will have covered the generic issues and general best practices for electronic records management. The take home mid-term will evaluate your understanding of these issues and practices. The take home exam will be composed of two essays totaling approx. 8-10 pages. Distributed Week 6 (March 2). Due Week 7 (March 9) (20%).

Problem Solving Exercise: You will receive examples of the three types of problems confronting decision makers in regards to electronic records management. You will develop and submit a 5-7 page proposed solution to a problem of your choice. Assigned Week 8 (March 16). Due Week 11 (April 6) (15%).

Course Project: We are blessed with countless scandals, legal cases, and allegations that revolve around improper management of records and information. Select a case from the list below (or identify your own issue – with instructor approval).

Conduct your own investigation into
1) the relevant environment for accountability and
2) the laws, rules, regulations, and/or policies that were broken or are alleged to have been broken.

Then summarize the consequences of inadequate recordkeeping for
1) the principals directly involved in the case,
2) victims of the failure of recordkeeping systems, and
3) the public at large.

Finally, identify recordkeeping policies, technologies, tools, and best practices that, if implemented, would have prevented or minimized the
damage. Approximately 15 pages. Due Week 13 (April 20) (30%, 1 PEP point for pre-Fall 2007 SI admits).

List of Candidate Cases:
- Enron accounting scandal
- Worldcom accounting scandal
- HealthSouth accounting scandal
- Valerie Plame identity leak
- UN Oil-for-Food Program
- Red Cross governance, accounting, and compensation policies
- FEMA accounting for hurricane relief
- Afghanistan/Iraq Contracts
- Tom Delay Indictment
- Vioxx and other pharmaceutical lawsuits
- Election/Voter Fraud [pick (almost) any country and (almost) any election]
- Choicepoint (inappropriate release of personal information).
- Jack Abramoff scandal
- FBI’s Virtual Case File
- Missing White House email

General Resources

The Resources section of the CTools Site has a folder called “Useful Websites and Resources.” Use this to find additional information and reference materials. Feel free to suggest additional resources.
Assignments and Expectations – Key Dates

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Active Participation in Class Sessions</td>
<td>Due: Week 3 (February 2)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Short Essay</td>
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Course Outline

Week 1 (January 12) Introduction, Course Logistics, Key Concepts
What is an electronic record? The difference between recordkeeping systems and information systems. Why do electronic records present special challenges? Issues, problems and principles of electronic records management.

READ

www.indiana.edu/~libarch/ER/encycloarticle9.doc

January 19 – NO CLASS – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Observation

Week 2 (January 26) Recordkeeping Requirements in Law, Policy, and Practice
This session will examine the labyrinth of laws, policies, and practices that provide the warrant and justification for creation, retention, and use of electronic records.

READ


Week 3 (February 2) Trust in Records and Recordkeeping Systems

Digital records are easy to alter, but people using records need to trust that the records are reliable and authentic evidence of transactions and communications. In this session we will discuss the concepts authenticity, reliability, and trust, and examine various methods to support trusted repositories.

Short Essay Assignment Due

READ


Browse

Week 4 (February 9) Evidence, Discovery, and Admissibility
Legal and auditing procedures set rules for what constitutes evidence, which practices are permissible for discovering evidence during an investigation. Forensic evaluation of evidence also determines its reliability and how much weight the evidence may hold in an investigation, hearing, or legal case. This session will explore the general rules and practices for defining admissible evidence in a variety of investigation procedures.

READ


The Sedona Conference, Commentary on ESI Evidence & Admissibility (March 2008).


http://www.law.com/jsp/legaltechnology/pubArticleLT.jsp?id=1202427312737

Week 5 (February 16) Promoting Accountability: Standards and Best Practices
Standards and Best Practices offer critical guidance for electronic records management and they offer a framework for program development and compliance auditing.

READ


February 23 – NO CLASS – Winter Break

**Week 6 (March 2) Promoting Accountability: Tools and Technology**

This session will examine some of the tools and technologies available to support accountability and electronic records management. We will also discuss the limitations of available tools.

**Midterm Exam Distributed**

**READ**


**Week 7 (March 9) Promoting Accountability: Compliance and Audit**

Standards, policies, and guidelines are of little value if there is no way to monitor compliance. This session will cover some of the methodologies for monitoring compliance with electronic recordkeeping requirements.

**Midterm exam due**
Week 8 (March 16) Promoting Accountability: Social Demand / Incentives for Records-based Accountability

Numerous forces are creating a social demand for increased accountability and new accountability mechanisms. Three important factors are 1) reestablishing the legitimacy of institutions following a series of scandals and malfeasance, 2) globalization and the ineffectiveness of national regulatory mechanisms; 3) pressure from consumers and some investors for socially responsible policies and practices. This session will examine the implications of demand-driven accountability for creation and management of electronic records.

Problem Solving Assignment Distributed

READ


**Week 9 (March 23) Sorting Out Contradictions: Freedom of Information, Privacy, Secrecy, and Accountability**

Access to records is an essential tool for holding organizations and individuals accountable. But free access to information is complicated by legal requirements and ethical concerns over personal privacy, national security, trade secrets, and other restrictions on access. In this session we will discuss the labyrinth of regulations that govern rights to access information, require disclosure, and likewise restrict access to records.

**READ**


Week 10 (March 30) Records and Accountability Environments: Government Accountability / International Organizations and Human Rights

This session will focus on the mechanisms that are intended hold governments accountable to their citizens. It will also explore breeches in this process. Records play an increasingly important role in monitoring human rights violations and in supporting truth and reconciliation processes. This session will also cover the policies and practices for electronic recordkeeping in international organizations and in support of human rights.

READ


Week 11 (April 6) Records and Accountability Environments: Corporate Accountability

After countless corporate scandals, regulatory agencies and governments have implemented more rigorous accounting standards with records management implications. This session will examine records and accountability in the corporate sector.

Problem Solving Assignment Due

READ

Week 12 (April 13) Records and Accountability Environments: Health Care

Electronic medical records hold out the promise of reducing health care costs, improving medical decision making, and enhancing patient’s access to their own medical information. However, the promise of electronic recordkeeping in health care has been hard to realize. This session will examine some of the particular requirements that make electronic medical records difficult to implement.

READ


Week 13 (April 20): Wrap Up: Towards Transparency, Accountability, and Governance

Summary of themes and ideas in the course.

Course Project Paper Due