

Access to and Maintenance of Academic Employee Records

ACA-27

About This Policy

Effective Dates:

10-11-1983

Last Updated:

04-28-2020

Responsible University Administrator:

University Faculty Council

Policy Contact:

Campus Chief Academic Affairs Official

Scope

- A. The policy applies to the [Personnel Files](#) of [academic appointees](#) that are maintained by the university either physically or electronically.
- B. The policy does not apply to medical or psychological [records](#), nor to records gathered in the course of an investigation under [UA-03, Sexual Misconduct Policy](#).

Policy Statement

- A. Every office which maintains Personnel Files concerning academic appointees shall notify the chief academic affairs officer of the campus about the nature and organization of those records, which information shall be made available to academic appointees.
- B. All academic appointees, upon request, shall have access to the unredacted records in their Personnel Files, including internal and external letters. This does not apply to records gathered in the course of an investigation under [UA-03, Sexual Misconduct Policy](#).
- C. [University officials](#), faculty governance bodies and committees, and boards of review, who have a legitimate interest in the contents, shall have access to the unredacted records of academic appointees except where access is prohibited by special policies such as those governing medical and psychological records. A legitimate interest is one related to the operation of the university and its academic mission. The determination of a legitimate interest will be made by the officer responsible for the maintenance of the record. This determination must be made scrupulously and with respect for the individual whose records are involved.
- D. The public shall have access to academic appointee records to the extent provided by the [Indiana Access to Public Records Act](#).
- E. Personnel Files concerning academic appointees are subject to the following principles:
 - 1. Anonymous communications other than course evaluations shall not be included.
 - 2. Unsolicited communications about an appointee shall not be included unless provided by the appointee, relevant to a disciplinary action, or received during an appointment, reappointment, promotion or tenure review.
 - 3. If any unsolicited communication is included, the appointee shall be notified, provided with a copy, and given an opportunity to respond in writing.
 - 4. Academic appointees may respond in writing to any items in their Personnel Files. Such written responses shall become part of the file.
 - 5. The contents of Personnel Files shall be [confidential](#) except as provided in this policy.

F. Records of academic appointees shall be maintained in accordance with policy [UA-18, University Records Retention and Disposition](#).

(In Compliance with State Statute IC 5-14-3; University Faculty Council, October 11, 1983; April 28, 2020)

Reason For Policy

The university maintains different kinds of records on academic employees used for a variety of purposes including promotion, reappointment, discipline and the setting of salary. In fairness to the appointees, to assure the accuracy of those records, and in recognition that we are a public university, those records must be maintained properly and available to appointees, administrators, and the public, consistent with principles of privacy.

Procedure

- A. The administrator of the office where a record is located shall:
1. Keep a record of requests for access
 2. Create procedures to assure that confidential and personal identifying information such as social security numbers be removed from records before they are released.
 3. Provide a safe method by which records can be viewed and copied that assures that the originals are not removed from the office, damaged, or altered.
 4. Consult with University Counsel concerning any subpoena or other governmental demand to have access to records.
 5. Not release any record except in accordance with this policy.
- B. Academic appointees who want access to their Personnel Files may:
1. Obtain from the [chief academic affairs officer](#) of the campus a list of all offices where records concerning the appointee may be located.
 2. Obtain access to records upon request made to the principal administrator of the office, school department, program or division that maintains the records. Records shall be made available to the appointee as soon as possible and always within five business days.
 3. Obtain copies of those records.
- C. Members of the public may obtain records of academic employees only by following the procedures in the [Indiana Access to Public Records Act](#) or by other legal processes. Confidential records may not be disclosed and confidential information contained in an otherwise disclosable document must be redacted.
- D. Questions about the scope of this policy, document redaction, protecting privacy, or the proper handling of a demand to records, should be referred to the University Counsel's office.

Definitions

Academic appointees: all individuals covered by [ACA-14, Classification of Academic Appointments](#), including visiting, adjunct and acting faculty; academic specialists; and emeritus faculty.

Chief academic affairs officer: the Vice-Provost or Vice-Chancellor of Academic Affairs on each campus or their designee.

Confidential: records and information include an appointee's home address, private telephone number, and social security number; financial and medical information; information concerning research, including actual research documents; information that is confidential under [UA-02, Americans with Disabilities Act Policy](#); [UA-03, Sexual Misconduct](#); [UA-04, Whistleblower Protection](#), or other university policies; and information that is exempted from disclosure by the [Indiana Access to Public Records Act](#).

Personnel File: meant broadly to include all records and information collected in connection with an individual's appointment, promotion, tenure, performance, assignment of duties, misconduct, student evaluations, and related matters.

Records: refers to all items or collections of information on individual academic appointees, in print, digital, audio-visual or any other medium, if stored or searchable by individual name or identifying symbol.

University official: a person employed by the university in an administrative, supervisory, or academic position, including law enforcement personnel and health staff; an individual serving on the Board of Trustees; or an individual serving on a board of review or a promotion, tenure, disciplinary or grievance committee.

University records: are records maintained by an administrative office of the university, a campus, or any college, school, department, program or division.

Related Information

[Indiana Access to Public Records Act](#)