Managing the Digital University Desktop

Understanding and Empowering the Individual; Preserving the Public Record and Institutional History

Empowering the Individual: Managing the Digital University Desktop
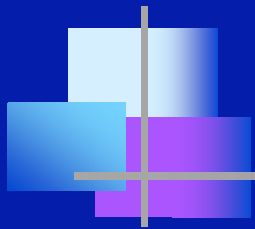
ECURE 2005

Tempe, Arizona

http://www.ils.unc.edu/digitaldesktop/

Thank You to

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission for generously funding this project

Thanks also to the Project Team!

- Helen Tibbo, Co-Project Investigator, UNC-CH
- Tim Pyatt, Co-Project Investigator, Duke UA
- Kim Chang, Co-Project Manager
- Megan Winget Barrett, Co-Project Manager
- Paul Conway, Duke Library IT Director
- David Mitchell, Duke Records Manager
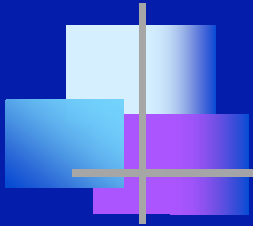- Frank Holt, UNC-CH Records Service Coordinator
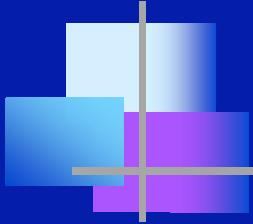
Your Thoughts For the Day

"The end user manages e-mail."

ARMA Guidelines for Managing E-mail

"It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, it is the one that is the most adaptable to change."
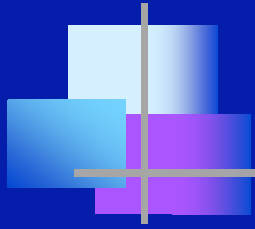
Charles Darwin

And Here's One More

On E-Mail:

"It's a double-edged sword, but sure beats having to find people on the phone."
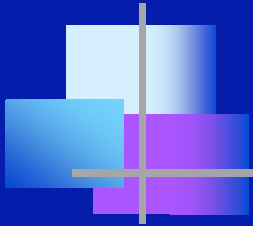
MDUD Interviewee

Today's Presentation

- Overview _ project goals and methodology

- Discussion of selected interview data with regard to observed file management behaviors vs. records management practice, management of faculty research data, the concept of email as a record, and issues of privacy and ownership of institutional e-records

- Development of instructional tools
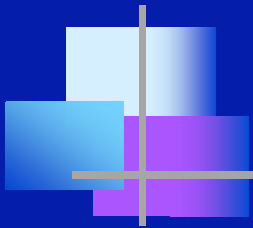
- What's next

Project Goals _ 1

■ Document how faculty, administrators, and staff use and manage files and records from electronic mail and other desktop applications at UNC Chapel Hill and Duke University, and by extension, across academia
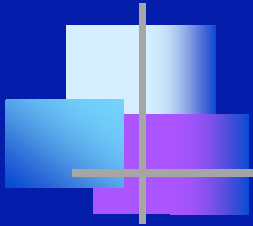
Project Goals _ 2

■ Based on the analysis of user needs and practices, as well as the North Carolina Public Records Law, develop optimized email and desktop management policies and "best practice" guidelines to serve both public and private higher education in North Carolina and provide an adaptable model of practice for other states

Project Goals _ 3

■ Develop educational opportunities (workshops, FAQs, exercises, web-based tutorials, etc.) to optimize faculty, administrator, and staff use and management of desktop electronic documents

Project Goals _ 4

▪ Develop user profiles necessary for a strategic consideration of electronic records management systems and use these to evaluate the potential appropriateness of ERMSs for the UNC-CH and Duke campuses

Project Goals _ 5

■ Disseminate information about the best practices guidelines and instructional units at UNC-CH, Duke, and across the 16-campus UNC system via a statewide conference and to other universities via the records management/archival literatures and conferences and the project website
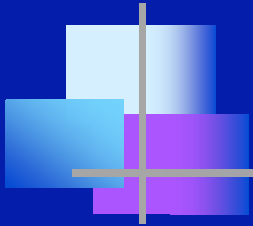
Rationale for Project

- The University environment

- Lack of recordkeeping systems

- Public institutions
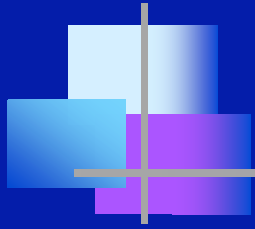
- Private institutions
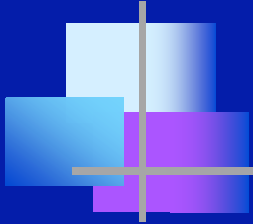
Phase I (July 2002-May 2003)

Primary Goal: Data Collection

- Survey and its findings _ 1899 valid responses at Duke; 1076 valid responses at UNC-CH

- Interviews _ 50 at UNC-CH; 50 at Duke; additional 25 with IT staff/administrators from both campuses
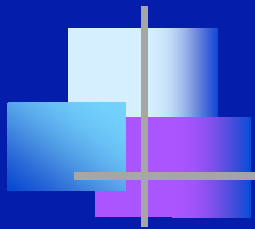
Interview Protocol Development

- We returned to our original goals

  - To understand how individuals manage their digital desktops, both email and other digital files

  - To improve user behavior by devising guidelines and learning models

- What are people doing?

- How can we improve what they're doing both for their own work and for the University?

Designing the Interviews

- Started with concerns that surfaced in the surveys: unsolicited email, confidentiality, time spent on email, security, management, volume, retention, training, etc.

- Generated every possible question we could think of and pooled our results

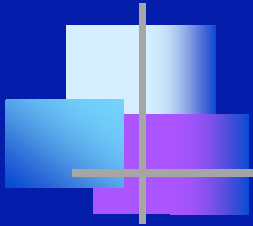- Translated archival jargon to laymen's terms (no words like **appraisal** and **authenticity**)

Developing the Questions

- Began to categorize our questions

- We linked our questions to basic archival functions because we were exploring how individuals function as their own records managers or archivists

- Identified primary and secondary questions
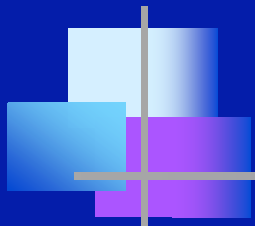
Appraisal Questions

- What criteria do you use to decide to keep an email message? To delete one?

- What criteria do you use to decide to keep an electronic document? To delete one?

- Do you think any of the email messages or documents that you receive or produce in the course of your daily work should be preserved for years to come by the university? Why/why not?

Authenticity Questions

- How do you save attachments?

- When you save an attachment, do you save the email along with it?

- If you store important messages electronically outside of your email application, does the header information stay with the messages?
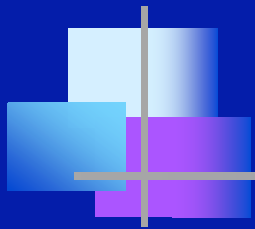
Arrangement Questions

- Tell me about your email folder structure that we see here.

- Get print-out of folder structure.

- Would you say that you use a similar structure in email and file directories?

- What about your paper file structure?

- Tell us about the file structure on your hard drive. How have you organized materials?
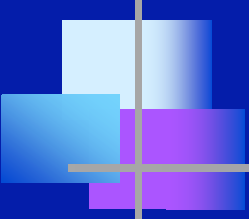
Description Questions

- How do you determine subject lines you attach to work-related email messages you send?
- How do you retrieve stored messages if you need them at a later time?

- How do you name electronic files?

- How do you retrieve your electronic files?

Physical Preservation Questions

- Are your email messages being backed up automatically?

- Do you explicitly back up your email messages?

- Are your electronic files (documents, images, etc.) automatically backed up?

- Do you keep copies of all the messages you send? If so, where/how do you keep these?
- How do you store important messages?

Ownership, Privacy and Security Questions

- Is your email yours or the university's? Other files on your computer?

- Who owns your email? (Ownership vs. intellectual property issues)

- Who has the ability to read your email without your permission? Your electronic files?

- Do you distinguish between "official" and personal email? Do you manage and store them differently?

- UNC ONLY: Have you heard of the Public Records Law in North Carolina? Are you aware that the University can make portions of our email available to the public under that law? DUKE ONLY: Do you think that the University can make portions of your email available to the public under certain legal conditions?
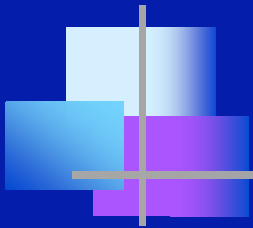
Phase II (June-December 2003)

- Used NVIVO software to code the data from each interview session

- Analyzed electronic filing schemes of selected individuals and compared with print filing schemes and records schedules

- Looked at technical capabilities of desktop applications and servers used at UNC-CH and Duke and investigated ERMS features for UNC-CH and Duke
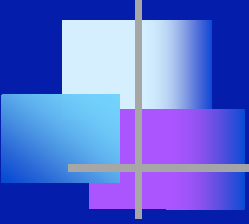
Conclusions

- Right behind spam and poor software, both faculty and staff are concerned about issues of privacy, confidentiality, and security.

- Being concerned is often not enough to get people to either learn more about the risks involved with their behaviors or to change such behaviors.

Conclusions - Confidentiality

- There is varying knowledge about privacy and confidentiality laws and policies.

- Many people know "their" email is not confidential _ that it may be a public record or subpoenaed _ but most wish and many act as if it were confidential.

- Many people have a vague idea that someone can access their email but they cannot state who specifically.

Conclusions _ Sensitive Information

■ People/departments routinely send sensitive info via email.

■ HIPAA has greatly increased awareness in the medical community regarding the need to handle patient communication carefully.

■ Faculty often do not know what would constitute confidential communication with students (may not be clear on FERPA, either).

Conclusions _ Data Ownership

■ Faculty and staff often have different attitudes and beliefs about data ownership.

■ Only 1 person out of 100 indicated that the author of an email, not the recipient, holds the copyright. Most people look at incoming email as their own.

Conclusions _ State of Knowledge

- Many people phrase their concerns as questions indicating that they do not know the answers, even when these answers are readily available.

- Most people do not take advantage of the features available in their email applications.

- Few people have had training in the use of their current email application or records law and fewer yet seek such training out.

Need For User Education

■ It is unlikely that passive posting of policies is an effective means of disseminating information to foster particular records management behaviors.

■ It is equally unlikely that simply posting FAQs and Help Pages provides pervasive education.

Interview Findings - Appraisal

Criteria for keeping emails and other electronic documents:

- Anticipated Use

- Keep Everything

- Evidence/Documentation

Quotes re: Appraisal

"I keep everything."

"I tend to be a packrat."

"Basically everything gets kept, people tend to lose things and want it sent to them again."

"Lab things _ that have to do with data _ I try to hold on to that sort of thing."

"I do keep all correspondence related to grants and funding ⋯ student correspondence."

"Sometimes I have a bad habit of skimming the top part and not reading the rest and just deleting it."

Interview Findings _ Appraisal (cont.)

Should any of your work be preserved for years to come by the University Archives? Why/why not?
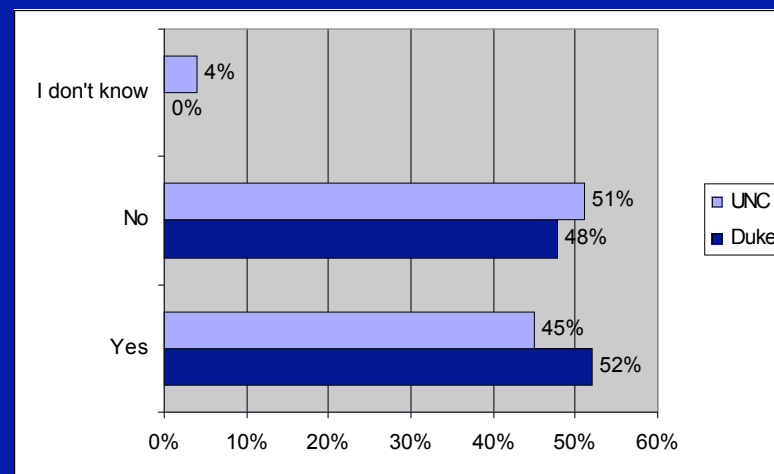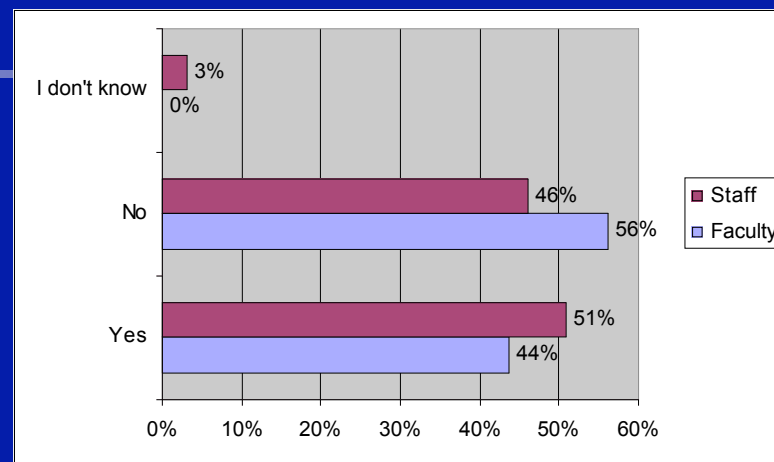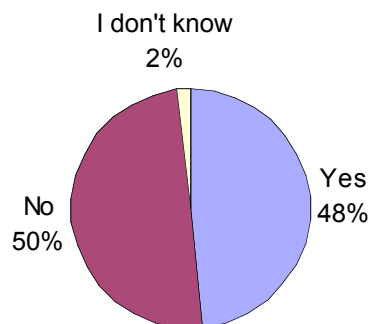
Quotes re: Appraisal (cont.)

"They can have them if they want … I don't really care … who knows what someone would be interested in in a thousand years."

"Email including meeting minutes _ I haven't encountered any in my career that would be considered historically significant."

"No, most of mine is just documentation."

"" … If I were to leave this job and someone were to replace me, then there would be useful documents for the program, but most of those are on floppy."

"I just don't think I have anything that would be interesting or of use outside this department."

Interview Findings - Authenticity

Do you save attachments outside of your email program?

No
11%

Yes
89%
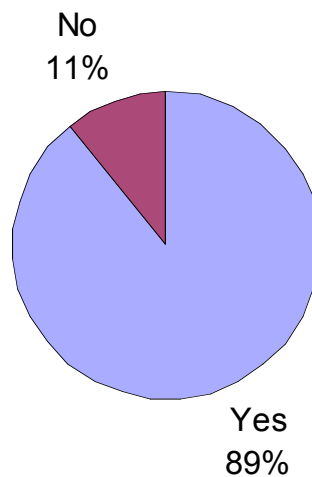
Interview Findings _ Authenticity (cont.)

When you save an attachment, do you save the email along with it?

Category	Value
use naming conventions	1
print	2
cut and paste info	4
Email content is important	6
Email content not important	12
Store both in email	25
Does not Preserve Relationship	54
Preserve Relationship	11
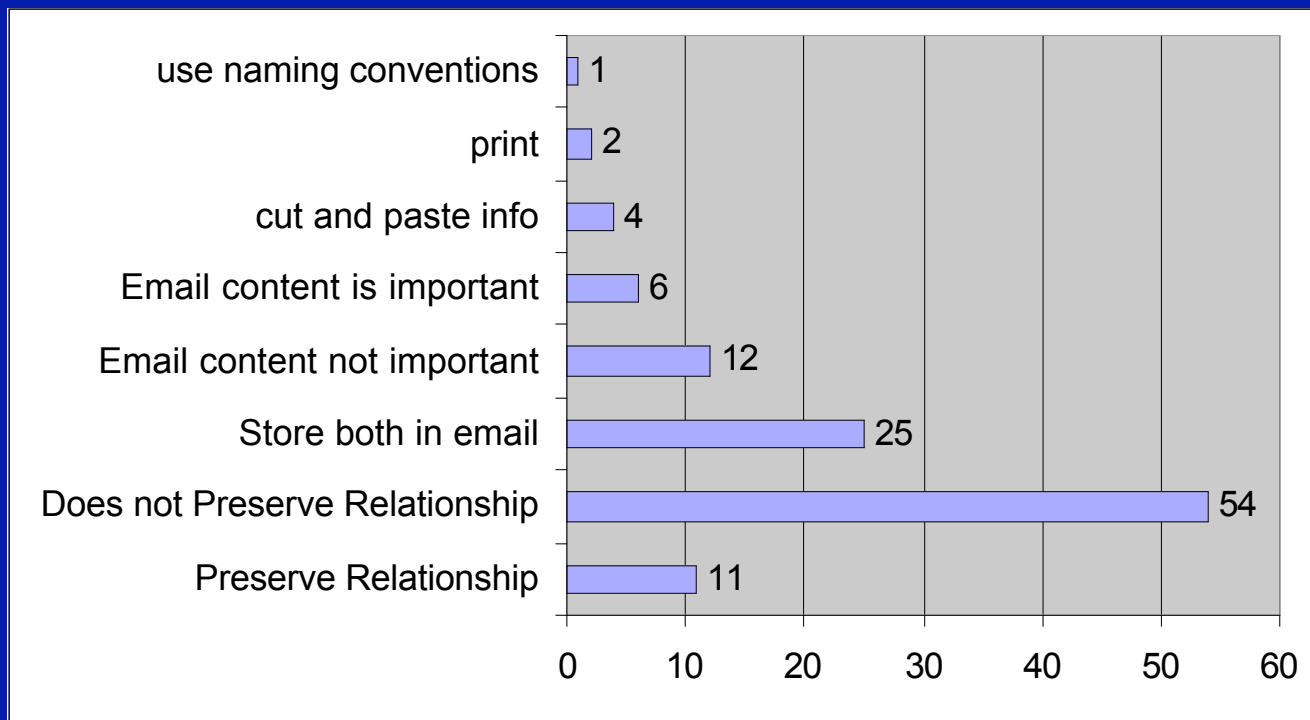
Interview Findings _ Authenticity (cont.)

If you store a message electronically outside of your email program, does the header information stay with it?

I don't know
2%

Yes
22%

No
76%
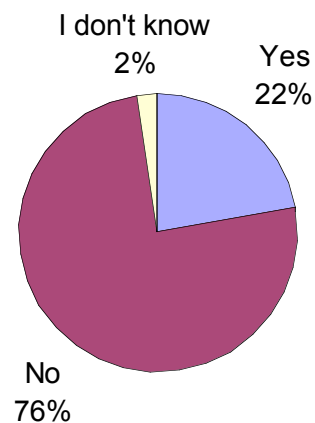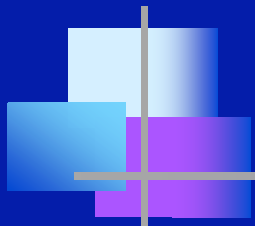
Interview Findings - Arrangement

Do you use folders to organize your email?
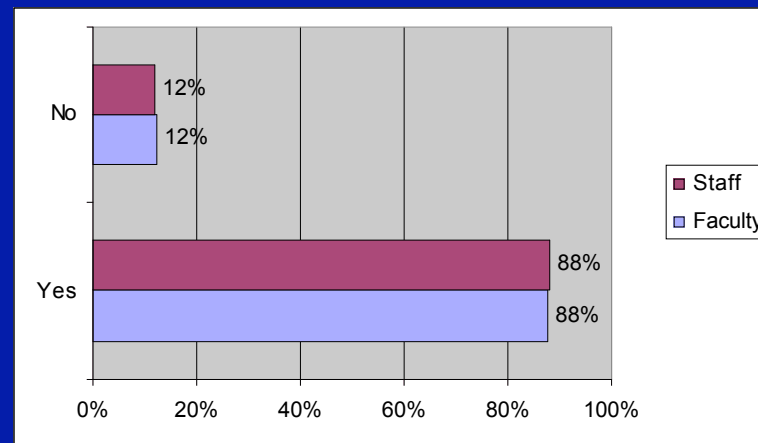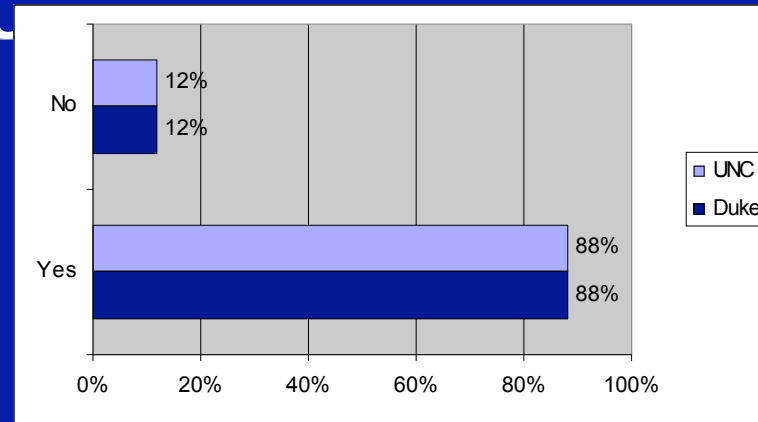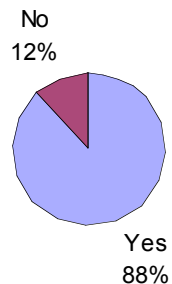
Interview Findings _ Arrangement (cont.)

How do you determine when to make a new folder?

- New responsibilities - 32

- Quantity - 30

"Computer guys make fun of me with all my folders."

Interview Findings - Description

- Most people use subject lines for emails that accurately reflect the topic of the email.

- If email messages have non-descriptive subject lines, most people don't change them, but some do.

- Most people retrieve stored email by browsing their folders.

- One person interviewed indicated that he or she often changed subject lines to camouflage sensitive email.

Interview Findings: Preservation

Are your email messages being backed up automatically?

I don't know
26%

No
10%

Yes
64%
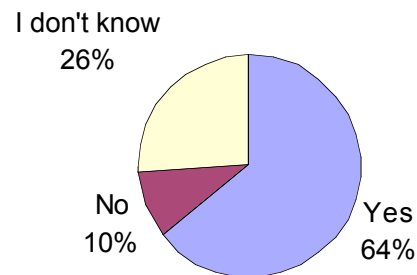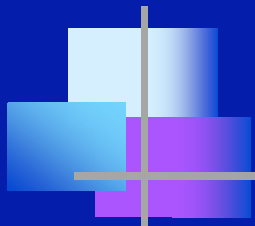
Interview Findings: Preservation (cont.)

Do you explicitly back up your email messages?

Yes
26%

No
74%
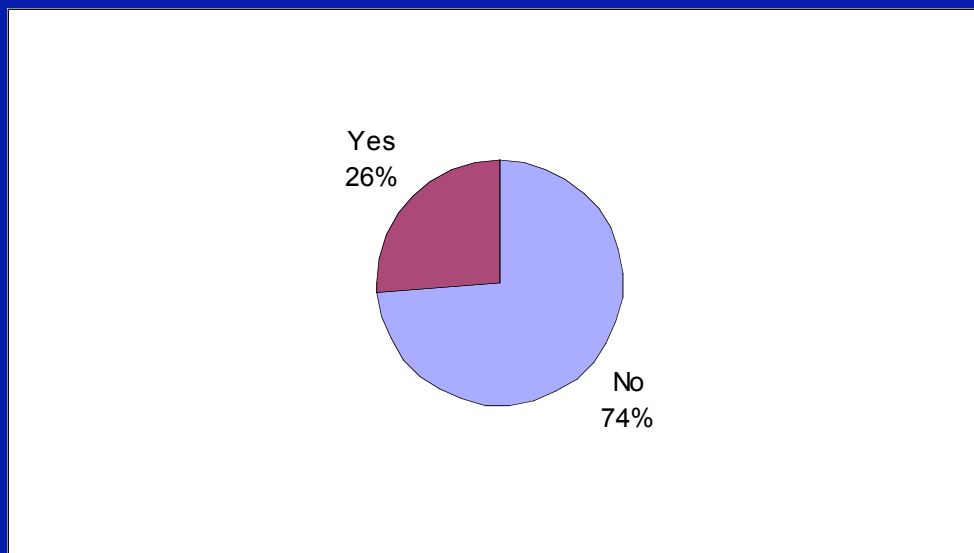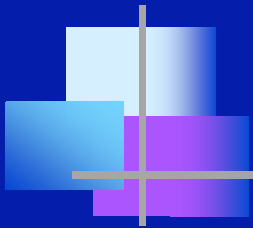
Interview Findings: Preservation (cont.)

How do you store important messages?

- Print out a paper copy _ 47
- File in folders (electronic version) _ 43
- Keep in inbox _ 17
- Hard drive _ 9

Quotes re: Preservation

"I'd like to believe that everything that we have that is important we have in paper files."

(On storing important messages) "Probably save it in five places, put it in folder in email, print and put in folder, and give to [name deleted] to save. If I have it in paper it is visible to me, when they go into folders they frequently are invisible."

(On back-up) "No, I'd kind of like it if I lost it all."

"You should check your e-mail more often. I fired you over three weeks ago."

Credit: *Jerry King*

Interview Findings _ Ownership, Privacy and Security

Is your email yours or the University's?

The University's _ 81% (55 staff, 26 faculty)

"Technically [it] belongs to the people of North Carolina."

"I think it is mine, it's on their server, but I feel I own it _ other files are mine."

"The University wants to believe that it is theirs, my sense is that they can claim to go into it at any point."

"I don't like the university to control my emails at all."

Interview Findings _ Ownership, Privacy and Security

Who has the ability to read your email?

- IT _ 59

- Nobody _ 25

- I don't know _ 13

- Supervisor _ 12

- Coworkers, the University, Someone - 8
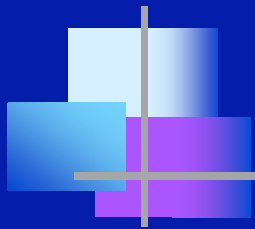
Quotes re: Ownership, Privacy and Security
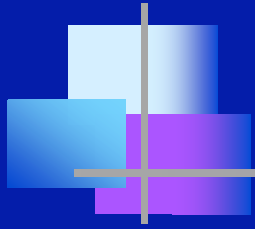
[on privacy] *"We have been told that if I mention something about a student's body or health in an email to another faculty member that this can actually be a breach of the student's privacy or something."*

[on security] *"When I'm not here, they could walk in and all they would have to do is click into email … I don't log off at night …"*
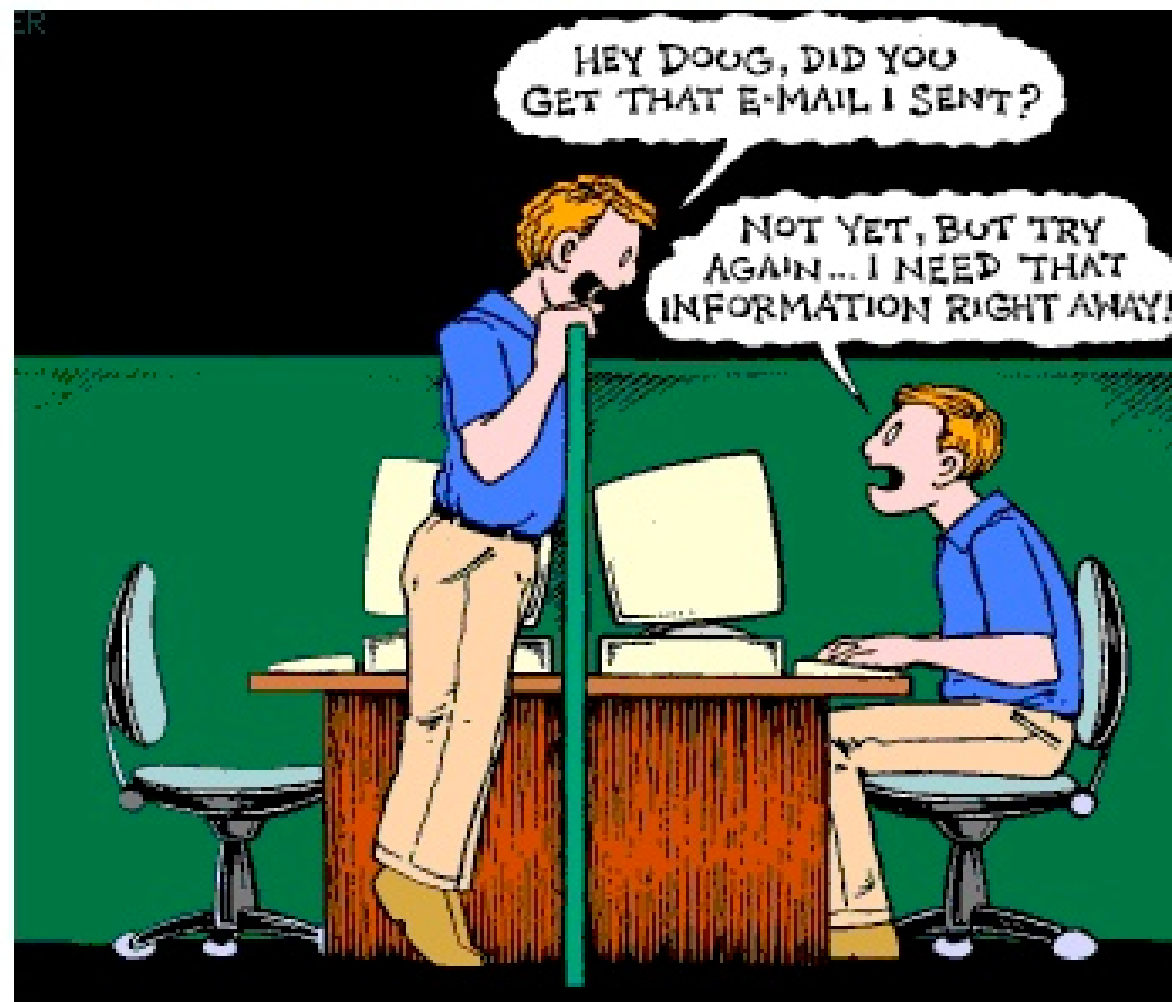
Phase III (January-May 2004)

- Began development of best practices guidelines

- Reviewed state of NC guidelines/policies and those of more than 2 dozen other states, universities, and government entities

- Decision to change format from manual to web-based FAQs
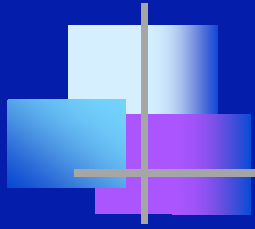
FAQ Development Challenges

- Campus differences in email systems and applications

- No central digital repository on either campus for permanent electronic records

- Records retention schedules not fully implemented on both campuses

- Workshop/training programs not in place on both campuses

Our First 6 FAQs:

- Is email considered an official University record at UNC/Duke?

- Should I handle my personal email differently than my work email (UNC/Duke)?

- What email can I delete?

- How do I file the email I need to keep?

- When and how should I save email attachments?

- What information should a printed email message include?

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Testing the FAQs

March 2004 UNC/Duke workshop attendees:

- Liked the FAQ format

- Agreed that they would not read longer info, even preferred shorter _ subdivide questions?

- Suggested that we use clear definitions and avoid the use of jargon

- Thought we needed more IT involvement

- Wanted clarification on issue of "ownership"

Phase IV (March-August 2004)

- Completed work on FAQs

- Re-designed the project website

- Began design of on-line tutorial

Phase V (Sept. 2004-Dec. 2005)

- Complete work on on-line tutorial

- Develop a Powerpoint workshop and lesson plans on Desktop Records Management

- Hold a statewide conference for C & U RMs and Archivists and separate "train the trainer" sessions

- Hire a consultant to evaluate the project

- Present study findings at conferences

- Write articles for journals

- Complete the final report for NHPRC

Afterthoughts

▣ PIM (Personal Information Management)
_ the "seamless" approach

▣ How have things changed since the interviews were completed? More email? Less use of folders?
▣ For archivists/records managers, the challenge remains the same

▣ *E-mail as a Public Record in North Carolina*
http://www.ah.dcr.state.nc.us/records/e_records/Email_8_02.pdf

Managing the Digital University Desktop

Understanding and Empowering the Individual; Preserving the Public Record and Institutional History

We need your feedback!

http://ils.unc.edu/digitaldesktop/

Janis Holder, University Archivist

UNC Chapel Hill

holderj@email.unc.edu