

Documenting Records Management at the University of Texas Institute for Geophysics

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Introduction

Records management is “[a] field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use, and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records” (ISO, *ISO 15489-1:2016*).

The University of Texas Institute for Geophysics (UTIG) is a research unit in the Jackson School of Geosciences at the University of Texas at Austin. Prior records management workflows at UTIG were developed by Brady Cox. The purpose of the project was to digitize physical personnel files, organize digitized personnel files in Box, update existing workflows, and produce new, detailed workflows in order to improve documentation of the records management process. This process is an important part of initial hire and end of employment at UTIG.

Organizing and digitizing UTIG personnel files, as well as documenting the process, will make personnel files more easily accessible and ensure that both current and future employees better understand recordkeeping requirements for personnel records at UTIG. In addition, being able to access these personnel files remotely is vital, given the current COVID-19 pandemic; this project will enable continued remote access to the personnel files.

Process

Organization of physical personnel files
Physical personnel records were organized in each personnel file by date.

Digitization of physical personnel files
Physical personnel records were scanned using a Fujitsu ScanSnap S1500 scanner. PDFs of personnel records were uploaded into digital personnel files located in Box. Digital personnel records were organized in each personnel file by type of record.

Deliverables

Deliverables included the following:

- A set of detailed workflows documenting the work process involved in organizing and digitizing personnel files
- A one-page summary of detailed workflows (representing a simple step-by-step guide to the organization and digitization process)
- Digitized and organized personnel folders stored in Box

Recordkeeping Requirements

Records retention guidelines are derived from the University of Texas at Austin Records Retention Schedule (UTRRS).

Active personnel files:

- Active personnel files are maintained until the employee’s end of employment at UTIG.

Archived personnel files:

- Consult the relevant series in UTRRS.

Acknowledgments

Prior contributions to this project, including development of workflows, were made by Brady Cox. Thanks to Dr. Ying Ding, capstone course instructor, and Susanne Morrison, field supervisor and Senior Human Resources Coordinator at UTIG.

References

International Organization for Standardization. (2016). Information and documentation—Records management—Part 1: Concepts and principles (ISO Standard No. 15489-1:2016). <https://www.iso.org/standard/62542.html>

Step-By-Step Guide to Management of Personnel Records at UTIG

Organizing documents

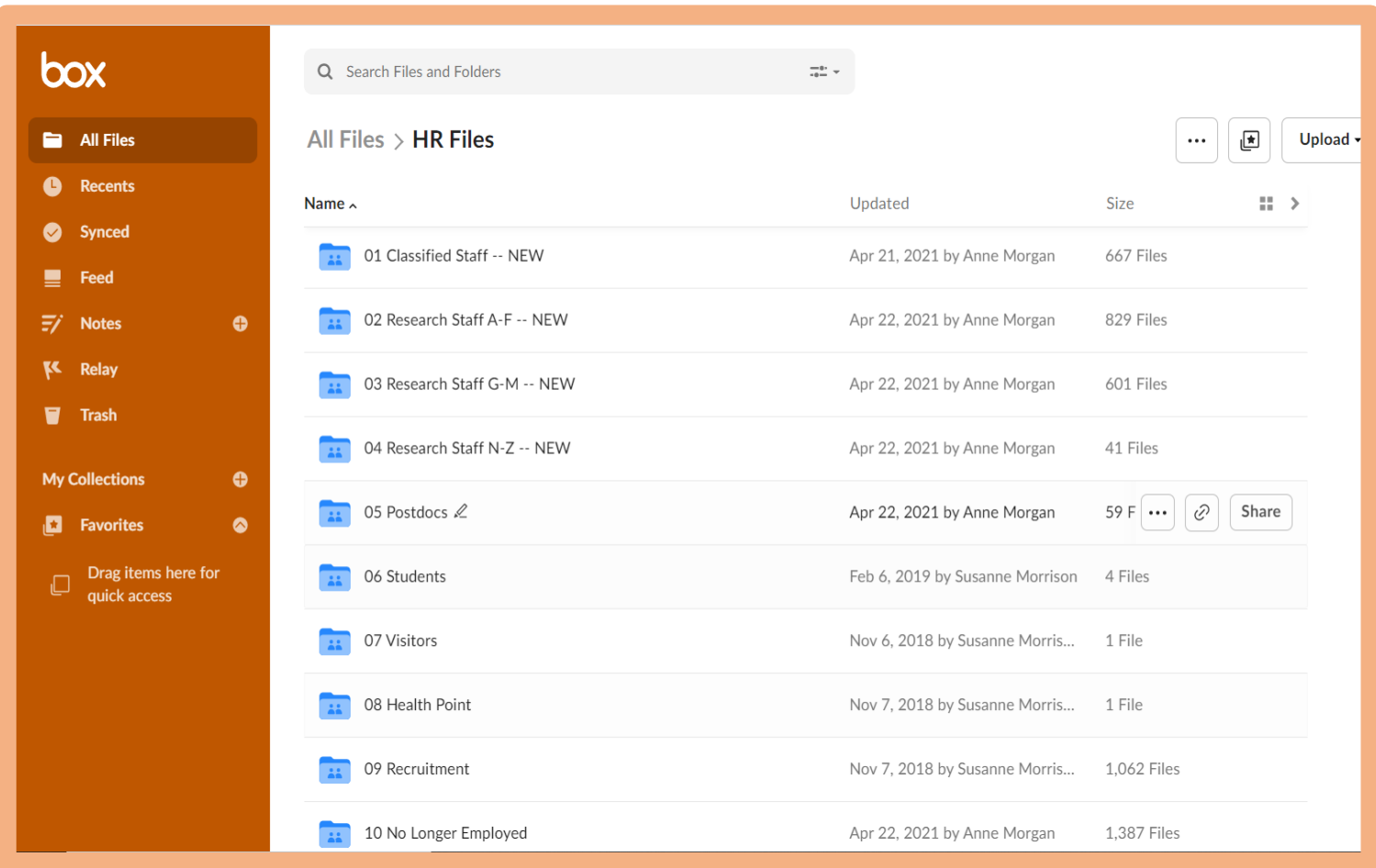
1. Organize the documents in the folder by date. The newest document goes at the top of the folder and the oldest document at the bottom.

Digitizing documents

*See Digitization Workflow for more detailed instructions.

2. Open “HR Files” in UT Box.
3. Turn on the Fujitsu ScanSnap S1500 scanner.
4. Place documents in scanner face down with the top of the documents at the bottom of the paper chute.
5. Scan documents. Press blue scan button to begin scanning. Click “Continue Scanning,” or press the blue scan button again, if more documents need to be scanned to the same file. Click “Finish Scanning” once all the selected documents are scanned.
6. Click “Scan to Folder” and save scanned documents as a file to the desktop computer.
7. Name the file. Name files according to this format: YYYY-MM-DD_LastName_DocumentType (e.g., 2018-09-01_Chikamoto_MeritIncrease). Use zeroes if you are not sure about the date (e.g. 0000-00-00).
8. Select the file and drag it into the appropriate folder in Box.

Example workflow, based on prior workflow



Folders containing personnel files in Box



ScanSnap scanner used to scan personnel records (Photo taken by Brady Cox)