

MANAGING THE DIGITAL UNIVERSITY DESKTOP

Draft Survey Participation Request Letter

(to be sent out over email)

For many of us, managing the information on our computers is a never-ending and frequently frustrating task. How many of us spend a good deal of time each week just looking for files, trying to remember where we have stored them and what we have named them? Email, while extremely convenient, often make matters worse. Most of us have been provided with little direction as to how best to manage this vast sea of messages and related documents.

The UNC-CH School of Information and Library Science (SILS) has received funding from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) to study computer file management practices in academic units and administrative offices here at UNC-CH, across the 16-campus UNC System, and at Duke University. SILS faculty member, Helen Tibbo, and Duke University Archivist, Tim Pyatt, will be directing the work on this project. To learn more about the project and follow our progress, visit our website at <http://www.ils.unc.edu/digitaldesktop>.

Our goals are to produce tools that will help us all manage our computer files and email better and preserve the universities' digital institutional memory. This research will result in a set of best practices and realistic recommended guidelines based on user needs and behaviors and the North Carolina Public Records Act that provides the regulatory framework for the retention and disposal of university information. In addition to electronic records management guidelines we will also be producing both classroom and web-based training modules. We hope our findings and the products based on your input will cumulatively save you and your colleagues months or even years of work throughout your careers!

Please consider sharing some information concerning your email experiences and methods by responding to the brief survey we will send you via email in the next week. It should not take more than 10 minutes of your time and you can participate simply by using the "reply" function of your email program or by going to a web form through a link at the top of the survey. We are not interested in the content of your files, but how you consider, review, manage, and work with them. Thank you so much for your time and effort on behalf of UNC-CH! Go Heels!!

We will keep the survey data entirely confidential. While we will know who responds because of the email addresses, we will not correlate any names with responses in our work and guarantee that your responses will not be identified with you personally in any reports or publications. Filling out the survey and sending it back to us indicates your willingness to participate in this study. The UNC-CH AA-IRB has approved this study. Questions regarding the survey should be sent to:

Dr Helen R. Tibbo, Associate Professor
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UNC-CH
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You may contact the AA-IRB at the following address or telephone number at any time during this study if you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant:

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