

### **Practical Tips for Making Public Records Requests:**

- Familiarize yourself with SSU's public records policy & procedure.
- Reviewing the Records Retention schedule may assist you in formulating your request by helping you to identify the manner in which the University organizes and maintains its records, the types of records each department maintains, and the length of time each office is required to maintain its records.
- Although public records requests may be submitted in-person, by phone, or by email, a request by email directed to [publicrecords@shawnee.edu](mailto:publicrecords@shawnee.edu) is preferred and helps to reduce misunderstandings about exactly what has been requested.
- Make your request specific. Try to specify a record with as much clarity as possible rather than making a request for general information. For example:  
*Overly broad request for information:* "Any and all records pertaining to all capital improvement projects at SSU since 1987."  
*Clear request for specific record:* "Certified payroll records for the Townhouse roof replacement project."
- Your request should be for documents that are already in existence.
- Ask for actual records rather than general requests for information.
- Ask to inspect unfamiliar or voluminous records. Doing so will likely save you time and expense.

### **Some things to keep in mind:**

- Responses to requests for voluminous records may be delivered on a rolling basis. The Public Records Officer will work with the requester to identify records of priority to the requester.
- Records are not available immediately upon request. The time it takes to produce records depends upon a number of factors, including the complexity of the request, volume of the records requested, the ease of retrieval, the medium on which the records are stored, the need for any legal review, and the extent to which redactions are necessary.

For more information, see <http://shawnee.edu/offices/general-counsel/public-records-request.aspx>