

# Data Management: Practical and Ethical Considerations

## BACKGROUND

- The University of Washington Libraries Assessment & Planning department collects and uses many types of data, including data with personally identifiable information (PII).
- Over the past few decades of activities in the Assessment and Planning program, data has accumulated. Not all the data meets current requirements for retention and PII standards.
- This project considers both the practical issues of managing historical and current data and the ethical concerns of how to retain, store, and destroy PII.

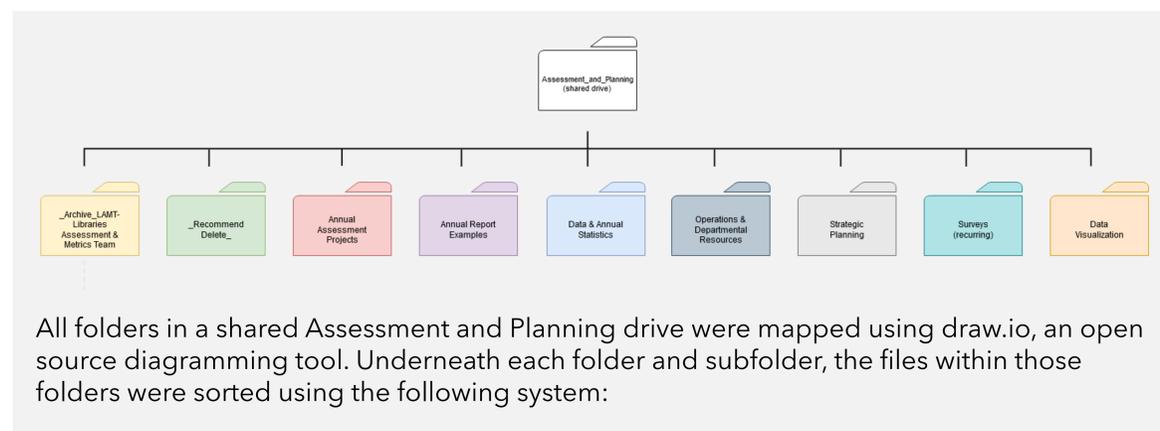
## PRIORITIES

- Map where data “lives” in order to identify data containing PII or needing to be retained with the University Archives
- Formalize a data management plan
- Develop a team workflow to implement the data management plan
- Consider the ethical (and legal) responsibility to properly manage data containing personally identifiable information

## LESSONS LEARNED

- Helpful to have this be the primary responsibility of one team member to manage and push forward.
- Data may live on shared team drives or personal drives
- Following the initial data management plan, it is helpful to set up a maintenance schedule

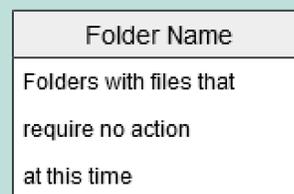
## METHODOLOGY



Each file within the folder was reviewed to check for any PII. If it appeared there was PII in the file, then the file name was listed, color-coded, and flagged as potentially containing PII.



Each file within the folder was reviewed to check if it needed to be retained following University protocol. If it appeared the data needed to be retained, then the file name was listed, color-coded, and flagged as potentially needing to be sent to the University Archives.



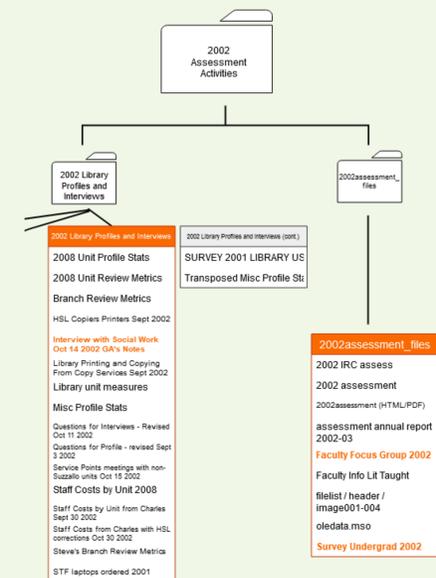
Files that did not appear to contain any data with PII or that would need to be retained were still mapped. Likely due to the specifics of retention requirements, there has not yet been a case of a file that has both contained PII and needed to be retained.



Vendor platforms used to collect data were handled separately in the data management plan and focused on efforts to transfer data off vendor platforms when possible. (Icon: “File Transfer” by Tuong Tam from the Noun Project)

## EXAMPLE DIAGRAM

Each subfolder is broken down to individual files to identify any data containing PII.



## NEXT STEPS

- Review each flagged file as a team to either store, retain with the University, or destroy
- Develop a tool for all library staff to use to help manage their own data
- Continue conversations about user privacy, the relationship between assessment and users, and how to apply a more critical lens to data management practices:
  - Whose responsibility is it to safeguard this data? (Assessment departments, others in the library, etc.)
  - What does it look like to systematically prioritize data management within a library department, organization, or institution?