

# Keeping an Archive

So much community knowledge and connection becomes available in an archive. An archive builds the organization's identity, connects current members to past, documents organizational and cultural changes over time, and preserves the blueprints of past traditions and events.

## How to keep an archive:

- Store archived materials in 3 locations:** flashdrive, 3-ring binder, and digital cloud folder.
  - Examples: 32gb flash drive, 2"- 3" three ring binder with at least 100 plastic sleeves, and a Google Drive folder
- Gather any materials you have from the past until now.**
- In each archive location, organize materials by year.**
- Discuss what's important to keep and what can be left out.** Consider the value and physical size of items, and how to best preserve them. Larger items like banners or posters, for example, can be photographed for the archive.
- Be sure to keep:** mentions in newspapers, membership lists (see: "Building Your Alumni Network" for more info), pictures from each year, major event posters, letters written to administrators or legislators, and logo designs
- Your digital and physical archives will be different.** Use the digital archive to house objects like years' worth of meeting minutes. Use the binder to house particularly important or interesting objects, especially if their physical form is important. This might include: drawings, collages, polaroid photos, newspaper clippings, flyers, and materials that have been physically handled and used.
- Securely store and pass on the archive.** Decide with your advisor where to securely store the flash drive, binder, and digital cloud folder passwords. Plan how next year's leadership will get access to the archives. It's important the archive doesn't get lost between years.
- Store back-ups.** Ask your campus' library or Office of Intercultural Affairs to store a back-up of your group's archive. The archive is less likely to be lost when it's housed by an established office than if your only back-up is kept by a single faculty advisor.
- Get creative with it!** Recreate an event from a previous decade and share the photos with alumni. Make a collage each semester to represent the organization's activities.



Questions about this resource?  
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