Session Description:
In December 2014, a controversy arose at the University of Oregon in which the university archives provided a faculty member with access to thousands of digital university records, one of which was ultimately published on the faculty member’s blog.¹ The university claimed that the records comprised both permanent and non-permanent records, “including student and faculty records designated confidential by federal law, state law, or both, privileged communications, and documents that are exempt from disclosure under the Public Records law.”² The university ordered the faculty member to return his copies of the records to the archives and appointed a special team of ten full time staff to process the records, an effort the university estimated would take at least 500 hours. As of March 2015, the two archivists implicated in the situation no longer work for the university. Though many of the details remain private, the controversy raises numerous questions for the profession and sets the stage for an important conversation about how archivists can work together to prevent similar situations from occurring in the future.

This Pop-Up Session, moderated by the chairs of the Issues and Advocacy Roundtable, will feature a panel of leaders from the College and University Archives Section, Electronic Records Section, Privacy and Confidentiality Roundtable, and Records Management Roundtable. The panelists will engage in a discussion about steps the archival profession could take to create policies, tools, and protections regarding records management, end-user agreements, and access to public records. The panelists will also discuss institutional outreach, advocating for resources, and due diligence for processing, redaction, and embargo of digital records at scale. After a 30-minute panel discussion, the moderators will open the conversation to attendees and facilitate a broad and proactive group discussion about the actions archivists can take to advocate for the work we do to provide appropriate access to records.

Session Moderators:
Sarah Quigley, Issues and Advocacy Roundtable Chair
Wendy Hagenmaier, Issues and Advocacy Roundtable Vice-Chair

Session Panelists:
Amy Fitch, Privacy and Confidentiality Roundtable Chair
Lawrence Giffin, Electronic Records Section Steering Committee Member
Eira Tansey, Records Management Roundtable Steering Committee Member
Christina Zamon, College and University Archives Section Chair

¹ For coverage of the controversy, from various sources, please see this list of links compiled by the Issues and Advocacy Roundtable: http://www2.archivists.org/groups/issues-and-advocacy-roundtable/the-university-of-oregon-situation. Please note that the inclusion of sources does not indicate an official stance of the Roundtable or SAA.