

## Case Study

# Wake Forest University Finds Harmony Between Academic Freedom and Organizational Security with CrashPlan



6,700 Employees



Higher Education



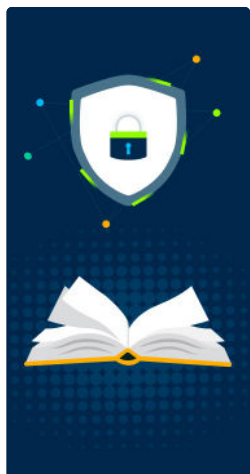
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

## Background

Wake Forest University is a private liberal arts university in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Since their founding in 1834 the institution has prided themselves on their motto “Pro Humanitate” (for humanity) living their values through providing excellent post-secondary education with a focus on research. According to Associate Director of Client Services at Wake Forest, Greg Collins, protecting the information generated by that research is no mean feat:

**“Every faculty member has some element of research required as part of their position. So we have a lot of data coming in and out, As a faculty member, this is their blood, sweat and tears.”**

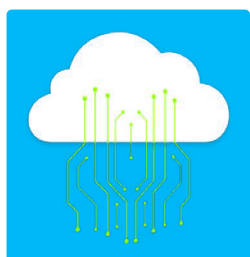
## Key Challenges



### Protecting Academic Progress while Maintaining Independence

“You can’t have a one-size-fits-all product or solution,” shared Greg when talking about the problems faced by the team at Wake Forest.

Due to the complexity of the systems in place as well as concerns for academic integrity and independence, it isn’t possible for an organization such as Wake Forest to mandate a centralized file-sharing process like large corporate entities do. While this can cause frustration at times for the IT team, it’s for good reason. In academia, faculty are the ultimate owners of their research. This is done out of a desire to prevent centralized influence or bias from impacting research outcomes. Because of this nuance of academic research, it was necessary for Wake Forest to find a solution which enabled their team to protect all of their faculty’s important data without influencing their work or creating unnecessary privacy risks.



### Grant Requirements

In recent years, the proliferation of cloud storage has allowed for many everyday workloads to move off of endpoint devices such as laptops and desktops entirely. While in many cases the technical ability to do this using some collaboration platforms exists, many grants (the lifeblood of academic research) explicitly forbid the usage of cloud storage solutions for storage of data generated for the purposes of the grant.



### Legal Hold Needs

Even though academic integrity dictates that faculty are the ultimate owners of the data, there still come times where the university is required to retain data for legal purposes. For whatever reason a retention request is sent, the university needs to ensure that no data can be accidentally or maliciously modified or deleted.

**“Sometimes it’s very specific where data can be stored. And some grants very plainly say ‘cannot be stored in a cloud environment.’”**

**Greg Collins**

Associate Director of Client Services at Wake Forest

## Solution

CrashPlan provides a secure and universal backstop for all faculty and staff data at Wake Forest. Administration made a decision when bringing CrashPlan into the organization to make it a requirement. **“Every maintained computer has to have CrashPlan on it.”**

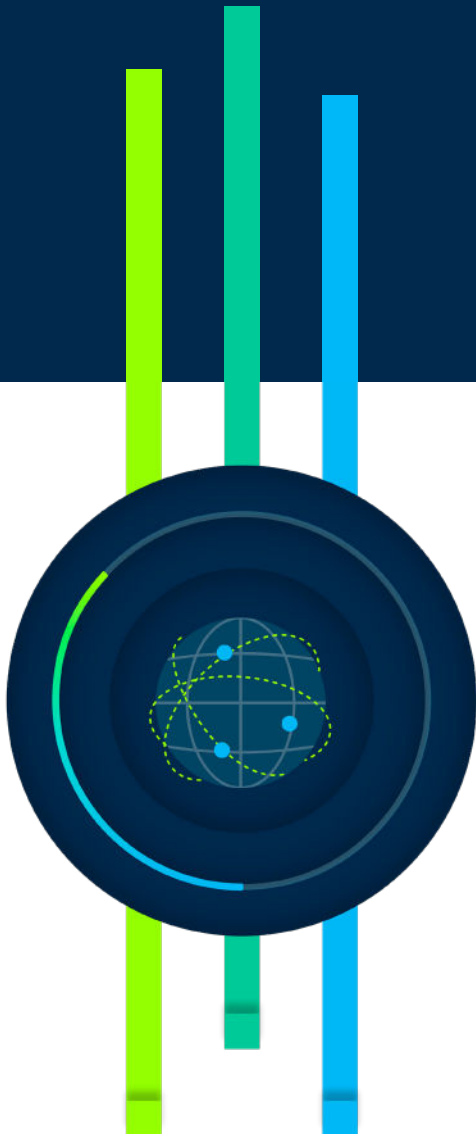
CrashPlan’s mixture of broad file collection (grabbing everything from the users’ home directory every fifteen minutes) and robust security made it the obvious choice to satisfy all of Wake Forest’s requirements. **“[CrashPlan’s] encryption has eased quite a few people’s minds,” Greg said.**

In order to satisfy grant requirements and ensure that no one outside of the organization could access data stored in backups, the team at Wake Forest were able to leverage CrashPlan’s core security model.

**“We were able to list the number of people and the names that were administrators in CrashPlan. And we never make that more than three [people].”**

Aside from the faculty member who owns the data, there are only three people on the planet who can access any of that user’s backup data and they all work for Wake Forest. This compartmentalized way of securing data breaks down the barriers for faculty and grant-auditors making it a no-brainer to partake in the upsides of cloud backup. Some of those upsides include being able to easily transfer data to a new device following replacement or failure and robust Legal Hold functionality.

**Greg tells people, “It’s literally a plan if your computer crashes.” He added, “[I] can see this light bulb go off.”**



## Key Use Case

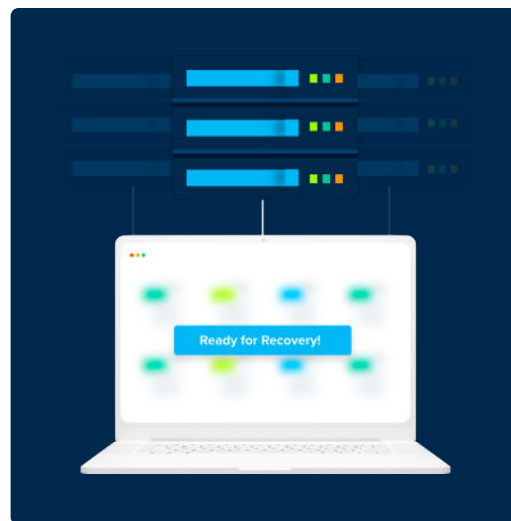
By using CrashPlan to protect data stored on all of their laptop and desktop computers, Wake Forest is able to provide a white-glove data protection process to their faculty and staff while also meeting the privacy and security requirements they demand.

***“The amount of time saved on panic and just the exchange process has been priceless.”***



## Conclusion

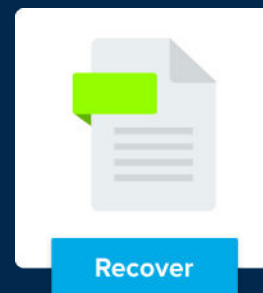
“If a hard drive crashes, [the device’s owner] is up and running on a loaner computer in no time.” By implementing CrashPlan for all faculty and staff, the IT and Security teams at Wake Forest have been able to deliver on their promise to protect faculty research data without breaching important ethical and contractual barriers.



**“To see their faces is always my favorite, because the folder structure comes down first and they’re like ‘THAT’S MY DESKTOP.’”**

By using CrashPlan, Greg and the team at Wake Forest have been able to spur delight in the hearts of their biggest critics all while saving time, money, and the panic that can come from eventual hardware failure. Since they leverage named administrators, they are able to require CrashPlan on all university computers and it’s possible for the organization to protect their users without sacrifices.

***Pro Humanite, indeed.***



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CrashPlan® enables organizational resilience through secure, scalable, and straightforward endpoint data backup. With automatic backup and customizable file version retention, you can bounce back from any data calamity. What starts as endpoint backup and recovery becomes a solution for ransomware recovery, breaches, migrations, and legal holds. So you can work fearlessly and grow confidently.

For more information, visit [crashplan.com](https://crashplan.com).

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