

2009

José State University History Department Records

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Guide to the San José State University History Department Records

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Collection number: MSS-2009-11-02



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Descriptive Summary

Title: San José State University History Department Records

Dates: 1962-1982

Collection number: MSS-2009-11-02

Creator: San José State University

Collection Size: 1 box, 0.42 linear feet

Repository: San José State University. Library.

San José, California 95192-0028

Abstract: The San José State University History Department Records, 1962-1982, consist of a selection of the department's annual reports, technical reports, printed booklets, and newspaper clippings. In addition, the records include the original manuscript of Associate Professor Benjamin F. Gilbert's *The Craft of History at San José State* (1981). The collection is arranged into one series: Series I. Annual Reports, Records and Miscellany, 1962-1982.

Physical location: For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Library's online catalog.

Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English

Access

The collection is open for research.

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Preferred Citation

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Processing Information

Collection processed by Silke Higgins. Finding aid EAD encoded by Silke Higgins. Reviewed by Danelle Moon and Erin Louthen.

Project Information

This finding aid was created as part of the Survey and Cataloging Project, a two-year San José State University Library grant project funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. The project began in 2008. The Project Director is Danelle Moon. The Project Archivist is Erin Louthen.

Organizational History

In 1857 the San Francisco Board of Education established Minns' Evening Normal School for current and prospective teachers in the city. Named after its principal, George W. Minns, the institution was formally established as the first California State Normal School by the State Legislature in 1862. A decade later, the Legislature voted to move the Normal School to San José, and the school relocated to its new home on Washington Square prior to the fall term of 1872. After a fire destroyed the Normal School building in 1880, the Legislature authorized \$200,000 to construct a new building on the same site. Completed in 1881, the building was commonly referred to as the Second State Normal School. After several names and curriculum changes, Minns' Normal School is now San José State University, offering more than 134 bachelor's and master's degrees with 110 concentrations, and is recognized as one of the top public universities granting such degrees in the West.

Charles W. Childs, after graduating from the San Francisco State Normal School, began teaching history at San José State Normal School in 1877. Under the progressive Childs, the school's curriculum expanded from a three-year to a four-year program and saw the inauguration of the modern discipline of history. Upon his retirement, Childs was succeeded by Agnes E. Howe, who funded a well-received local history program and in 1901 achieved the separation of history and geography into two disciplines. During World War I, enrollment numbers for history courses dropped drastically, and only two teachers remained to instruct the students. However, the discipline survived due to a renewed enthusiasm for local history and was quickly revived after the end of the war. In 1921, the San José State Normal School became San José State Teachers College, and the history curriculum was extended to ten courses in the first year. In the second year, the discipline of history offered a four-year bachelor's degree under the guidance of the newly established Social Sciences Department. During the years of Thomas W. MacQuarrie, the sixteenth president of the college, the discipline of history underwent manifold changes. After the uncertain times of the 1930s and World War II, enrollment quickly rose at the college. The end of the war brought a heightened interest in history, leading to new ideas and inspiration for changes to the curriculum and the department, which were implemented over the course of the next decade. In 1957, under the presidency of John T. Wahlquist, the long-awaited separation of the Department of History, Economics, and Geography into individual departments was approved. During the 1960s and 1970s, enrollment in the department increased steadily. In 1971 the History Department played a major role in establishing the Sourisseau Academy for State and Local History on campus. After its peak year in 1972, the department saw declining numbers in enrollment for the remainder of the 1970s, and the same concerns were faced in the 1980s. Currently, San José State University's History Department offers a great variety of programs for both undergraduate and graduate studies, including a minor in Jewish Studies and courses in the interdisciplinary field of Public History.

Bibliography

Gilbert, Benjamin F., and Burdick, Charles. *Washington Square, 1857-1979: The History of San José State University*. San José, California: San José State University, 1980.

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Walsh, James P. *San José State University: An Interpretive History, 1950-2000*. San José, California: San José State University, 2003.

Related Material

San José State University Faculty Papers of H. Brett Melendy, MSS-2009-05-01, San José State University Library Special Collections and Archives.

San José State University Oral History Project, MSS-2005-04-01, San José State University Library Special Collections and Archives.

The Benjamin F. Gilbert Research Papers, MSS-2009-02-07, San José State University Library Special Collections and Archives.

Scope and Content of Collection

The San José State University History Department Records, 1962-1982, consist of a selection of the department's annual reports, technical reports, printed booklets, and newspaper clippings. In addition, the records include the original manuscript of Associate Professor Benjamin F. Gilbert's *The Craft of History at San José State* (1981).

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into one series: Series I. Annual Reports, Records, and Miscellany, 1962-1982.

Subject Headings

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

San José State University -- History Dept. -- History.

San José State College -- History.

California State University, San José -- History.

San José State University -- History.

Education, Higher -- California -- San José.

History -- Study and teaching (Higher) -- United States.

Series I: **Annual Reports, Records, and Miscellany 1962-1982**

Physical Description: 1 box

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Box: 1

Annual Reports, Records, and Miscellany 1962-1982