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Guide to the San José State University New College Records

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Processed by:
Elizabeth Lopez
Date Completed:
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Encoded by:
Elizabeth Lopez

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Descriptive Summary

Title: San José State University New College Records

Dates: 1968-1998

Bulk Dates: 1972-1978

Collection number: MSS-2009-11-03

Creator: San José State University

Collection Size: 12 boxes(18.25 linear feet)

Repository: San José State University. Library.

San José, California 95192-0028

Abstract: The San José State University New College Records, 1968-1998 (bulk 1972-1978), document New College-- a four-year liberal arts program. The records consist of administrative files, twenty- and thirty-year reunion materials, daybooks, a scrapbook created by New College Provost Harold (Hal) DeBey, radical publications, and a New College banner. The collection is arranged into five series: Series I. Administrative Files, 1968-1997 (bulk 1972-1978); Series II. Reunion Materials, 1988 & 1998 (bulk 1998); Series III. Scrapbook and Daybooks, 1970-1980 (bulk 1970-1975); Series IV. Radical Publications, 1960s-1970s (bulk 1969); and Series V. Realia, undated.

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 Restrictions

The collection is open for research. However, Box 4 is restricted.

Publication Rights

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Preferred Citation

San José State University New College Records, MSS-2009-11-03 , San José State University Library Special Collections & Archives.

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.

Processing Information

Collection processed and encoded by Elizabeth Lopez. Reviewed by Danelle Moon and 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 Jose, 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 Jose 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.

The San José State University New College program (1968-1981) was a four-year liberal arts course of study created to "tear down the walls between disciplines" with its experimental approach to higher education. Founded by SJSU faculty members Jack Pierce (Anthropology), Jack Douglas (Library), and Harold (Hal) DeBey (Chemistry/New College Provost from 1968-1977), New College faculty included artists, writers, and social scientists. The major objectives of New College were "to offer society's urgent need for wise, creative and responsible citizens prepared to participate actively in a self-governing community, to offer a clear alternative to the impersonality found in large colleges and universities, to bring students and professors together in the common pursuit of truth, and to introduce students to some of the decision-making processes involved in the creation of a curriculum." In addition, New College promoted the ideology of "allowing students to pursue individual paths of study free of rigidly structured requirements," as well as the concept of "supporting, guiding and encouraging the idealism of young people who are aware of the world's complex problems and who wish to dedicate themselves to their amelioration."

The first two years of a New College student's coursework was devoted to the study of humankind, with general education classes in three broad areas: in the Humanities and the Arts, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Natural Sciences and Technology. Course topics included "man's image of himself," "man and his natural environment," and "the discussion of man's future" in direct relation to global concerns such as human and natural resources conservation, population issues, and war and peace. In upper division study, New College students and faculty worked together to design a curriculum based on a combination of seminars, independent study, and courses from other departments in order to meet individual study objectives. Students also spent part of their time in community activities, and were encouraged to live in a special co-educational dormitory on campus to foster "informal discussions between students and faculty," and to create "an opportunity for varied and unusual friendships across cultural and social barriers."

Although at the time, New College was considered a successful alternative to traditional higher education, declining enrollment in the late 1970's and diminishing fiscal resources in early 1980's ended support for continuing the program and in 1980 New College officially closed.

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

New College Senior Projects, 1970-1981. San José State University Special Collections & Archives.

San José State University Oral History Project Collection, MSS-2006-04-01. San José State University Special Collections & Archives. http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt5d5nd3sj

San José State University Student Publications Collection, MSS-2009-08-02, San José State University Special Collections & Archives.

Scope and Content of Collection

The San José State University New College Records, 1968-1998 (bulk 1972-1978), document New College-- a four-year liberal arts program. The records consist of administrative files, twenty- and thirty-year reunion materials, daybooks, a scrapbook created by New College Provost Harold (Hal) DeBey, radical publications, and a New College banner.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into five series: Series I. Administrative Files, 1968-1997 (bulk 1972-1978); Series II. Reunion Materials, 1988 & 1998 (bulk 1998); Series III. Scrapbook and Daybooks, 1970- 1980 (bulk 1970-1975); Series IV. Radical Publications, 1960s-1970s (bulk 1969); and Series V. Realia, undated.

Indexing Terms

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 New College -- History.

San José State College -- History.

California State University, San José -- History.

San José State University -- History.

Education, Higher -- California -- San José.

Interdisciplinary approach in education -- California -- San José.

Series I: **Administrative Files 1968-1981 (bulk 1972-1978)**

Physical Description: 3 boxes

Series Scope and Content Summary

This series comprises the bulk of the collection and consists primarily of administrative materials related to the New College program. Items include the New College general plan, reports, student contracts, course-related materials, and program termination files.

Arrangement

This series is arranged by format and then alphabetically by folder.

Access Note

Access Note: Box 4 is restricted

Box 1 **New College Proposal 1970s**

Box 2 **Administrative Files 1968-1981**

Box 3 **Student Contracts & Reports 1972-1979**

Box 4 **Student Records 1968-1997**

Series II: **Reunion Materials 1968-1998 (bulk 1998)**

Physical Description: 1 box

Series Scope and Content Summary

This series contains materials related to the twenty- and thirty-year New College reunions, including flyers, photographs, and a daybook with alumni updates for the 1998 reunion.

Arrangement

This series is arranged chronologically by folder.

Box 5 **Reunion Materials 1968-1998**

Series III: **Scrapbook & Daybooks 1970-1980 (bulk 1970-1975)**

Physical Description: 5 boxes

Series Scope and Content Summary

This series consists of a New College scrapbook and daybooks. The scrapbook was created by Harold (Hal) DeBey, New College Provost from 1968-1977, and contains New College photographs from the 1970s. The daybooks include brief comments written by New College students during the 1970s, which serve as a record of the experiences of the New College community for the year noted.

Arrangement

This series is arranged by format and then chronologically within each format.

Box 6 **Harold DeBey Scrapbook 1970s**

Box 7 **Daybooks 1970-1971**

Box 8 **Daybooks 1971-1972, 1975**

Box 9 **Daybooks 1974-1976**

Box 10 **Daybooks 1979-1980**

Series IV: **Radical Publications 1960s-1970s (bulk 1969)**

Physical Description: 1 box

Series Scope and Content Summary

This series includes single copies of radical publications published between the 1960s-1970s, including *The San Francisco Oracle*, *El Malcriado*, *Helix*, *Berkeley Tribe*, *Challenge*, *SDS New Left Notes*, *The Militant*, and *The 21st Century Fair*.

Arrangement

This series is arranged chronologically by folder.

Box 11 **Radical Publications 1960s-1970s**

Series V: **Realia undated**

Physical Description: 1 box

Series Scope and Content Summary

This series consist of a New College cloth banner with yellow, purple, and white colors.

Box 12 **New College Banner undated**