Guide to the College of Engineering records, 1906-1954

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Collection number: CU-39

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Collection Title: College of Engineering Records,

Date (inclusive): 1906-1954

Collection Number: CU-39

Creator: University of California, Berkeley. College of Engineering

Extent: 11 boxes (11 linear ft.)


Berkeley, California 94720-6000

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

Abstract: Correspondence, administrative and committee files; reports of the Department of Civil Engineering, 1906-1944; materials re the Navy V-12 and Army Special Training Programs, 1943-1945; Institute of Engineering Research files, 1949-1953; files on Works Progress Administration projects, 1935-1941; Department of Mechanical Engineering files, 1946-1953; account books and day books of the Summer School of Surveying, 1902-1914.

Languages Represented: English

Access

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Early study in the technical colleges was a combination of the science and art of engineering with humanities and foreign language. But the practice of engineering was not neglected. The staff and students installed most of the college's machinery and facilities and contributed to the development of campus equipment. Joseph N. LeConte was appointed assistant professor in the College of Mechanics in 1892 and later professor of mechanical engineering, serving until his retirement in 1937. He wrote of the 1890-1900 period when the only local electrical power was generated in the engineering laboratory: “Our library (Bacon Hall) had never been lighted at night....Authority was granted to set a line of poles from the Electrical Laboratory to the Library and South Hall....On these were strung the wires of the ‘power circuit’ and the single loop of wire for arc lamps.... The lighting service on the grounds consisted of about 10 open arc lamps in series.... This string of antediluvian arc lamps was the bane of Cory’s (Professor Clarence L. Cory, for whom Cory Hall is named) and my existence, and we often made nocturnal trips around the circuit to see if all were in operation. I remember one night when President Kellogg was giving his annual reception, three lamps went out of action at critical locations, so that we in our dress suits climbed the poles and got them going while on our way to the reception.”

Engineering has kept pace with the growth and development of the campus, having approximately 3,000 students now enrolled in the college. About 1,200 are graduate students. The first engineering bachelor’s degree was granted in 1873 in the College of Civil Engineering, the first master’s degree in 1896, and the first doctoral degree in 1894. Through June of 1965, the college and its antecedents granted 17,187 bachelor’s, 3,338 master’s, and 506 doctoral degrees. Engineering alumni have made a substantial contribution to the development of the state and the nation. The college staff continues to maintain leadership in engineering instruction, in important research, and as consultants with government and private agencies in all areas of engineering.

As a result of the increased research tasks during the early 1940’s which were supported by off-campus agencies, the college established the Institute of Engineering Research in 1948, which is now the Office of Research Services of the college. Expenditures on presently sponsored research activities average over $6 million a year. These activities are directed by staff members, manned largely by graduate students, administered by the Office of Research Services, and much of the work is done with facilities located at the Richmond Field Station.

Engineering at Berkeley provides active staff participation and supervision in the Engineering Extension course and conference programs of service to the people of the state. At present, approximately 2,500 extension students each year are continuing their education through this service administered at Berkeley. Engineering Extension also assists with the administration of other special technical conferences and meetings which are arranged by engineering staff members.

The present dean of the college, George Maslach, follows a long line of notable leaders in the field of engineering education, application, development, and research: Deans Frank Soulé (civil, 1896-1907), Friedrich G. Hesse (mechanics, 1896-1901), Samuel B. Christy (mining, 1896-1914), Clarence L. Cory (mechanics, 1901-29), Andrew C. Lawson (mining, 1914-18), Charles Derleth, Jr. (civil, 1907-29 and engineering, 1929-42), Frank H. Probert (mining, 1918-40), Lester C. Uren (mining, acting, 1940-41), Donald H. McLaughlin (mining, 1941-42, and engineering, 1942-43), Morrough P. O’Brien (engineering, 1943-59), and John R. Whinnery (engineering, 1959-63). Each has added to the stature and eminence of the college.—H. W. Iversen
In 1906, Clarence Linus Cory was appointed to the newly created chair of Civil Engineering. He immediately set about establishing the curriculum, which included subjects such as mathematics, English, physics, chemistry, and mechanics. The first Mining and Mechanic Arts Building (later renamed the Civil Engineering Building) was completed in 1893. Hesse selected Clarence Linus Cory to be assistant professor of mechanical and electrical engineering. Immediately, Cory, Joseph A. Sladky, superintendent of the machine shops, and Joseph Nisbet LeConte, instructor in mechanical engineering, concentrated on plans for electrical laboratories in the new Mechanics Building, then under construction. Upon its completion in 1894, Cory and LeConte, largely with student help, installed electrical equipment surpassed by few, if any, universities in the country. Research started immediately.

In 1901, Cory was made dean of the College of Mechanics and for more than a generation was recognized as a farsighted and vigorous leader in his profession. Cory Hall, which now houses the Department of Electrical Engineering, was named in his honor. After his retirement in 1930, the Colleges of Mechanics and Civil Engineering were combined to form the College of Engineering, containing the Department of Civil Engineering and the Department of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering. In 1931, the latter department was split into the separate Departments of Mechanical Engineering and Electrical Engineering. In 1942, the Colleges of Engineering and Mining merged to form a single administrative unit, the College of Engineering, and a single academic unit, the Department of Engineering, with the various fields, such as electrical engineering, known as divisions. In 1958, the Division of Electrical Engineering again became the Department of Electrical Engineering.

The original electrical engineering curriculum was rigidly prescribed, including chemistry, physics, mathematics, English, German, shop work in machine tools and pattern making, mechanical drawing, descriptive geometry, analytic mechanics, kinematics, strength of materials, thermodynamics, hydraulics, surveying, and electrical machines. Until the middle 1920's, this curriculum changed very little, except for the elimination of the language requirements and their replacement by free electives. Then the growing importance of communications and electronics forced the elimination of the shop courses and surveying and the establishment of power and communications options. Recent scientific and technological developments, such as automation, computers, solid-state, quantum-electronic and micro-electronic devices, and the growing importance of bioelectronics, plasmas, magnetohydrodynamics, and sophisticated systems for transmission and analysis of information and for optimal control, resulted in the establishment of four options in electrical engineering, allowing the student to follow an integrated sequence of courses in his major field of interest and still find time for cultural courses. Approximately 3,800 B.S. degrees, 850 M.S. degrees, and more than 150 Ph.D. degrees have been granted in electrical engineering, with 91 Ph.D. degrees awarded since 1960. Full-time graduate enrollment in electrical engineering is now 340, with undergraduates (juniors and seniors) numbering 466. The electrical engineering faculty, excluding teaching fellows and research assistants, numbers 76. The large increase in graduate study and research is largely due to the establishment of the Electronics Research Laboratory, which handles research contracts with the federal and state governments and private industry for the department. Today, over 200 of the electrical engineering graduate students receive substantial financial aid from fellowships or teaching or research assistantships.—Lester E. Reukema

Civil Engineering

Civil Engineering was one of the six original colleges of the University; its inclusion was in accordance with the University's purposes as a land-grant institution. From 1869 to 1930, it operated as the College of Civil Engineering; in 1930, civil engineering and irrigation (which had been established in 1901) became departments of a newly established College of Engineering. The two then became separate divisions of the Department of Engineering in 1947, a combined Division of Civil Engineering and Irrigation in 1951, and finally a combined Department of Civil Engineering in 1958. In 1958, Divisions of Hydraulic and Sanitary Engineering, Structural Engineering and Structural Mechanics, and Transportation Engineering (recently created under separate organization) were established in the department. Thus, the present (1965) organization of the Department of Civil Engineering incorporates not only civil engineering as originally established, but also irrigation and transportation, as well as hydraulics (which until 1958 had been administered by mechanical engineering). Closely associated with civil engineering is the Institute of Transportation and Traffic Engineering, founded by legislative act in 1947.

Enrollment in civil engineering was fairly constant, averaging about 50 students a semester in the early decades of the University's existence, but a few years after the turn of the century enrollment tripled. It then grew slowly to about 250 students in 1930, increased to 400 in 1940, and was 500 in 1957, just before the lower division was transferred to general engineering. At that time there were about 300 upper division and 100 graduate students in civil engineering; now (1965) there are about 200 upper division and 300 graduate students. The faculty has grown correspondingly to its present number of about 40 professors and ten lecturers, plus the necessary teaching assistants.

In the early years the principal instruction was in undergraduate courses in surveying, mapping, properties of materials, structural design, and structures such as buildings, bridges, dams, and water-supply and sewerage systems. Now there are some 50 upper-division courses and a larger number of graduate courses, with elective groups in construction engineering, hydraulic and water-resources engineering, sanitary engineering, soil mechanics and foundation engineering, structural engineering, structural mechanics, and surveying-geodesy-photogrammetry.
As in other branches of engineering, laboratory work is an important feature of teaching and research in civil engineering. There are organized laboratories with staff and facilities in the fields of bituminous materials and pavements, engineering (construction) materials, hydraulics, photogrammetry, sanitary chemistry, soil mechanics, and structures. The facilities are located on the Berkeley campus and at the Richmond Field Station, a large proportion of the six engineering buildings on the campus being devoted to laboratories. For many years civil engineering conducted an annual summer surveying camp, essentially a field laboratory, but in 1943 the camp was discontinued because of war conditions. It has not been reinstated, in large part because of the shift in emphasis from manipulative skills to analysis, design, and research.—Joe W. Kelly

**Mechanical Engineering**

The Morrill Land Grant Act, passed by Congress in 1862, stipulated in part the establishment “...of at least one college where the leading object shall be...to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and mechanic arts....” Of the four technical colleges established by the organic act of the University (1868), those of mechanics and agriculture were first organized. The *Biennial report to the Regents of the University for 1873-75* states that the object of the College of Mechanics is to “educate mechanical engineers, machinists (as far as they are constructors of machinery) and others who wish to devote their energies to such technical and industrial pursuits as involve a knowledge of machinery.”

Instruction in electrical engineering was offered in 1892, and in 1903 the dean of the College of Mechanics served also as the chairman of the Department of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering.

By 1913, the curriculum in mechanical engineering had eliminated, through matriculation requirement or by deletion, sociohumanistic courses, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, freehand and mechanical drawing, and in their place added more mathematics and engineering. Electrical and mechanical engineering were identical except for one course, in each of the junior and senior years. With the industrial growth of California, attention was focused on hydraulics, electrical power, and hydroelectrical installations with course offerings in these fields. During World War I interest in aviation grew and shipyards were established on the Pacific coast. These developments created a demand for training for the war effort and establishing courses in aerodynamics, marine engineering and naval architecture.

The change in classroom instruction during the 20 years between World Wars I and II was a gradual withdrawal from emphasis on machine design, construction and performance evaluation to the application of the laws of nature to the evaluation of systems and their components. An extension of this approach has expanded the number of courses and the fields of study offered to such an area that several fields of study have split from the department to form other departments, while those remaining have been established as divisions of the department. Chronologically, the Department of Mechanical Engineering was established in 1931, designated as the Division of Mechanical Engineering in the Department of Engineering in 1946, and again returned to the status of the Department of Mechanical Engineering in 1958. The Division of Engineering Design separated from the Division of Mechanical Engineering in 1947. The Division of Industrial Engineering separated from mechanical engineering in 1956. The Departments of Nuclear Engineering and Naval Architecture became separate in 1958. The divisions organized in 1958 and constituting the Department of Mechanical Engineering are aeronautical sciences, applied mechanics, heat power systems (changed to thermal systems, 1965), and mechanical design.

The enrollment in the College of Mechanics grew steadily from the beginning of the University until it reached a maximum of 10.85 per cent (293 students) of the University undergraduate enrollment in 1908. In 1964, the enrollment was less than two per cent (299 students) of the University undergraduate enrollment.

The development of the laboratories paralleled the classroom instruction. The initial object was to demonstrate construction, maintenance, and operation of machinery. The second step reduced the vocational aspect somewhat and stressed the performance characteristics of the machine. In 1929, the woodshop and machine shop instruction was eliminated from the curriculum. The junior and senior laboratories stressed a broad concept of system analysis and developed a pattern to introduce the student to the critical approach desired in graduate research.

In December, 1940, a department-instituted survey in the San Diego, Los Angeles and San Francisco areas confirmed the desire of industry for assistance in training and up-grading employees in their engineering departments. With the sponsorship of the U.S. Office of Education instruction was begun in February, 1941, under the Engineering Defense Training program (EDT); however, it was soon apparent that its utility would be greatly increased by inclusion of science and management courses in production and supervision, hence instruction was given under Engineering Science Management Defense Training (ESMDT). From 1942 to 1945, the word “defense” was changed to “war,” and during this period a total of 151,202 men and women were trained for industrial occupations by the University. In addition, courses were also given for the Armed Forces.—S. A. Schaaf
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