Guide to the Presidential Debate records

Finding aid prepared by Ashley Toutain
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Overview of the Collection

Title: Presidential Debate records

Date (inclusive): 1992, 1996

Collection number: USDA_2001_001, USDA_2011_005

Creator: University of San Diego University Relations

Extent: 5 total boxes, 3 oversize (5 linear feet)

Repository: University of San Diego, Archives and Special Collections

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Abstract: This collection contains planning materials, videos, and news clippings for the University of San Diego’s hosting of the 1992 and 1996 Presidential Debates. The 1992 debate was ultimately canceled, but the 1996 debate went forth as scheduled.

Languages: English

Historical Note

1992 Debate

In August 1992, the Commission on Presidential Debates selected the University of San Diego as one of four Presidential Debate venues. The debate between President George Bush, then Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton, and Texas businessman Ross Perot was to be held on Sunday October 4, 1992. Debates were also scheduled for Michigan State University, Louisville, Kentucky, and the University of Richmond in Virginia. The Bush campaign, however, had not formally confirmed attendance at these debates due to issue with the debate format. After confirmation deadlines passed, the debates in Kentucky and San Diego were canceled and the Michigan debate was rescheduled. Later dates were then added to the schedule, leaving a 9 day span for all of the debates. Debates were held at Washington University of St. Louis on October 11th, the University of Richmond on October 15th, and Michigan State University on October 19th. A Vice Presidential Debate was held on October 13th at Georgia Tech.

In order to be selected as a debate site, the University of San Diego needed to raise $500,000 dollars in debate hosting costs, transform Shiley Theatre into a televised debate studio, and transform the cafeteria into a press center for 2,000 reporters and technicians. Additional events were also planned including a Debate Forum, a candlelight tribute to the candidates and a mural wall constructed by the Associated Students.

1996 Debate

The University of San Diego was again chosen as a debate host site for the 1996 Presidential Debate between President Bill Clinton and Senator Bob Dole. Announced in January 1996, the Debate would be held October 16, 1996 in a town hall format. Hartford, CT was the site of the first debate held on October 6, 1996. Washington University of St. Louis was also selected as a site, but the event was canceled.

The Presidential Debate at the University of San Diego was held on October 16th in a newly renovated Shiley Theatre. C-SPAN offered live coverage of the debate. USD Director of Public Relations Jack Cannon served as the Chair of the Debate Planning Committee and oversaw planning and communication for the event. Additional events were planned in conjunction with the debate including a Corporate Associates Debate Luncheon featuring a panel forum of media and political figures, a Debate Gala, a World Media Pre-Debate reception for national and international media personnel, and KNSD/KSDO Debate Watch. Special single-unit courses with a debate theme were offered to students, as well as music and theatre presentation events and an exhibition in the Founders Gallery.

Scope and Content Note

This collection contains planning records, videos, and news clippings associated with both the 1992 and 1996 Presidential Debates. 1992 Debate records cover the selection and subsequent cancellation of USD as a host site. News clippings also cover the controversy between the Bush and Clinton campaigns over why the debate was canceled. 1996 Debate records include correspondence, site selection and visitation information, planning meeting records, and contract information with the Commission on Presidential Debates. Design records featuring the debate logo which was placed on Media Kit items, t-shirts, lapel pins, and stationary are included. Short news cast videos are included along with promotional videos of USD, videos of debate preparation, and coverage of the debate. Also included are contact sheets with photographs of the event; newspaper articles covering site selection and the Debate; and a scrapbook of photographs, news, and event programs.

1. Series I: Presidential Debate, 1992
2. Series II: Presidential Debate, 1996

3. Series III: Debate Videos

Series II is further arranged into three subseries:
1. A. Debate Planning Records
2. B. Debate Binders
3. C. Scrapbook

Series III is further arranged into two subseries:
1. A. 1992 Debate
2. B. 1996 Debate

Alternative Format Available
The 1996 Debate Scrapbook has been digitized.

Access Information
This collection is open for research.

Preferred citation
[Folder Title], Box # Folder #, Presidential Debate records, Copley Library, University of San Diego, Archives and Special Collections.

Processing Information
This collection was processed by Ashley Toutain in 2017.

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Hughes, Author
Hayes, Alice
Cannon, Jack
Shiley, Darlene
Clinton, Bill, 1946-
Dole, Robert J., 1923-
Bush, George, 1924-

Subjects and Indexing Terms
University of San Diego
University of San Diego. Shiley Theatre

Subjects and Indexing Terms
San Diego (Calif.)

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Presidents--United States--Election--1996.
political events

Series I: Presidential Debate 1992
Scope and Content Note
Records in this series document the selection of USD as a host site for the 1992 Presidential Debate and subsequent cancellation of the event. Records also include planning materials from the University of Richmond, which remained as a host site for the 1992 debate. News articles about site selection and cancellation of the debate make up a large portion of these materials.

Box/Folder: 1 / 1 Activities and Events [University of Richmond] 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 2 American Political Network The Hotline September 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 3 Backgrounder (Preliminary Visit) August 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 4 Commission on Presidential Debates June - August 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 5 Communication Faculty and Staff September 1992
Series I: Presidential Debate 1992

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Box/Folder: 1 / 6 Communication Students September 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 7 Contract (Letter of Intent) August - September 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 8 Contributions and Sponsorships 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 9 Correspondence with Elected Officials 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 10 Debate Follow Up October 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 11 Debate Forums 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 12 Debate Lottery Students/Winners 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 13 Debate Packet 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 14 Debate Tickets and Access [University of Richmond] 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 15 Decision to be a Host Site [University of Richmond] 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 16 Estimated Costs 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 17 Media Local 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 18 Media National 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 19 Monitoring Report 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 20 Operational Plans Facilities [University of Richmond] 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 21 Operational Plans Police and Security [University of Richmond] 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 22 Post Debate [University of Richmond] October 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 23 Public Relations and Media [University of Richmond] 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 24 Student Volunteers [University of Richmond] September 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 25 Presidential Task Force Meetings September 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 26 Press Advisories August 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 27 Press Clips August - October 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 28 Site Visits August - September 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 29 Task Force Committees [University of Richmond] 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 30 USD Dropped as Debate Site October 1992
Box/Folder: 1 / 31 XYZ of Inquiries 1992

Series II: Presidential Debate 1996

Scope and Content Note
Records document the planning of the 1996 Presidential Debate held at the University of San Diego. Planning records include information and meeting materials for the debate planning committee, correspondence regarding the event, financial documents, the debate contract, and discussions with the Commission on Presidential Debates regarding site selection. Also included are the debate transcript and news articles covering the University of San Diego as the host site. Records also include Media Kits, Programs, and Invitations for the debate as well as invitations for the Debate Luncheon.

Subseries A: Debate planning records 1996

Box/Folder: 1 / 32 Presidential Debate October 16, 1996
Box/Folder: 1 / 33 Access Passes 1996
Box/Folder: 1 / 34 Activities and Events 1996
Box/Folder: 1 / 35 C-SPAN Plans for Coverage 1996
Box/Folder: 1 / 36 Committees 1996
Box/Folder: 1 / 37 Community Debate Watch 1996
Box/Folder: 1 / 38 Contract February 1996
Box/Folder: 1 / 39 Contributions and Sponsorships 1996
Box/Folder: 1 / 40 Correspondence 1996
Box/Folder: 1 / 41 Cultural Events 1996
Box/Folder: 1 / 42 Debate Commission Team Technical Visit 1996
Box/Folder: 1 / 43 USD Debate Directory 1996
Box/Folder: 1 / 44 Debate Luncheon 1996
Box/Folder: 1 / 45 Debate Tickets and Access 1996
Box/Folder: 1 / 46 Debate Update 1996
Box/Folder: 1 / 47 Debate Watch 1996-1997
Box/Folder: 1 / 48 Events in Conjunction with the Debate 1996
Box/Folder: 1 / 49 Invitation 1996
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<th>Box/Folder: 1 / 56</th>
<th>Box/Folder: 1 / 57-58</th>
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Scope and Content Note

- [Includes Hartford Connecticut debate materials. The City of Hartford served as the location for the Vice Presidential debates.]

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Scope and Content Note

- [Includes luncheon photographs.]

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<th>Box/Folder: 1 / 70</th>
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<th>Box/Folder: 2 / 11</th>
<th>Box/Folder: 3</th>
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Scope and Content Note

- [Includes materials designed with the 1996 Presidential Debate logo. Material includes folder of University of San Diego brochures, faculty media guide, press releases, and Presidential Debate pin.]

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<td><strong>Dallas Morning News, October 16, 1996</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dallas Morning News, October 18, 1996</strong></td>
<td><strong>Hartford Courant, October 16, 1996</strong></td>
<td><strong>Hartford Courant, October 17, 1996</strong></td>
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Subseries B: Debate Binders 1996

Scope and Content Note
These records were compiled into four binders by University Relations staff to document all aspects of planning the 1996 Debate, along with an additional binder of debate photograph contact sheets. Binders are well organized by topic and include materials such as correspondence, planning, schedules, meeting minutes, campus advisories, preparation information, activity lists for debate week, and news articles about the event. Much, but not all, of the materials is duplicated in the former records, though these follow a different organizational structure. These are also a more finalized composition of the debate planning.

Processing/Project Information
Records were originally organized within five binders. These have been transferred to archival boxes and folders for preservation purposes. Original order has been retained.
| Box/Folder: 2 / 16 | Financial Estimates 1996  
Processing/Project Information  
[Binder 1] |
| Box/Folder: 2 / 17-18 | Special Events 1996  
Processing/Project Information  
[Binder 2] |
| Box/Folder: 2 / 19 | Student Involvement Binder 1996  
Processing/Project Information  
[Binder 2] |
| Box/Folder: 2 / 20 | GALLOP Organization 1996  
Processing/Project Information  
[Binder 2] |
| Box/Folder: 2 / 21 | Memorabilia and Merchandise 1996  
Processing/Project Information  
[Binder 2] |
| Box/Folder: 2 / 22 | President Hayes’ Debate Activities 1996  
Processing/Project Information  
[Binder 3] |
| Box/Folder: 2 / 23 | Media Preparations 1996  
Processing/Project Information  
[Binder 3] |
| Box/Folder: 2 / 24 | Press Communications 1996  
Processing/Project Information  
[Binder 3] |
| Box/Folder: 2 / 25 | USD Debate Website 1996  
Processing/Project Information  
[Binder 3] |
| Box/Folder: 2 / 26 | Event Notices and Calendars 1996  
Processing/Project Information  
[Binder 3] |
| Box/Folder: 2 / 27 | Photography 1996  
Processing/Project Information  
[Binder 4] |
| Box/Folder: 2 / 28 | Printing 1996  
Processing/Project Information  
[Binder 4] |
| Box/Folder: 2 / 29 | Facilities 1996  
Processing/Project Information  
[Binder 4] |
Subseries C: Scrapbook 1996
Scope and Content Note
Debate scrapbook containing photographs of debate preparations, the press area, the Corporate Associates luncheon, Debate Watch, and of cake models of government buildings. In addition to the photographs, news releases, articles, invitations and event programs are included in the scrapbook.
Alternative Form of Materials Available
A digitized version of this scrapbook is available as TIFF and PDF.

Scope and Content Note
13 news clip videos covering the selection of USD as a site for the Presidential Debate, USD’s preparation for the Debate, and the cancellation of the debate. Video length ranges from approximately 1 minute to approximately 7 minutes. News programs are from local news stations such as KFMB, KGTV, KNSD, and KUSI, along with a national CNN newscast.
Subseries B: **1996 Debate 1996**

**Scope and Content Note**

12 news clip videos featuring USD’s selection, planning for the debate, coverage of the debate. News programs from local news stations such as KFMB, KGTV, and KNSD, along with national newscasts from CNN and C-SPAN. In addition to news clips are the full-length coverage of the debate, Turner Adventure Learning Behind the Scenes coverage, and footage of USD’s preparations. An interview with Jack Cannon, Chair of the Debate Task Force and footage of Darlene Shiley’s speech are also included. Videos range in length from 30 second news clips, to 20 minute preparation videos, to the two hour Turner Adventure Learning video.