Guide to the San José State University Humanities Department Publications
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Abstract: The San José State University Humanities Department Publications, 1965-2008, consist of promotional announcements, newsletters, posters, brochures, signs, flyers, press, and a DVD advertising various events as well as registration and career services. The collection also includes several pieces of internal university communication. Of special interest is several folders related to a competition sponsored by the English Department, The Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest, which seeks to find "the opening sentence to the worst of all possible novels."

Access
The collection is open for research.

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Processing Information

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.

The San José State University Humanities Department was created to provide students with an integrated perspective on Western civilization. This perspective has since been expanded to a wider global view in response to developments in technology, world culture and communications. Humanities courses integrate history, literature, philosophy, religion, politics, music and art. The department offers a curriculum that covers the “human experience in aesthetic, creative, literary, and religious realms as well as cultural traditions in major world areas.” Students thus develop analytical and expressive skills, the ability to read, write, and think clearly, along with an appreciation of the arts and letters and their role in shaping modern society. Upon graduation, Humanities students pursue a wide variety of occupations, including law, journalism, librarianship, teaching, public service, social work and public relations.

Scope and Content of Collection
The San José State University Humanities Department Publications, 1965-2008, consist of promotional announcements, posters, brochures, newsletters, signs, press, and flyers advertising various events as well as registration and career services. The collection also includes several pieces of internal university communication.

Arrangement
The collection is arranged into three series: Series I. Events and Publicity Announcements; Series II. Newsletters; and Series III. The Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**
- Education -- Higher -- California -- San José.
- Printed ephemera -- California -- San José.
- Humanities -- Study and teaching (Higher) -- United States.
- San José State University -- History.
- San Jose State College
- California State University, San José -- History.
- San José State University
- San José State University -- Humanities Dept. -- History.

**Series I: Events and Publicity Announcements** Series I: 1965-2008

**Series Scope and Content Summary**
This series consists of a small collection of flyers, brochures, posters and a screening DVD announcing various Humanities Department events. Notable among them is an invitational brochure detailing an evening on campus with author Toni Morrison in 1987. This series also includes information about registration dates and career events, as well as several pieces of internal departmental communication.

**Arrangement**
This series is arranged chronologically by date.

**Box 1, Folder 1**
- Events and Publicity Announcements 1965-2008

**Box 1, Folder 2**
- SJSU School of the Humanities and the Arts Event Calendars October 1981-September 1983

**Box 1, Folder 3**
- SJSU School of the Humanities and the Arts Event Calendars October 1983-September 1986

**Series II: Newsletters** 1980-1998

**Box 1, Folder 4**
- Newsletters to Humanities Faculty and Staff in the Form of Memos from the Dean's Office 1980-1993

**Box 1, Folder 5**
- English Department Newsletter March 1973-November 1978

**Box 1, Folder 6**
- Multicultural Forum Spring 1993-Spring 2003

**Box 1, Folder 7**
- Laurels Fall 1990

**Series III: Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest** 1983-1987

**Scope and Contents**
Since 1982, the Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest is held yearly by SJSU's English Department. The contest is a "whimsical literary competition that challenges entrants to compose the opening sentence to all possible novels."

**Box 2, Folder 1**
- Copies of News Articles 1983

**Box 2, Folder 2**
- Booklet from Second Annual Contest 1983

**Box 2, Folder 3**
- News Articles, Press Releases, Correspondence, Winners 1983-1985

**Box 2, Folder 4**
- News Articles 1986

**Box 2, Folder 5**
- News Articles 1986-1987

**Box 2, Folder 6**
- News Articles 1987