Guide to the San José State University Student Organizations Records
MSS.2009.03.09

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Abstract: The San José State University Student Organization Records, 1916-2011, document various student body organizations over a 70-year period, such as the Associated Students, the Black Masque Honor Society, the Spartan Programs Committee, and various Panhellenic and honorary fraternities and sororities. The records consist of newspaper clippings, photographs, correspondence, flyers, programs, scrapbooks, handwritten scrolls, and meeting minutes.

Access
The collection is open for research.

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Processing Information
Collection processed by Alicia Deadrick and Kimberly Koshiyama. EAD finding aid encoded by Robert Donahue and Kimberly Koshiyama. Reviewed by Stephanie Watson, June 2016. Accruals were added to Series II and IV (in Box 12) by Dana V. Lema in February 2018.

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 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.

San José State University has been home to numerous student organizations throughout its 150-year history. SJSU student clubs range from social groups to Greek letter societies, honor societies to academic and major-related clubs, and service and human rights organizations. The Philomathean society is the oldest documented club on campus, with evidence of its existence prior to 1876. Many of the initial Normal School and San José State Teachers College student organizations were related to literary studies, oratory, and Christian missionary work. Panhellenic Greek societies were also present on campus during the nineteenth century, including Chi Epsilon, Kappa Delta, Iota Phi, and Alpha Rho. In addition, an early form of student government, referred to as the Student Body, was established on campus in 1898; it was subsequently renamed Associated Students in 1923. As of 2010, San José State University maintains over 300 active student clubs and organizations, including the service co-ed fraternity Alpha Phi Omega, the Akbayan Pilipino American Organization, the History Club, the Badminton Club, and the Longboarding Club.

Related Material
Scope and Content of Collection

The San José State University Student Organization Records, 1916-2011 (bulk 1930-1940), document various student body organizations over a 70-year period, such as the Associated Students, the Black Masque Honor Society, the Spartan Programs Committee, and various Panhellenic and honorary fraternities and sororities. The records consist of newspaper clippings, photographs, correspondence, flyers, programs, scrapbooks, handwritten scrolls, and meeting minutes.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into four series: Series I. Publications and Minutes; Series II. Greek Letter Societies; Series III. Honor Societies; and Series IV. Other Student Organizations Materials.

Subjects and Indexing Terms

College students -- California -- San José -- Societies, etc.
California State University, San José -- History
Students -- Societies, etc.
San José State Teachers College -- History
San José State Normal School -- History
San José State University -- Student Organizations -- History
San José State University -- History
Greek letter societies -- California -- San José
Education, Higher -- California -- San José
San José State University
San José State College

Series I: Publications and Minutes

Series Scope and Content Summary

This series consists of publications, advertisements, fliers, handbooks, and meeting minutes of various SJSU student body organizations, including the Associated Students, the Black Masque Honor Society, Model United Nations of the Pacific West at San José State College, the Spartan Programs Committee, and various Panhellenic and honorary fraternities and sororities.

Arrangement

This series is arranged alphabetically by student organization.

Box 1

Publications and Minutes 1926-1975

Series II: Greek Letter Societies

Series Scope and Content Summary

This series documents Greek letter societies at SJSU, and includes materials such as Eros Sophian alumni books, Alpha Phi Omega announcements, an Omega Nu journal publication, a booklet celebrating Alpha Lambda Delta’s fifty-year anniversary in 1974, Iota Sigma Phi correspondence, Epsilon Phi Tau fraternity programs, a 1992 Theta Chi memory book and a plaque commemorating the founding of the Tao Delta Phi fraternity in 1916.

Arrangement

This series is arranged chronologically by date.

Separated Materials

Framed item stored with other framed items in Vault 1. Wooden Tao Delta Phi plaque stored in Box 12 with rest of collection.

Box 2, Box 12

Fraternities and Sororities 1916-1992
Series II: Greek Letter Societies

Box 3
Ero Sophian Society 1947-1973, 2005

Box 4
Miscellaneous Societies 1931-1968
The National Order of Omega San Jose State University Chapter Establishment Frame
April 5, 1979
Range 32B, Bay 21

Series III: Honor Societies
Series III: 1930s-1970s (bulk 1930-1940)

Series Scope and Content Summary
This series documents honor societies at SJSU, and includes materials such as the Beta Phi Mu Constitution, Delta Nu Theta/Home Economics Honor Society meeting minutes, handwritten scrolls of the Ista Delta Phi constitution, and Iota Delta Phi invitations to a 1968 Open House event.

Arrangement
This series is arranged chronologically by date.

Box 5
Delta Nu Theta/Home Economics Honor Society 1930-1949

Box 6
Ista Delta Phi 1932

Box 7
Miscellaneous Honor Societies 1940-1979

Box 8
Beta Phi Mu 1970-1979

Series IV: Other Student Organization Materials

Series Scope and Content Summary
This series documents various student organizations at SJSU, and includes materials such as a program for the Vietnamese Scholarship League from 1968, "Religion in Life" week pamphlets created by the College Religious Council in 1956; an English as a Foreign Language Club scrapbook from 1963; English Club scrapbooks and Phelan Contest and Awards records; and a flyer written by the Black Student Union announcing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s assassination in 1968.

Arrangement
This series is arranged by organization.

Box 9
Other Student Organizations Scrapbooks

Box 10
Foreign Students Organizations

Box 11
Black Masque Honor Society and English Club Materials 1930-2011

Box 12
Alumni Association 2002-2003