Guide to the Norman Gunderson Cybernetic Systems Program Collection
MSS.2012.06.12

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04/17/2013
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Abstract: This collection is comprised of professional materials, periodicals, ephemera, correspondence and photographs documenting Norman O. Gunderson's significant career as dean of School of Engineering at San Jose State University (1955-1970), as director of Masters Degree Program in Cybernetic Systems (1970), and as a legislative and educational consultant to Santa Clara County Director of Transportation after his retirement from academia (1975-1991). The bulk of this collection (1967-1984) contains primary and secondary sources that delineate Norman O. Gunderson’s role in the conception, establishment and expansion of SJSU’s Masters Degree Program in Cybernetic Systems. In 1970, Gunderson resigned as dean to direct the establishment and development of SJSU’s Masters Program in Cybernetic Systems, an interdisciplinary curriculum focused on technology-oriented problem solving methodologies within political, economic, social, and moral systems. Included in these files are curriculum proposals, course description, lecture notes, correspondences, event brochures, newspaper clippings, and compiled course and research readings. Other significant parts of the collection include documents related to Gunderson’s effort to help SJSU School of Engineering obtain its state accreditation to offer graduate degree engineering programs and to provide research opportunities for faculty. The collection also contains personal effects and memorabilia, e.g., awards, honorable mentions, and miscellaneous biographical materials.

Access
The collection is open for research.

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Preferred Citation
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Processing Information

Biographical History
This collection focuses primarily on Norman O. Gunderson’s (1918-1996) academic career at San Jose State College. Born in Laramie, Wyoming in 1918, Gunderson obtained a bachelors degree in Civil Engineering from University of Wyoming in 1939. After graduation, he worked for U.S. Soil Conservation Service Bureau of Reclamation (1939-1941), then he entered U.S. Army and retired as Lieutenant Colonel (1941-1946). In 1942, Gunderson married Bonne Jeane Davis. In 1947, Gunderson received a M.A. in Civil Engineering from University of Wyoming. Immediately afterwards, Gunderson was offered the position as assistant professor of Engineering at San Jose State College. In 1955, Gunderson was promoted to Dean of San Jose State College's Department of Engineering. During his tenure, he directed an effort to challenge the state-imposed restrictions on engineering education at the state college level, and successfully helped San Jose State College’s Department of Engineering obtain its accreditation to offer graduate degree engineering programs and to provide research opportunities for faculty. Notably in the 1966-1967 academic year, Gunderson had the honor of inviting and accommodating the incessant futurist and architect Buckminster Fuller (1895-1983) as San Jose State College’s first “Distinguished Scholar in Residence.” In 1970, Gunderson resigned to direct the establishment and development of San Jose State College’s Masters Program in Cybernetic Systems, an interdisciplinary curriculum focused on technology-oriented problem solving methodologies within political, economic, social, and moral systems, which he had previously conceived during his deanship. After his retirement in 1983, Gunderson served as a legislative and educational consultant for Santa Clara County Transportation and supervised University Fellowship Program.
Scope and Content of Collection
This collection is comprised of professional materials, periodicals, ephemera, correspondence and photographs documenting Norman O. Gunderson's significant career as Dean of the Department of Engineering at San Jose State College (1955-1970), as director of the Masters Degree Program in Cybernetic Systems (1970), and as a legislative and educational consultant to Santa Clara County Director of Transportation after retirement (1975-1991). In 1970, Gunderson resigned as dean to direct the establishment and development of San Jose State College's Masters Program in Cybernetic Systems, an interdisciplinary curriculum focused on technology-oriented problem solving methodologies within political, economic, social, and moral systems. The bulk of this collection (1967-1984) contains primary and secondary sources that delineate Norman O. Gunderson's role in the conception, establishment and expansion of this program. Included in these files are curriculum proposals, course description, lecture notes, correspondences, event brochures, newspaper clippings, and compiled course readings. Other significant parts of the collection include documents related to Gunderson's effort to help San Jose State College's Department of Engineering obtain its state accreditation to offer graduate degree engineering programs and to provide research opportunities for faculty. The collection also contains personal effects and memorabilia, e.g., awards, honorable mentions, and miscellaneous biographical materials.

Arrangement

Bibliography

Subjects and Indexing Terms
San José State University -- Faculty
San José State University -- Curricula -- Programs
High technology and education -- California -- Santa Clara County
Cybernetics -- Research
Santa Clara County Transportation Agency -- History
Gunderson, Norman O.
Ferguson, Cherel lyn

Scope and Content of Collection
This series consists of materials related to Norman O. Gunderson's work at San Jose State University and in Santa Clara County. The bulk contains primary and secondary documents that delineate Norman O. Gunderson's role in the conception, establishment and expansion of SJ SU’s Cybernetic Systems Program. Included in these files are curriculum proposals, course description, lecture notes, and compiled writings about systems analysis.

Arrangement
This series is arranged alphabetically by subject and chronologically within each subject.

Folder 1: Binder I - Cybernetic Systems Course 200 1977
Folder 2-4: Binder II - Cybernetic Systems Course 200 1979
Folder 5-12: Binder III - Various Courses 1979
Folder 13: Course Descriptions n.d.
Folder 14: Course Reader - Cybernetic Systems Course 200 1973
Folder 15: Course Syllabus and Schedule 1973-1974
Folder 16: Cybernetic Systems Program 1967-1984
Folder 17: Cybernetic Systems Program Awards 1978
Folder 18: A Guide to the Cybernetic Systems Program 1976
Folder 19-21: Lecture Slides n.d.
Folder 22: Other Writings on Cybernetic Systems 1962-1983
Folder 23: Reprint of Cybernation and Man 1965
Folder 24: Santa Clara Transportation and Education 1984-1991
Folder 25: School of Engineering 1967-1981
Folder 26: Selected Writings on Cybernetic Systems 1968-1982


Scope and Content of Collection
This series contains newspaper clippings, newsletters and journals that document Norman O. Gunderson’s public appearances, academic work and achievements.

Arrangement
This series is arranged alphabetically by subject and chronologically within each subject.

Folder 29: Newspaper Clippings 1954-1988


Scope and Content of Collection
This series contains letters written by or to Norman O. Gunderson that are related to his academic and professional pursuits.

Arrangement
This series is arranged in chronological order.

Folder 30: Correspondence 1952-2001 1980-1987

Series IV: Ephemera 1956-1996

Scope and Content of Collection
This series contains pamphlets, event programs and invitations, and agendas that Norman O. Gunderson had collected during his career.

Arrangement
This series is arranged in chronological order.


Scope and Content of Collection
This series contains photographs that documents Norman O. Gunderson in various stages of his career and after.

Arrangement
This series is arranged in chronological order.


Series VI: Biography and Awards 1960, 1987-2004

Scope and Content of Collection
This series contains timeline, biographical notes, and awards attributed to Norman O. Gunderson.

Arrangement
This series is arranged in chronological order.