Guide to the San José State University Library Records MSS.2009.03.03

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SJSU Special Collections & Archives
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Abstract: The San José State University Library Records (1880-2017) document the administrative and operational functions of the university library. The records consist of reports, blueprints, architectural drawings, and administrative files such as meeting minutes. Also included is student census data and blueprints of the university library as well as library publications
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Processing Information
Collection processed and finding aid EAD encoded by Robert Donahue. Reviewed by Danelle Moon and Erin Louthen. In March 2016, Series III was added to the collection by Grace Song, and further accruals to that series were included by Natalie Sanchez. Series IV was added in November 2017 by Dana V. Lema.
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 was Danelle Moon. The Project Archivist was 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 Library can trace its origins to the early days of the California State Normal School, which provided funding to purchase books and other materials for a campus library in the 1860s. The first California State Normal School building in San José was completed in 1872, with a new library located on the first floor. The building was destroyed by fire in 1880, but most of the library’s 2,000 volumes were saved. Further expansion of the college library occurred in 1942 with the construction of a Library Annex in 1956, which extended northward toward the old public 1901 Carnegie Library (corner of Fourth and San Fernando Streets). The Carnegie building had ceased being a public library in 1936, and was sold to the college for use as a Student Union. In 1961, the Carnegie Library was destroyed to make room for Library North, a new building later to be named Wahlquist.

In the 1970s many San José State campus buildings were deemed unsafe and were destroyed, including the 1910 library. The Robert D. Clark Library, completed in 1982, became the home to new acquisitions, while older materials remained in the John T. Wahlquist library building. In the early 1990s, SJSU President Robert L. Caret and San José mayor Susan Hammer began negotiations to build a joint university and city library. In 2000, the Wahlquist Library was destroyed to make space
for the construction of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library. The groundbreaking ceremony took place on October 20, 2000 and the library opened on August 1, 2003.

Scope and Content
The San José State University Library Records (1880-2017) document the administrative and operational functions of the university library. The records consist of reports, blueprints, architectural drawings, and administrative files such as meeting minutes. Also included is student census data and blueprints of the university library as well as library publications. The bulk of the records document the library from 1962 to 1999, but there are historically significant materials from earlier incarnations of the library, such as accession records dating back to the late 1800s. Artifacts that were used in the library, such as property stamps, Special Collections stamps, and more, are included. Also included is memorabilia documenting library staff events dating from 1949-1953.

Arrangement

Related Materials
San José State University and the San José Public Library System Joint Library Project Records, MSS-2009-08-05

Subjects and Indexing Terms
San José State University -- History
San José State Teachers College -- History
San José State University -- Library
San Jose State Normal School -- History
San José State University -- Library -- History
San Jose State College -- History
San José State University. Library

Physical Description: 50.0 boxes
Series Scope and Content Summary
The San José State University Library can trace its origins to the early days of the California State Normal School in the 1860s. The academic library has served students in San José for over a century. The records chronicle the library from its roots as a Normal School library to the university's preparations for the creation of a joint library with the main branch of the San José public library in 2003.

The material in this series contains administrative files, reports, questionnaires, and library statistics. Also included are files pertaining to the St. John Dixon case. Dixon was one of three students expelled from Alabama State University after participating in a sit-in at a white lunch counter. He applied for admission to San José State and was initially denied. President Wahlquist (1952-1964) and advocates for Dixon later managed to obtain the paperwork for Dixon and allow him admission to San José State College.

Arrangement
This series is arranged chronologically by date range.

Accession Records 1887-1962

Box 3  Handbooks, Pamphlets 1903-1947

Box 4-19  General Files 1910-1999
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Series III: Artifacts and Memorabilia 1949-2002

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Box 57
Library Stamps circa 1960-2002
Box 58
Library Staff Social Events Scrapbook
Box 58, Folder 1
January 1949-November 1951
Box 58, Folder 2
January 1952-April 1953
Box 59
Series IV: Publications 2017
Scope and Contents
Publications created by SJSU King Library including Library News newsletter