Guide to the University of San Diego Commencement Program records

University of San Diego

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Guide to the University of San Diego Commencement Program records

Overview of the Collection

Title: University of San Diego Commencement Program records
Dates: 1954-2017
Creator: University of San Diego
Quantity: 7 boxes (5.5 linear feet)
Summary: These records include the planning materials, speech transcripts, programs and invitations for University of San Diego commencements.
Identification: USDA_2008_008, USDA_2008_010, USDA_2011_002
Language: English
Repository: University of San Diego, Archives and Special Collections
Copley Library
5998 Alcalá Park
San Diego, CA 92110
Telephone: 619-260-2730
spcoll@sandiego.edu

Historical Note

The San Diego College for Women held its first graduate ceremony in 1954, awarding Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science in Nursing degrees to nine individuals. Reverend Charles Buddy presided over the commencement each year until 1964, when Francis Furey began presiding. The ceremony was held on the San Diego College for Women Alcalá Park campus. The College for Women continued to hold separate ceremonies from the College for Men and School of Law until 1968 when the schools began the process of merging.
The University of San Diego College for Men and School of Law held their first, combined, ceremony in 1958. Undergraduate degrees at this ceremony were awarded to the four graduates of 1956 and 1957, as well as the 26 graduates of 1958. The College for Men and School of Law continued joint ceremonies until 1962, at which point the School of Law began awarding Doctorate degrees. With the exception of a short stint between 1968 and 1970, the School of Law has continued to hold a separate commencement ceremony from the rest of the University. The bulk of the School of Law Ceremonies have been held on the University of San Diego campus, though the Civic Theatre in downtown San Diego was home to multiple commencement ceremonies throughout the late 1960s and 1970s.

As merging of the College for Women and College for Men was taking shape in 1968, the separate ceremonies merged into one. Student degrees were still separated by College for Men and College for Women until 1972 when the University officially merged. The organization of the undergraduate and graduate commencement ceremonies has varied throughout the years to accommodate the growing University. Until 1986, the undergraduate and graduate ceremonies were held together. An attempt was made between 2001 and 2003 to combine undergraduates and graduates of the same school, still with two separate ceremonies overall. The 2004 ceremony went back to separate commencements for the graduates and undergraduates, and the undergraduate ceremony was broken into morning and afternoon ceremonies. The College of Arts and Sciences ceremony was held in the morning, and the Schools of Business and Engineering ceremony was held in the afternoon. The plan of four ceremonies (School of Law, Graduate, Undergraduate College of Arts and Sciences, Undergraduate School of Business and School of Engineering) continued until 2018 when a second ceremony for the graduate school will be added.

In addition to honoring the University of San Diego graduates, awarding honorary degrees was a common practice during commencement ceremonies. Reverend James Booth and Patricia Nixon were awarded the Diocesan Citation of Honor in 1955 and 1959 respectively. Then Vice President of the United States Richard Nixon received the University of San Diego's first honorary Doctor of Laws in 1959. 154 honorary degrees have been awarded throughout the USD commencement history, with at least one degree offered nearly every year between 1959 and the mid-2000s. The School of Law stopped awarding Honorary Degrees in 2003. Only one honorary degrees has been awarded during the undergraduate ceremonies since 2008.
those receiving their degree. Planning materials include correspondence, 'post-mortem' meeting minutes, and discussion of potential speakers. The 'post-mortem' meeting was a way in which the commencement committee discussed the positives and negatives of the commencement ceremony, as well as what could be done differently the next year. Also included are transcripts of speeches given, detailed timelines of the daily events, and news articles about the commencements. This extent of information does not occur for all years, but is the norm for those commencements dated 1972 through 2009.

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Arrangement

This collection is arranged into three series:

Series I. San Diego College for Women
Series II. University of San Diego College for Men and School of Law
Series III. Combined Commencements
Series IV. University of San Diego

These records are arranged in chronological order.

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Restrictions

This collection is open for research.

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Related Material

The Honors Convocation was also held during the Commencement weekend activities. See the Honors Convocation records for related materials.

Photographs throughout the collection have been moved to photograph storage for preservation purposes. Separation sheets and photocopies of the photographs remain in the original location.

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Index Terms
San Diego College for Women
University of San Diego
University of San Diego. College for Men
# University of San Diego. School of Law
San Diego (Calif.)

# Administrative Information

## Preferred citation

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[Folder Title], Box # Folder #, University of San Diego Commencement Program records, Copley Library, University of San Diego, Archives and Special Collections.
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## Processing Information

Initial processing of this collection was conducted by Tessie Camina in 2011. Further processing was conducted by Ashley Toutain in 2017.

# Detailed Description of the Collection

## Series I: San Diego College for Women Commencement, 1954-1967

This series consists of invitations and commencement programs for the San Diego College for Women. Programs list the proceedings of the commencement events as well as names of those receiving their degree. Not all folders contain invitations.

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Series II: University of San Diego College for Men and School of Law Commencement, 1958-1967

This series consists of programs for the San Diego College for Men and School of Law commencement. Programs list the proceedings of the commencement events as well as names of those receiving their degree. Also included are news articles about then Vice President Richard Nixon attending the 1959 ceremony to receive an honorary degree.

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23  College for Men Commencement Program, 1964
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25  College for Men Commencement Program, 1966
26  College for Men Commencement Program, 1967


This series contains the programs for the short time in which the College for Women, College for Men, and School of Law held a joint commencement. Programs list the proceedings of the commencement events as well as names of those receiving their degree.

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28  College for Women, College for Men, and School of Law Commencement Program, 1969
29  College for Women, College for Men, and School of Law Commencement Program, 1970

Series IV: University of San Diego Commencements, 1971-2017

This series consists of programs, planning materials, news articles, and speech transcripts for the University of San Diego commencement ceremonies. These include ceremonies for the School of Law, Graduate school, and Undergraduates. Programs list the proceedings of the commencement event as well as names of those receiving their degree. Planning materials include correspondence, 'post-mortem' meeting minutes, and discussion of potential speakers. The 'post-mortem' meeting was a way in which the commencement committee discussed the positives and negatives of the commencement ceremony, as well as what could be
done differently the next year. Also included are transcripts of speeches
given, detailed timelines of the daily events, and news articles about the
commencements.
The above description of records does not occur for all years, but is the
norm for those commencements dated 1972 through 2009. Commencement
committee materials are primarily those of the undergraduate and graduate
commencement planning, not the School of Law. In many cases, thought,
discussion of the School of Law Commencement can be found in files
labeled Undergraduate or Graduate Commencements and vice versa. Those
interested in a particular years' commencement are advised to look in all
files for that year, regardless of school.

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[Includes information such as weekend events, honorary degrees, mace bearers, marshals, scripts, and future planning.]
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