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School of Agriculture Records

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School of Agriculture Records

Finding Aid

South Dakota State University Archives and Special Collections
Briggs Library (SBL) Room 241 Box 2114
1300 North Campus Drive
Brookings, SD 57007
Phone: 605-688-5094
Email: arcrefs@sdstate.edu

Collection Summary

Identifier

UA 52.11

Title

School of Agriculture Records

Creator

School of Agriculture, South Dakota State College of Agriculture and
Mechanic Arts

Dates

1911-1930

Extent

0.21 linear feet -- 1 small document case

Language

English

Repository

South Dakota State University Archives and Special Collections, Hilton
M. Briggs Library, Brookings, South Dakota.

Access note

This collection is open to researchers without restrictions. The materials in the Archives do not circulate and may be used in-house only.

Preferred Citation

Name of item. School of Agriculture Records. UA 52.11. South Dakota State University Archives and Special Collections, Hilton M .Briggs Library, Brookings, South Dakota.

Abstract

The School of Agriculture was an agricultural high school that taught practical classes to prepare students for life on the farm and in the home. This collection is composed of publications generated by the School of Agriculture, including newspapers, programs, bulletins and recruitment circulars.

Historical Note

From 1908-1960, the South Dakota School of Agriculture at Brookings educated young men and women from across South Dakota in a unique atmosphere. For five months of the year, students lived on the campus of South Dakota State College and took "practical" classes to prepare for life on the farm and in the home. As a replacement for their high school course, the school primarily taught vocational agriculture and home economics but did not neglect traditional subjects such as English and arithmetic. Students took part in a full range of extracurricular activities and even published a newspaper. Aggies, as they were widely known, thus reaped the benefits of a high school education while still working at home or earning money to pay tuition for seven months of the year.

In the earliest years, enrollment in the school was very high. Both boys and girls were represented, and many students were older than average high school students were. High schools were not common in rural South Dakota, and those that were available were often at quite a distance, requiring students to live away from home. The five-month calendar was particularly attractive to rural students, and the location at South Dakota State University made many older students feel less conspicuous.

Following the 1917 passage of the Smith-Hughes Act, which provided funding for vocational and home economics in the public schools, enrollment began to decline slightly. The establishment of high schools throughout the state also assisted in the decline, although rural students continued to attend. Following World War II, the school began to offer a certificate in agriculture for high school graduates, similar to an associate's degree. By the early 1950's the number of girls enrolled dropped to two, and the home economics courses were dropped entirely. The agriculture classes were still

offered however, although enrollment was often very low for the high school courses. In 1959, due to the drop in enrollment and growth in the number of high schools across the state, South Dakota State College decided to discontinue the high school courses and offer an associate's degree in agriculture as a replacement for the post-graduate work. In June, 1960, the last students graduated from the School of Agriculture, and it officially ceased to exist.

Contents Note

This collection is composed of material generated by the School of Agriculture. Folders contain newspapers, programs, bulletins and recruitment circulars.

The Aggie News was a newspaper published quarterly by the State Alumni Association of the School of Agriculture. It contained news stories about students, organizations, and announcements of interest to School of Agriculture students and faculty. The material in this collection is not a complete run of this newspaper.

The recruitment circulars were sent out by the principal of the School of Agriculture. These circular contain facts about the school and activities available to students. Some may contain photographs of the early campus of South Dakota State University.

The bulletin contains information in detail relative to the different department and courses of instruction, entrance requirements, schedules of study, lists of instructors of the institution, its administration, equipment, organizations, publications, funds, students' expenses, scholarships, etc.

Key Words

Agricultural high schools -- South Dakota -- Brookings

South Dakota State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts -- School of Agriculture

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

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Arranged and Described by

Crystal J. Gamradt, 1999 March 11.

Container List

Box	Folder	Description	Date(s)
1	1	The Aggie News (newspaper)	1929
1	2	The Aggie News (newspaper)	1930
1	3	Bulletin	1911
1	4	Commencement (programs)	1926-1931, 1933
1	5	Few Scenes in and about the School of Agriculture (recruitment circular)	1927-1930
1	6	Junior-Senior Banquet (programs)	1914, 1928
1	7	Recruitment circulars	1925-1927, undated
1	8	Senior Class Play - "Arnold Goes Into Business" (program)	1929