

Trustees, Board of (1837-1981)



Guide to the
Administrative
Records of
Georgetown
College

Guide to the Records of the Board of Trustees

Special Collection and Archives Ensor Learning Resource Center Georgetown College

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Accession Number 2000.14

Records of the Board of Trustees

Official Records: 1837-1981

16 Items

Location: AFC-A-1, Archives Room, Ensor Learning Resource Center

Introduction

The records of Georgetown College's Board of Trustees were created between 1837 and 1981 and include sixteen bound volumes and individual folders. They are part of Record Group 6, Administrative Records. Records prior to 1837 were destroyed by fire that same year in the Scott County Court Clerk's office. The trustees of the Kentucky Baptist Education Society, which governed the college, often met in the clerk's office and kept their records there. The records after 1981 are still in possession Office of the President of Georgetown College, which has traditionally maintained the records of the Board of Trustees. The earliest minute book was in possession of the library, and then in 2000, the minutes, encompassing the years 1867-1981, were transferred from the vault in Giddings Hall to Special Collections and Archives. The records were organized and opened for research in the spring of 2001.

These records were kept in both bound and loose-leaf blank books. Those before 1912 were written while those afterward were typed. Instead of being kept in archival boxes, they are stored, lying flat, in a filing cabinet drawer.

The records are open for research without restrictions under the conditions of the Archives' access policy. Records may be copied for use in individual scholarly or personal research.

History of the Board of Trustees

In 1828 Issachar Pawling, or Paulding, of Mercer County, Kentucky, offered his estate to Rev. Silas Noel as seed money to start an institution for the education of Baptist ministers. The interest only was to be used until his death, whereupon the principal would be allocated to a college. Silas Noel, a lawyer and minister from Frankfort, and Alva Woods, President of Transylvania

University, were named as the trustees. Due to the high level of interest in establishing a new Baptist college, twenty-four men petitioned the Kentucky legislature to establish a new education society. In 1829, the legislature granted a charter to the Kentucky Baptist Education Society, which had the authority to locate a Baptist college somewhere in Kentucky. That same year the trustees of the defunct Rittenhouse Academy, a land-grant school founded by Rev. Elijah Craig in Georgetown in 1798, offered its land for establishing the college. The trustees of the Kentucky Baptist Education Society accepted, and the new college became known as Georgetown College.

The members of the Kentucky Baptist Education Society were a self-governing body with the power to elect a president and govern the financial and educational affairs of the college. The trustees continued under the name of the Kentucky Baptist Education Society until around the turn of the century when they became known as the Board of Trustees. Board members have included people like James F. Robinson, a governor of Kentucky; Richard M. Johnson, a vice president of the United States; Lee Todd, an entrepreneur and president of the University of Kentucky; and Basil Manly, Jr., a founder of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The Kentucky Baptist Education Society (KBES), whose membership was composed of contributors to the college, nominated candidates to the board until 1906 when the Baptist Education Society of Kentucky was formed to make two recommendations for every vacancy to the Kentucky Baptist Education Society. The KBES made the final selection at the annual meeting of the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky. In 1941, the cumbersome procedure of electing trustees was streamlined and gave the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky a greater role in selecting the trustees. The Baptist Education Society of Kentucky was abolished, and the trustees of Georgetown College nominated two candidates directly to a committee of the General Association, which made the final selections. The same general arrangement remains with the Kentucky Baptist Convention, the successor to the General Association.

Scope and Content of the Records

The records contain the reports of actions taken by Georgetown College's governing body. Since its founding, the Board of Trustees has been involved in the school's most controversial events, such as: establishing a classical curriculum, moving the school to Louisville, initiating co-education, building dormitories with low-interest government loans, and supporting a president whom Baptists considered an "apostate". The minutes also contain the official lists of graduates for each year, the hiring, firing, and resignations of faculty and major staff positions, and the major financial decisions. The books, beginning with 1912-1916, contain many inter-leavings of attachments.

Sub series Description

Sub series I Items 1-8 Minute Books, 1837-1981

These books represent a continuous record of the whole board's transactions between 1837 and 1981. Records before 1837 were destroyed by fire and the remaining records are in the possession of the Office of the President.

Sub series II Items 9-11 Minute Books, Executive Committee, 1874-1962

Unlike the records in the previous sub series, there are gaps. The whole board met regularly twice a year. In the interim, a small group, called the executive committee, was elected from the trustees' membership to make decisions that required immediate action by the trustees, but yet not significant enough to require action by the whole board. It is not known if the minute books for the executive committee prior to 1874 and between 1916 and 1927 still exist. Presumably the president's office possesses those after 1962. Part of the gap (1920-25) is closed by copies of executive committee minutes in items 14 and 15.

Sub series III Items 12-13 Minutes, 1930-1951

These are copies of minutes contained in the books of sub series I. They are in folders.

Sub series IV Items 14-15 Minutes, Executive Committee, 1920-1938

Except for item 14, most of the minutes in item 15 are copies of those in item 10. They are in a folder.

Sub series V Item 16 Auditor's Report, 1920

There are two copies of an audit of the college's financial affairs in 1920. It is a report with no working papers.

Items List

**Sub series I
Minute Books**

1	Minute Book	1837-1866
2	Minute Book	1867-1912
3	Minute Book	1912-1916
4	Minute Book	1916-1927
5	Minute Book	1927-1952
6	Minute Book	1952-1960
7	Minute Book	1960-1971
8	Minute Book	1971-1981

**Sub series II
Minute Books
Executive Committee**

9	Minute Book, Executive Committee	1874-1915
10	Minute Book, Executive Committee	1927-1939
11	Minute Book, Executive Committee	1940-1962

**Sub series III
Minutes**

12	Minutes	1930-1934
13	Minutes	1942-1951

**Sub series IV
Minutes
Executive Committee**

14	Minutes, Executive Committee	1920-1925
15	Minutes, Executive Committee	1926-1938

**Sub series V
Auditor's Report**

12	Auditor's Report	1920
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