Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation records

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English
Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Rockefeller Archive Center

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Summary Information

Repository:	Rockefeller Archive Center
Creator:	Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation
Title:	Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation records
ID:	FA257
Date [inclusive]:	1945-1971
Physical Description:	3.08 Cubic Feet 7 document boxes and 34.2 GB of digital files.
Physical Description:	7 document boxes and 34.2 GB of digital files.
Language of the Material:	English .

Preferred Citation

Information regarding the Rockefeller Archive Center's preferred elements and forms of citation can be found at http://www.rockarch.org/research/citations.php

Biographical / Historical

The Woodrow Wilson Fellowship program was designed to encourage college graduates to consider college teaching as a career and provided support for first-year graduate students in the humanities and the social sciences in its early years before expanding to include mathematics and the sciences.

After World War II ended, Princeton University professor Whitney Oates and graduate dean, Sir Hugh Taylor, with the support of donor Isabelle Kemp, established a graduate fellowship program to draw veterans whose academic studies had been interrupted by military service back to the classroom. The timing was crucial as the G.I. Bill was attracting greater numbers of students, thereby creating increased demand for university professors. A Carnegie Corporation grant in 1949 extended the program's scope nationwide, and a large grant in 1957 from the Ford Foundation allowed the program to become an independent nonprofit foundation named for the former President of Princeton University and of the United States, Woodrow Wilson. With the Ford Foundation gift and subsequent additional grants, the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation offered 1,000 fellowships per year.

Fellows became leaders in education, government, corporations, and nonprofits, and among them are Nobel Laureates and Pulitzer Prize winners. Although the Foundation expanded its work in the 1960s by offering Teaching Internships and Administrative Internships, Martin Luther King Fellowships, Women's Studies Dissertation Fellowships, and Visiting Fellows program, the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation files held by the RAC do not include records of those endeavors.

The Woodrow Wilson Foundation continues to promote excellence in education by offering teaching fellowships to outstanding candidates, preparing them to teach in low-income communities and high-need schools. The Foundation also administers other education-related programs and partners with organizations involved in similar activities.

Scope and Contents

In general, each fellowship file contains an application form (or statement of financial need in the early years), letters of recommendation, a language competency form, transcripts, an indication of choice of graduate school, and questionnaires and survey material used to track the fellow's progress through graduate school and subsequent career. Approximately 50% of the Fellows responded to the 1977 questionnaire and 11% returned a 1997 summary status card. Form letters and correspondence regarding financial matters were not included in the scanning project. The collection includes 14,260 printed photographs of individual fellows and those are housed separately and are organized alphabetically by first letter of surname. Printed annual reports for the following years are part of the collection: 1993, 1995-98.

These files trace not only individual careers, but also trends in education and occupation as society changed. During the early years, applicants sometimes had to leave the program or delay the start due to being drafted or on active military duty. Declinations, often because the applicant received other awards such as a Fulbright Scholarship, are documented. Typical for the times, women applicants generally were single with no children or who had children of school age. Some letters of recommendation mention the candidate's physical appearance. Some of the information within the files includes: present occupation, graduate study institution, major field, degree, publications, military service, career plans, change of academic field, study abroad, and income sources. The original index prepared by the WWNFF's contract scanner included a category for ethnic background; however the indexers themselves assigned the classification based on appearance in photographs and circumstantial information in files. Prior to 1952, all fellows were Caucasian. The WWNFF periodically attempted to increase the number of minority participants, one of which was the Teaching Intern program. Fellows with at least two years of graduate school were offered the opportunity to teach in historically black colleges and schools serving other disadvantaged students, principally in the Appalachians. Follow-up questionnaires asked recipients to assess the influence the award had on their careers. A printout of one file is included in the Processing folder for reference.

Arrangement

The fellowship file numbering system used by the WWNF was retained even though the pattern is sometimes inconsistent and illogical and some numbers are missing from the sequence. Because some numbers were duplicated in different years, surnames were added to the file names to distinguish individual files. A few files were apparently scanned twice and those are noted as 'duplicate' on the index; one or two files could not be opened and those are noted as 'corrupt' on the index.

Files are grouped by year of application and named by file number; the PDF file organization follows the File Magic folder groups and file number and have the surname added, plus the first name when the surname appears for more than one fellow. An index in Excel format is available sorted alphabetically by Fellows' surnames, by file number, and by Fellowship year. (1) The Index uses the first Fellowship year shown on the questionnaire, e.g. if 1946-47 is shown, 1946 was used; however, files were kept in the folders as originally arranged. Thus, a 1957 file, for example, may be in a 1952 folder. If the file indicated whether a person has died, that was noted on the index. Any sensitive material, such as existence of grades or medical condition, is also noted on the index.

(1) Originally the depositor indexed files in twelve fields: 1) Last Name; 2) First and Middle Names; 3) Ethnic Background; 4) Gender; 5) Award Status; 6) State; 7) Undergraduate School; 8) Final Degree; 9) Field of Study; 10) Graduate School; 11) Dissertation Fellow; and 12) Teaching Intern; however, the RAC does not have that index.

File Plan

Former Classification: IV 4B 10.

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Conditions Governing Access

To gain access to the fellowship files, researchers must review and sign the limited license agreement. Please consult an RAC archival staff member for assistance.

Access to the digital files is provided via a hard drive made available to researchers on site at RAC.

Conditions Governing Use

The Woodrow Wilson fellowship files are made available for scholarly non-commercial use only, "for data to be utilized in the study of groups with no reference being made to any specific individual in order to safeguard the confidentiality" of the fellows represented in the files.

Custodial History

As one of four sponsors of a project to digitize the 18,517 files of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation fellows, the Rockefeller Archive Center received a set of the 30 compact discs (CDs) containing the files that had been scanned in the File Magic program. The other sets were deposited with the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation in Princeton, New Jersey; the Andrew Mellon Foundation in New York; and the Spencer Foundation in Chicago. By July 2008, these three organizations either could not locate or could not access their copies. The original paper records had been destroyed after being scanned.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The collection was ingested as Accession 1998:016.

Controlled Access Headings

- Education
- Teachers -- Training of
- Charities
- Charitable uses, trusts, and foundations
- Mathematics
- Social sciences
- Philanthropy
- Philanthropy -- United States

Collection Inventory

Fellowship files

Fellowship Files Fellowship Files Fellowship Files Fellowship Files

Other Finding Aids

An Index to the file names and file structure is available on the hard drive provided to researchers onsite at RAC.

Title/Description	Instances
Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation - Fellowship Files - A-Z, 1945-1971	disk 8

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Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation Photographs

Physical Description: 3.08 Cubic Feet 7 document boxes

File Plan

Former Classification: P/1076

Controlled Access Headings:

- Photographs

Title/Description	Instances
Portraits - A	box 1
Portraits - B	box 1
Portraits - C	box 1
Portraits - D	box 2

Portraits - E	box 2
Portraits - F	box 2
Portraits - G	box 2
Portraits - H	box 3
Portraits - I	box 3
Portraits - J	box 3
Portraits - K	box 3
Portraits - L	box 4
Portraits - M	box 4
Portraits - N	box 5
Portraits - O	box 5
Portraits - P	box 5
Portraits - Q	box 5
Portraits - R	box 5
Portraits - S	box 6
Portraits - T	box 6
Portraits - U	box 7
Portraits - V	box 7
Portraits - W	box 7
Portraits - Y	box 7
Portraits - Z	box 7
Portraits - Unidentified	box 7

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