

= John J. Tigert =

John James Tigert , IV (February 11 , 1882 ? January 21 , 1965) was an American university president , university professor and administrator , college sports coach and the U.S. Commissioner of Education . Tigert was a native of Tennessee and the son and grandson of Methodist bishops . After receiving his bachelor 's degree , he earned his master 's degree as a Rhodes Scholar .

After completing his education , Tigert taught at Central College ; served as the president of Kentucky Wesleyan College ; and worked as a professor , sports coach and administrator at the University of Kentucky .

Tigert gained his greatest national prominence as the U.S. Commissioner of Education from 1921 to 1928 , and the third president of the University of Florida , from 1928 to 1947 . He is remembered as a forceful advocate for American public education , intercollegiate sports and university curriculum reform .

= = Early life and education = =

Tigert was born in Nashville , Tennessee , in 1882 , the third son of a Methodist Episcopal minister , John James Tigert , III , and his wife , Amelia McTyeire Tigert . Tigert received his primary education in the public schools of Kansas City , Missouri , and Nashville , and earned his high school diploma , with honors , from the Webb School in Bell Buckle , Tennessee .

= = = Vanderbilt = = =

He was admitted to Vanderbilt University in Nashville , where he was a member of the Phi Delta Theta Fraternity (Tennessee Alpha Chapter) and a standout athlete in baseball , basketball , football and track . His time at Vanderbilt overlaps with Grantland Rice . As a senior , Tigert was honored as an All @-@ Southern halfback for the Vanderbilt Commodores football team . In his final game , he scored the first points netted all season against rival Sewanee .

Tigert graduated from Vanderbilt with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1904 ; he was selected for Phi Beta Kappa , and was chosen as a Rhodes Scholar , the first from the state of Tennessee , along with teammate Bob Blake . While at Oxford University in Oxford , England , he completed his Master of Arts degree at Pembroke College in 1907 , and he continued to participate in competitive university sports , including cricket , rowing and tennis .

= = Educator , administrator , reformer = =

After returning to the United States , Tigert taught at the Methodist @-@ affiliated Central College in Fayette , Missouri , and , at the age of 27 , was appointed president of Kentucky Wesleyan College in Owensboro , Kentucky in 1909 . That same year , he married the former Edith Jackson Bristol .

= = = University of Kentucky = = =

He later received an appointment as a professor of psychology and philosophy at the University of Kentucky in Lexington , Kentucky . He was perhaps best known for his work on psychology in advertising . While there , Tigert also served as the athletic director from 1913 to 1917 , the Kentucky Wildcats men 's basketball coach in 1913 , 1916 and 1917 , the Wildcats women 's basketball coach from 1911 to 1915 and again from 1916 to 1917 , and the Wildcats football coach in 1915 and 1916 .

= = = Commissioner of Education = = =

President Warren G. Harding appointed Tigert as the U.S. Commissioner of Education in 1921 , and he served for seven years during the administrations of Harding and Calvin Coolidge . As

commissioner , he was an energetic advocate of education reform and greater educational opportunities for all classes of Americans , and he traveled widely and spoke often to virtually any group interested in education . In particular , he took an interest in rural education , and advocated innovative ways to impart public education to a wider audience , including the use of radio . During his time in Washington , D.C. , he also served a term as the national president of Phi Delta Theta Fraternity .

= = = University of Florida = = =

The Florida Board of Control selected Tigert as the third president of the University of Florida in Gainesville , Florida in 1928 . He assumed leadership of the university during an extended period of economic crisis in the state of Florida . When the Great Depression began with the Wall Street Crash of 1929 , Florida was already suffering from the after @-@ effects of the 1920s land boom and bust , as well the devastating aftermath of two major hurricanes in 1926 and 1928 .

The common thread of the nineteen years of Tigert 's administration was doing more with less . Faculty salary cuts were common ; Tigert himself never drew his full authorized annual salary of \$ 10 @,@ 000 . Among Tigert 's many significant reforms , he decentralized the university budget to the level of the individual academic colleges , allowing them to set their own spending priorities . The University Council , composed of the president , the registrar and the college deans , retained final approval authority . Tigert also established the faculty senate , the Institute of Inter @-@ American Affairs and the Bureau of Economic and Business Research .

One of his most influential reforms as president was the founding of the new University College as an academic division within the University of Florida in 1935 . The college was modeled on the general education college at the University of Chicago , and administered the freshman and sophomore @-@ year liberal arts education of undergraduates before they were accepted to the university schools or colleges that administered their academic majors . The college 's stated purpose was to " stimulate intellectual curiosity " and " encourage independent work , " with new liberal arts requirements in biology , English language and literature , the humanities , logic , mathematics , physical sciences and social sciences , and thereby counter the growing trend toward " trade school " education at the university level .

As a former university athlete and coach , Tigert took a particular interest in athletics @-@ related policy issues while he was president and was an enthusiastic supporter of the Florida Gators sports program generally , and football in particular . He was responsible for the construction of the university 's first and only permanent football stadium , Florida Field , in 1930 . He borrowed \$ 10 @,@ 000 to begin construction of the stadium , and then raised \$ 118 @,@ 000 to pay the construction costs of the 22 @,@ 800 @-@ seat facility . Tigert was also instrumental in the organization of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) , which the University of Florida joined as one of the thirteen founding institutions in December 1932 . Tigert subsequently served two terms as SEC president (1934 ? 1936 and 1945 ? 1947) . As a key leader within the SEC , he worked to impose a uniform set of rules and standards for academic eligibility for SEC athletes . Appalled by the under @-@ the @-@ table payments to amateur college athletes that were prevalent at the time , he advocated the grant of scholarships to athletes which would become the grant @-@ in @-@ aid of other university athletic programs and as mandated by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) in the years to follow .

Like his predecessor , Albert A. Murphree , Tigert was elected president of the National Association of State Universities , serving from 1939 to 1940 .

Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7 , 1941 , students began to withdraw from the university in large numbers to enlist in the U.S. Armed Forces . The financial impact on the university had the potential to be devastating , but Tigert navigated the war years by making the university campus , dormitories and class rooms available for the training of U.S. Army Air Force flight crews . Tigert kept the lights on , and the bills paid . Veterans began to return to school with support from the GI Bill , and by the fall term of 1946 , over seventy percent of the University of Florida 's 7 @,@ 000 students were returning World War II veterans . Contributing to the shortage of

facility space was the influx of new female students when the Florida Legislature reinstituted co-education in 1947 . The university suddenly had more students than its available housing and classroom space could serve .

Tigert resigned as university president in 1947 , worked as an educational consultant to the government of India as a member of the Indian Higher Education Commission , and taught philosophy at the University of Miami until 1959 .

===== Legacy =====

Tigert served as president of the University of Florida for nineteen years , longer than any of the other presidents of the university . During his term , the university awarded its first doctoral degrees in 1934 , a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa was installed in 1938 , and total student enrollment grew from 2 @, @ 162 in 1928 to over 7 @, @ 500 in 1947 . As university president , he was responsible for significant and lasting academic , athletic and administrative reforms .

In recognition of Tigert 's long service as its president through depression and war , the University of Florida awarded him an honorary degree , a doctor of letters , during its 1953 centennial celebration , and renamed its main administrative building , Tigert Hall , for him in 1960 . Tigert died in Gainesville , Florida on January 21 , 1965 ; he was 82 years old . He was survived by his wife Edith , their son and daughter , and five grandchildren .

As a fitting final tribute to a professor , education reformer and administrator , who also fervently supported college sports , Tigert was inducted into the University of Florida Athletic Hall of Fame as an " Honorary Letter Winner , " and was elected to the College Football Hall of Fame as a player in 1970 .

===== Head coaching records =====

===== Men 's basketball =====

===== Football =====

===== Women 's basketball =====