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Lesley Graduate School

Course Catalogs, 1954-2010

By Marie Wasnock

Collection Overview

Title: Lesley Graduate School, Course Catalogs, 1954-2010

ID: 07/01/001

Creator: Lesley University (1909 -)

Extent: 7 Boxes

Arrangement: Arranged in chronological order.

Date Acquired: 08/11/2011

Languages: English

Scope and Contents of the Materials

This collection contains course catalogs published annually for Lesley University's Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences (GSASS) and Graduate School of Education.

Historical Note

Lesley University is made up of the following four schools:

Lesley College
Art Institute of Boston at Lesley
Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences
Graduate School of Education

In 1909 Edith Lesley [Wolfard] opened “The Lesley Normal School” (“normal” at the time

designating teacher training schools) in her home on Everett Street in Cambridge, Massachusetts to train young women to become kindergarten and early elementary teachers. Influenced by the philosophy of German educator Friedrich Froebel, Lesley's two-year curriculum stressed the importance of physical activity (singing, dancing and gardening) and play, particularly with blocks and similar objects. Edith Lesley also stressed the values of treating students as individuals and the importance of "gracious living." Eleven students graduated in the first class in 1911. In the following year classes in household arts were added and in 1918, a department, known first as Domestic Science, later (1939-1940) as Home Economics, was established, offering a one- or two-year program which prepared students to work in various public institutions, including schools and hospitals.

By the 1920s the school, now "The Lesley School," had twenty-two instructors, had acquired three buildings for dormitories, and had built Alumni Hall for assemblies and classes. Extra-curricular activities came to play an important role, with Wednesday afternoons reserved for musical or theatrical student performances. Later in the decade a three-year kindergarten and early elementary program was offered in addition to the two-year course of study. During the 1930s Gertrude Malloch, who had joined the school as a teacher and administrator in its first decade, became the school's chief administrator, after Edith Lesley Wolfard's health began to fail.

The late 1930s to early 1940s saw some changes at Lesley. Enrollment, which had been over 300 earlier in the decade, declined during the Depression, reaching a low of 63 at one point. In 1939 the school, to that point privately owned, became a non-profit institution through incorporation, and during the academic year 1939-1940 it added a four-year teacher-training program. In 1943 this four-year program was recognized as meeting all the requirements of the B.S. in education and soon after that the school began to award this degree. 1944 saw the school's name changed to Lesley College and the appointment of the College's first president, Trentwell Mason White. Edith Lesley Wolfard retained the titles of Founder and Director Emeritus. The first baccalaureate degrees were awarded in June of 1945. In 1949, Lesley College acquired the Walter F. Dearborn School and the Lesley Ellis School, and in 1959 added a third, the Carroll Hall School, as laboratory schools, providing opportunities for study and observation by Lesley College students and faculty.

The next decade was one of growth for Lesley, with the addition of evening and summer classes, a coeducational graduate program in education, new buildings and an enrollment expanding to 380 undergraduates and 52 graduate students. Lesley achieved regional and national accreditation in 1952 and in 1954 was empowered to confer a Master's Degree in Elementary Education. The graduate school was co-ed. The decade was also marked by loss, with Edith Lesley Wolfard's death in 1953 and President White's in 1959. Don Orton succeeded Dr. White in July 1960. As the 1960s progressed, enrollment continued to grow and the college continued to offer a variety of student activities and clubs. In 1961, the first New England Kindergarten Conference was held. The 1960s also saw the death of Gertrude Malloch, who donated her home to be used as a house for the Lesley College President.

Lesley College continued to grow in the 1970s and 1980s, both building and acquiring new properties. The graduate school increased its offerings to include 18 different programs in the 70s, and added management degree completion programs in the 80s. In 1981, the Lesley initiated the School of Programs in Management for Business and Industry (PMBI), which later became the School of Management. By the mid-80s, the graduate school enrollment was over 3300, and, additionally, Lesley launched its first off-campus program, the National Outreach program in Denver, Colorado. In 1982, an academic and living skills program for young adults with learning disabilities was also founded, called the Threshold Program. In 1985, Lesley inaugurated its first female president, Margaret McKenna. Soon after, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges approved Lesley's first Ph.D. program. The first Ph.D. students were admitted in the fall of 1990.

In the 1990s, Lesley continued to increase the size of its campus by purchasing the Porter Exchange Building, which doubled its classroom space. The college also joined Division III of the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association), distinguishing itself as an institution that encourages both physical and intellectual prowess. International programs increased, being offered in Europe, the Middle East, and Canada. In 1996, the Graduate School of Education was officially established. In 1998, the school purchased the Art Institute of Boston.

The new millennium proved to be one of success and distinction for Lesley. In 2000 Lesley officially became a university, and its undergraduate program was renamed Lesley College. In 2003, Princeton Review named the university as one of the "Best Northeastern Colleges," and in 2004 Backpacker magazine named Lesley's Audubon Expedition Institute as one of the "Top 5 Outdoor Education" programs. The college went co-ed in 2005, admitting men for the first time. In the spring of 2006, President McKenna announced her retirement at the end of the 2006-2007 academic year, and the Board of Trustees announced that Dr. Joseph B. Moore would take over as President of Lesley University in July of 2007.

Administrative Information

Accruals: Collection will receive additions annually.

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Appraisal Information: In good condition.

Processing Information: Processed by Marie Wasnock, Fall 2011.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 1: Graduate School, Course Catalogs, 1954-1975

Box 2: Graduate School, Course Catalogs, 1975-1985

Box 3: Graduate School, Course Catalogs, 1985-1991

Box 4: Graduate School, Course Catalogs, 1991-1996

Box 5: Graduate School, Course Catalogs, 1995-2000

Box 6: Graduate School, Course Catalogs, 2000-2007

Box 7: Graduate School, Course Catalogs, 2007-2010