Guide to the Baptist Theological Union Records 1863-1999
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Descriptive Summary

Identifier  ICU.SPCL.BTU

Title  Baptist Theological Union. Records

Date  1863-1999

Size  35 linear feet (34 boxes)

Repository  Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center
University of Chicago Library
1100 East 57th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract  The collection contains records of the Baptist Theological Union, including minutes and administrative records, correspondence, financial information, and news clippings, documenting the early history of the B.T.U. and the activities of its governing board and committees.

Information on Use

Access

Series III contains administrative and financial records that are restricted for fifty years from the date of creation. The remainder of the collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Baptist Theological Union. Records, [Box #, Folder #], Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Historical Note

In August 1863 a group of Baptist leaders met in Chicago and created the Baptist Theological Union. On Feb. 16, 1865, the Illinois legislature granted the Baptist Theological Union a charter for "the founding, endowment, support, and direction of an institution for theological instruction." That same year, Dr. Nathaniel Colver began to give instruction to a few students in his study. The Baptist Union Theological Seminary fully launched in 1866.

The formal work of the Baptist Union Theological Seminary began with the appointment of George W. Northrup as President and Professor of Systematic Theology. In the fall of 1867, courses in that subject as well as Ecclesiastical History and Biblical Literature and Exegesis were given to nineteen students in the Old University of Chicago's Douglas Hall. On July 1, 1869, the Seminary dedicated its own building directly across the street from the Old University of
Chicago. The Seminary provided theological education in English, Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish to Old University of Chicago and non-University students. Facing financial hardship in the mid-1870s, the Seminary sold its buildings near the Old University of Chicago and moved to donated land in the Chicago suburb of Morgan Park in 1877. The Old University of Chicago closed in 1886.

When John D. Rockefeller donated money toward the founding of the new University of Chicago, he made it a condition of the gift that the Baptist Union Theological Seminary become the Divinity School of the new institution. This took place formally on July 1, 1892. Since the establishment of the University of Chicago Divinity School, the Baptist Theological Union has continued its existence as a separate organization with its own Board, overseeing an endowment that provides support to the Divinity School.

Many Baptist Theological Union and Baptist Union Theological Seminary leaders were key to the founding and early history of the University of Chicago. E. Nelson Blake, President of the Board of the Baptist Theological Union from 1877 to 1893, was also a major donor to the new University of Chicago, and the first chairman of the University’s Board of Trustees. Edward Goodman and Thomas W. Goodspeed were also active in both institutions. The University of Chicago’s first President, William R. Harper, was a professor of Hebrew and Cognate Languages in the Seminary from 1879 to 1886. Dr. Eri B. Hulbert joined the faculty of the Seminary in 1881. In 1892, he became the first Dean of the Divinity School (until 1907).

Scope Note

The material in this collection has been organized into three series. Series I includes materials documenting the founding and early history of the B.T.U., including it’s relationship with the University of Chicago. It includes correspondence, financial records, minutes, and reports. Series II documents the operations and governance of the B.T.U. from 1928 through the 1960s, and consists primarily of records relating to the organizations annual meeting and meetings of the Board of Trustees. Series III contains records similar to those in Series II, dating from the 1960s to the 1990s. Access to these records is restricted for fifty years from the date of creation, because they contain materials relating to the financial and personnel affairs of the B.T.U.

The early records of the B.T.U. previously formed parts of the collection “Baptist Theological Union and Baptist Union Theological Seminary. Records.”

Related Resources

Browse finding aids by topic.

University of Chicago. Divinity School. Records

Baptist Union Theological Seminary. Records

Subject Headings
• University of Chicago (1857-1866)
• University of Chicago. Divinity School
• Baptist Theological Union (Chicago, Ill.)
• Baptist Union Theological Seminary (Morgan Park, Ill.)

INVENTORY

Series I: Baptist Theological Seminary, Founding and Early Administration, 1863-1927

Box 1
Folder 1
An Act to Incorporate the Baptist Theological Union, located in Chicago" (1865); By-Laws of the Board of Trustees

Box 1
Folder 2
"Memorandum of the Baptist Theological Union of Chicago." Notes and records taken by G.S. Bailey, Financial and Recording Secretary [1867-75]. Includes B.T.U. Board of Trustees minutes 1867

Box 1
Folder 3
Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1897-1900 [T.W. Goodspeed, Secy.]

Box 1
Folder 4
Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1900-1902

Box 1
Folder 5
Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1902-1904

Box 1
Folder 6
Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1904-1907

Box 1
Folder 7
Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1907-1910

Box 1
Folder 8
Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1902-1910, mimeographed

Box 2
Folder 1
Correspondence, 1870-1874

Box 2
Folder 2
Correspondence of the Board of Trustees of the B.T.U., 1877-1892

Box 2
Folder 3
Correspondence of the Board of Trustees of the B.T.U., March, 1880 – November, 1901
Folder 4
Correspondence of the Board of Trustees of the B.T.U., December, 1901

Box 2

Folder 5
Correspondence of the Board of Trustees of the B.T.U., January, 1902 – March, 1912

Box 2

Folder 6
Correspondence of the Board of Trustees of the B.T.U., April, 1912 – November, 1924

Box 2

Folder 7
Annual Reports of the Board of Trustees of the B.T.U., 1871, 1891-1892; 1895-1904

Box 2

Folder 8
Special Committee Reports, circa 1875-1909

Box 2

Folder 8A
Commission to Study the Relations of the B.T.U. and the Scandinavian Theological Seminary at Morgan Park, correspondence, notes and report, 1888-1912

Box 2

Folder 9-10
Early Reports of the B.T.U. at the time of Union with University of Chicago, 1891-1908

Box 2

Folder 11
Agreements between the Baptist Theological Union and the University of Chicago, 1904-1908

Box 2

Folder 12
Commission on the Affairs of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago; Preliminary Report, 1908

Box 2

Folder 13
Reports of Committees on Relation between the B.T.U. and the University of Chicago, undated

Box 3

Folder 1
Contributors, undated

Box 3

Folder 2
"Memorandum of names of subscribers and amounts of subscriptions and donations for support and endowment of theological chair of N. Colver, DD. and successors, undated

Box 3

Folder 3
Treasurer’s book, 1863-1870

Box 3

Folder 4
Treasurer’s book, 1866
Box 3
Folder 5
Treasurer’s book of the Ladies Baptist Education Society, 1867

Box 3
Folder 6
Subscriptions of the Second Baptist Church of Chicago to the Theological Seminary Building, 1868

Box 3
Folder 7
Subscriptions for a Theological Building, 2 vol., 1868

Box 3
Folder 8
Contributions, circa 1869-1872

Box 4
Folder 1
Treasurer’s book, 1873

Box 4
Folder 2
Treasurer’s book, 1875

Box 4
Folder 2A
G. A. Bailey, financial claims against the B.T.U., circa 1880

Box 4
Folder 3
Subscriptions to the $100,000 endowment fund, circa 1882

Box 4
Folder 4
Treasurer’s book, 1884-1893

Box 4
Folder 5
Treasurer’s book, 1891

Box 4
Folder 6
Treasurer’s book, 1900

Box 4
Folder 7
Financial Statements, 1885-1901

Box 4
Folder 8
Financial Statements, 1901-1924

Box 4
Folder 9
Annual Reports of the Treasurer, 1884-1924

Box 5
Folder 1
Accountant’s and Auditor’s Reports, 1885-1910
Box 5
Folder 2
Notes and reports on debts and investments, 1902-1912

Box 5
Folder 3
Real estate holdings, including Baptist Hospital, 1902-1922

Box 5
Folder 4
Treasurer, State of Illinois vs. the B.T.U., legal records 1897-1901

Box 5
Folder 5
Ledger, 1895-1905

Box 5
Folder 6
Scrapbook, News Clippings, April, 1876 – April, 1892

Box 5
Folder 7
Scrapbook, News Clippings, April, 1892 – March, 1904

Box 5
Folder 8
Scrapbook, News Clippings, March, 1904 – March, 1907

Box 6
Minutes, 1914-1927
Includes minutes of annual meeting, Board of Trustees, and committees

Box 7
Minutes, 1917-1927
Includes minutes of annual meeting, Board of Trustees, and committees

Box 8
Historical volume, Records, v. 1, 1863-1899
Includes manuscript constitution, minutes of annual meeting, Board of Trustees, and committees

Box 9
Historical volume, Records, v. 2, 1899-1917
Includes minutes of annual meeting, Board of Trustees, and committees

Box 10
Historical volume, Records, 1863-1875
Includes manuscript constitution, minutes of annual meetings, Board of Trustees, and committees, duplicates records in Box 8

Box 11
Historical volume, Letters, 1913-1927
Includes carbon copies of outgoing correspondence of Secretary
Box 12
Historical volume, Records, 1891
Includes agreement between B.T.U. and University of Chicago, letters from John D. Rockefeller

Series II: Board of Trustees and Administrative Records, 1928-1962

Box 13
Folder 1
Correspondence and administrative records, 1941-1953
Box 13
Folder 2
Correspondence and administrative records, 1956-1958
Box 13
Folder 3
Correspondence and administrative records, 1958-1962
Box 13
Folder 4
Correspondence and administrative records, 1963-1966
Box 13
Folder 5
Annual meeting, notes and related documents, 1953-1958
Box 13
Folder 6
Annual meeting, notes and related documents, 1959-1960
Box 13
Folder 7
Annual meeting, notes and related documents, 1960-1961
Box 14
Folder 1
Annual meeting, notes and related documents, 1961-1962
Box 14
Folder 2
Annual meeting, notes and related documents, 1961-1963
Box 14
Folder 3
Annual meeting, notes and related documents, 1963-1964
Box 15
Minutes, 1928-1946
Includes minutes of annual meeting, Board of Trustees, and committees

Box 16
Minutes, 1928-1946
Includes minutes of annual meeting, Board of Trustees, and committees, duplicates records in Box 15

Box 17
Minutes, 1931-1944
Includes minutes of annual meeting, Board of Trustees, and committees

Box 18
Minutes, 1932-1946
Includes minutes of annual meeting, Board of Trustees, and committees

Box 19
Minutes, 1943-1954
Includes minutes of annual meeting, Board of Trustees, and committees

Box 20
Minutes, 1947-1954
Includes minutes of annual meeting, Board of Trustees, and committees

Box 21
Minutes, 1947-1956
Includes minutes of annual meeting, Board of Trustees, and committees

Box 22
Minutes, 1954-1958
Includes minutes of annual meeting, Board of Trustees, and committees

Box 23
Minutes, 1957-1960
Includes minutes of annual meeting, Board of Trustees, and committees

Box 24
Includes minutes of annual meeting, Board of Trustees, and committees

Box 25
Minutes, 1958-1962
Includes minutes of annual meeting, Board of Trustees, and committees


The records in this series are restricted for fifty years from the date of creation.

Box 26
Minutes, 1963-1969
Includes minutes of annual meeting, Board of Trustees, and committees

Box 27
Minutes, 1969-1980
Includes minutes of annual meeting, Board of Trustees, and committees

**Box 28**
Minutes, 1980-1990
Includes minutes of annual meeting, Board of Trustees, and committees

**Box 29**
**Folder 1**
Annual Meeting Minutes, 1964-1966
**Box 29**
**Folder 2**
Annual Meeting Minutes, 1965-1967
**Box 29**
**Folder 3**
Administrative records, 1967-1969
**Box 29**
**Folder 4**
Annual Meeting Minutes, 1967-1968
**Box 29**
**Folder 5**
Administrative records, 1969-1971
**Box 29**
**Folder 6**
Trustees Meeting, October, 1971
**Box 29**
**Folder 7**
Trustees Meeting, April 19, 1972
**Box 29**
**Folder 8**
Administrative records, 1971-1972
**Box 30**
**Folder 1**
Administrative records, 1973-1974
**Box 30**
**Folder 2**
Financial Report, 1973
**Box 30**
**Folder 3**
Annual meeting and Board of Trustees, October 18, 1972
**Box 30**
**Folder 4**
Annual meeting and Board of Trustees, April 18, 1973
**Box 30**
**Folder 5**
Annual meeting and Board of Trustees, October 17, 1973
**Box 30**
Folder 6
  Annual meeting and Board of Trustees, April 17, 1974
Box 30
Folder 7
  Annual meeting and Board of Trustees, October 16, 1974
Box 30
Folder 8
  Administrative records, 1974-1975
Box 30
Folder 9
  Annual meeting and Board of Trustees, October 15, 1975
Box 30
Folder 10
  Annual meeting and Board of Trustees, April 16, 1975
Box 30
Folder 11
  Administrative records, 1975-1976
Box 31
Folder 1
  Annual meeting and Board of Trustees, October 20, 1976
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Folder 2
  Annual meeting and Board of Trustees, April 14, 1976
Box 31
Folder 3
  Annual meeting and Board of Trustees, April 13, 1977
Box 31
Folder 4
  Annual meeting and Board of Trustees, April 12, 1970
Box 31
Folder 5
  Administrative records, 1977-1979
Box 31
Folder 6
  Financial statements and records, 1976
Box 31
Folder 7
  Financial statements and records, 1974
Box 31
Folder 8
  Financial statements and records, 1977
Box 31
Folder 9
  Annual meeting and Board of Trustees, October 19, 1977
Box 31
Folder 10
Administrative records, 1977-1978
Box 31
Folder 11
  Administrative records, 1978-1981
Box 32
Folder 1
  Administrative records, 1978-1980
Box 32
Folder 2
  Dean’s Report to BTU, 1970-1973
Box 32
Folder 3
  Dean’s Report to BTU, 1974-1979
Box 32
Folder 4
  Administrative records, 1980-1982
Box 32
Folder 5
  Administrative records, 1982-1983
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Folder 6
  Administrative records, 1983-1984
Box 32
Folder 7
  Administrative records, 1985-1986
Box 32
Folder 8
  Administrative records, 1984
Box 33
Folder 1
  Administrative records, 1986-1987
Box 33
Folder 2
  Administrative records, 1987-1988
Box 33
Folder 3
  Administrative records, 1988-1989
Box 33
Folder 4
  Administrative records, 1989-1990
Box 33
Folder 5
  Administrative records, 1990-1991
Box 33
Folder 6
  Administrative records, 1991-1992
Box 34
Folder 1
   Administrative records, 1992-1993
Box 34
Folder 2
   Administrative records, 1993-1994
Box 34
Folder 3
   Everett J. Tarbox, 1993-1995
Box 34
Folder 4
   Administrative records, 1994-1995
Box 34
Folder 5
   Administrative records, 1995-1996
Box 34
Folder 6
   Administrative records, 1995-1997
Box 34
Folder 7
   Annual meeting and Board of Trustees, April 18, 1996
Box 34
Folder 8
   Annual meetings and Board of Trustees, April 10, 1997 and April 7, 1998
Box 34
Folder 9
   Annual meeting and Board of Trustees, November 4, 1998
Box 34
Folder 10
   BTU Trustees Biographies, 1983-1998
Box 34
Folder 11
   Annual meeting and Board of Trustees, April 21, 1999