

University of Chicago Library Special Collections Research Center

University of Chicago Innomimates / X-Club Records 1917-1982



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier ICU.SPCL.INNXCLUB

Title University of Chicago. Innominates / X-Club. Records

Date 1917-1982(inclusive)

Size 2.75 linear feet (6 boxes)

Repository 1100 East 57th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637

Abstract The Innominates / X-Club Records consists of 2.75 linear feet of material and cover the period 1917-1982. The collection contains records for both the Innominates and the X-Club. Both clubs were organizations of faculty in the physical, biological, and social sciences at the University of Chicago. Files include membership rosters, correspondence, speakers records, nominations, secretaries lists, ballots, announcements, and procedures.

Information on Use

Access

The Innominates / X-Club Records contain no restrictions and are open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection the preferred citation is:

University of Chicago. Innominates / X-Club. Records, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

Historical Note

The Innominates club was an organization created by and for faculty in the physical, biological, and social sciences at the University of Chicago. According to the earliest records maintained by the club, the Innominates modeled themselves after faculty "shop clubs" at Harvard University. An organizational meeting of interested science faculty convened on February 5, 1917, at the Hotel del Prado in Hyde Park. At that meeting, founding members agreed that monthly meetings would consist of an evening meal and presentation of research in progress by an individual or group of collaborating members. Speakers and topics of discussion were to be pre-arranged in order to facilitate advance announcement. Initially, membership was to be limited to approximately twenty members, with new members admitted through a nomination and election process. The name Innominates--the unnamed or anonymous ones--was officially adopted for reasons left unelaborated in the record. The organizing members of the club were: Elbert Clark, Charles H. Swift (Anatomy); William E. Cary (Bacteriology); J. W. E. Glattfield, H. I. Schlesinger (Chemistry); L. I. Knight (Botany); J. H. Bretz, E. A. Stephenson (Geology); A. C.

Lunn, A. R. Schweitzer (Mathematics); A. J. Dempster, Harvey B. Lemon (Physics); F. C. Koch, Arnold B. Luckhardt (Physiology); J. G. Sinclair (Zoology); and H. D. Kitson (Psychology). Harvey B. Lemon volunteered to serve as the group's first secretary.

The Innominates soon settled into a pattern of dinner and discussion at the Quadrangle Club, with occasional field trips and picnics. Over the years, attendance at meetings and the degree of formality and the scientific rigor of presentations fluctuated. The club carefully monitored its membership roster and preserved the original plan of admission by means of nomination and election. Submission of resignation was required for those wishing to leave the club, so that vacancies could be filled with active, bright, and interesting younger scholars. Gradually, the number of members, both active and inactive, grew to over forty. By the early 1940s, the secretary's minutes show that non-University of Chicago scholars were also inducted. Although members and topics of discussion predominantly represented the physical and biological sciences, membership and speaker lists attest to the participation of others, including anthropologists Fay-Cooper Cole and Fred Eggan.

The X-Club originated as a faculty club similar to, but distinct from, the Innominates. At an organizational meeting held January 10, 1928, X-Club founders established that the objective of the club would be "to broaden the scientific knowledge and interests of its members, and to promote acquaintance and friendship among its members, by meeting monthly for the presentation of some scientific subject by some member, and the informal discussion of the topic by the group." The initial concept of the club was that it should provide a forum of exchange for a maximum of twenty-five junior faculty members in the physical and biological sciences. Charter members were Walter Bartky (Astronomy), J. A. Bearden (Physics), W. W. Watson (Physics), Paul Cannon (Pathology), G. M. Dack (Bacteriology), and R. W. Gerard (Physiology). Like the Innominates, the X-Club selected members via nominations and ballot and quickly established a routine of dinner at the Quadrangle Club followed by lecture. Although the X-Club began strictly as a community of physical and biological scientists, it soon embraced social scientists, and in the 1960s and 70s it began to admit scholars from the humanities in order to foster interdisciplinary discussion.

The Innominates and the X-Club co-existed at the University of Chicago for many years, often sharing the same members and even holding occasional joint meetings. Neither club ever required its members to pay dues. When membership in both clubs began to dwindle, Donald Rowley (Pathology and Committee on Immunology) and Donald Fiske (Psychology) initiated the idea of a merger. In 1980, the members of both clubs voted to integrate the two organizations and member lists, thereby forming the Innominates/X-Club. The records of both predecessor clubs and of the combined Innominates/X-Club were presented to the University of Chicago Archives in 1982 after continuing decline in participation seemed to presage the club's demise. The consolidated club continued, however, despite diminished interest, until 1996 when it became inactive. Although presently dormant, the club has never been formally dissolved.

Scope Note

The Innominates / X-Club Records consists of 2.75 linear feet of material and cover the period 1917-1982. The collection contains records for the Innominates and the X-Club. Both clubs

were created by and for faculty in the physical, biological, and social sciences at the University of Chicago. Files include membership rosters, correspondence, speakers records, nominations, secretaries lists, ballots, announcements, and procedures.

The records have been divided into three series. Series I, Innominates, contains files for this science faculty club and covers the years 1917-1979. The files have been arranged chronologically. Series II, X-Club, contains files for this club which was made up primarily of junior faculty members in the physical and biological sciences. The second series covers the years 1941-1981 and has been arranged alphabetically. The files in Series III help documents the merger between the two faculty clubs in 1980. This series contains discussions and ballots regard the merger, rosters, questionnaires, and combined membership lists. These files have been arranged chronologically.

Related Resources

The following related collection is located in the Special Collections Research Center:

Tuesday Club Records

Subject Headings

- Innominates
- X-Club
- University of Chicago
- Science clubs
- Universities and colleges--Chicago, IL--Societies, etc.

INVENTORY

Series I: Innominates

Box 1

Folder 1

Innominates, Rosters and Correspondence, 1917 - 1948.

Box 1

Folder 2

Innominates, Rosters and Speakers Record, 1917 - 1949.

Box 1

Folder 3

Innominates, Roster, 1959 - 1960.

Box 1

Folder 4

Innominates, Membership Correspondence, Roster, 1961 - 1962.

Box 1

Folder 5

Innominates, Membership Correspondence, Roster, Nominations 1962-1963.

Box 1

Folder 6

Innominates, Membership Correspondence, Roster, Nominations 1963 - 1964.

Box 1

Folder 7

Innominates, Membership Correspondence, Roster, Nominations, 1964 - 1966.

Box 1

Folder 8

Innominates, Membership Correspondence, Roster, Nominations, 1966 - 1967.

Box 1

Folder 9

Innominates, Membership Correspondence, Secretaries List (history), Roster, Nominations, 1967 - 1968.

Box 2

Folder 1

Innominates, Membership Correspondence, Roster, Nominations, 1968 - 1969.

Box 2

Folder 2

Innominates, Membership Correspondence, Roster, Nominations, 1969 - 1970.

Box 2

Folder 3

Innominates, Membership Correspondence, Roster, Nominations, 1970 - 1971.

Box 2

Folder 4

Innominates, Membership Correspondence, Roster, Nominations, 1971 - 1972.

Box 2

Folder 5

Innominates, Membership Correspondence, Roster, Nominations, 1972 - 1973.

Box 2

Folder 6

Innominates, Membership Correspondence, Nominations, Roster, 1973 - 1974.

Box 2

Folder 7

Innominates, Membership Correspondence, Roster, 1974-1977.

Box 2

Folder 8

Innominates, Membership Correspondence, R.S. Berry, sec'y., 1975 - 1976.

Box 2

Folder 9

Innominates, Membership Correspondence, Nominations, 1976 - 1977.

Box 2

Folder 10

Innominates, Membership Correspondence, Roster, 1977 - 1978.

Box 2

Folder 11

Innominates, Membership Correspondence, Roster, 1978 - 1979.

Box 2

Folder 12

Innominates, Membership Lists and Forms, 1978 - 1979.

Box 2

Folder 13

Innominates, Ballots

Box 2

Folder 14

Innominates, List of Secretaries, Rules for Secretaries.

Box 2

Folder 15

Innominates, Stochastics (membership lists), 1968, 1970 - 1978.

Series II: X-Club

Box 3

Folder 1

1954 - 1967.

Box 3

Folder 2-3

X-Club, Correspondence, 1941 - 1963.

Box 3

Folder 4

X-Club, Correspondence, 1964 - 1968.

Box 3

Folder 5

X-Club, Correspondence, 1971 - 1974.

Box 3

Folder 6-7

X-Club, Correspondence, Nomination (voting ballots), Membership Lists, 1975 - 1976.

Box 3

Folder 8

X-Club, Correspondence, 1974-1978; Addendum, 1969-1974 (yellow notebook)

Box 4

Folder 1

X-Club, Membership Lists, 1958 - 1966.

Box 4

Folder 2

X-Club, Membership Lists, Attendance Records, Merger vote, 1981

Box 4

Folder 3

X-Club, Minutes, 1957 - 1972. (bound volume)

Box 4

Folder 4

X-Club, Minutes, 1972 - 1980. (bound volume)

Box 4

Folder 5

X-Club, New Members, Attendance, Membership Lists, 1967 - 1974. (yellow notebook)

Box 5

Folder 1

1) Statement of Purpose and Rules of Procedure. 2) Copy of Referendum Ballot dated 1/30/64.

Box 5

Folder 2

X-Club, Procedures, 1974, 1979 - 1981.

Box 5

Folder 3

X-Club, Quadrangle Club Menu(s) from the early 1970's (?).

Box 5

Folder 4

1941 - 1969. Also, list of secretaries (maroon notebook)

Box 5

Folder 5

X-Club, Speakers and Topics, 1974 - 1975.

Series III: X-Nominates

Box 6

Folder 1

X-Nominates, Discussion (Voting Ballots) over merger, Nominations, 1979 - 1980.

Box 6

Folder 2

X-Nominates, Roster, Membership Correspondence, Voting Ballots, 1980-1981

Box 6

Folder 3

X-Nominates, Roster, Membership Correspondence, Questionnaires, 1981.

Box 6

Folder 4

X-Nominates, Combined Lists, questionnaires, 1981.

Box 6

Folder 5

X-Nominates, Speakers and Topics, 1981 - 1982.

Box 6

Folder 6

X-Nominates, Membership Correspondence, Nominations, Roster, 1982 - 1983.