

University of Chicago Library

Guide to the University of Chicago Office of the President, Mason Administration Records 1910-1929



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.OFCPRESMASON
Title	University of Chicago. Office of the President. Mason Administration. Records
Date	1910-1929
Size	15 linear feet (30 boxes)
Repository	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.
Abstract	This collection contains records of the University of Chicago Office of the President, covering the administration of Max Mason, president from 1925-1929. Included are administrative records such as correspondence, reports, publications, budgets and personnel material.

Information on Use

Access

The records of the University of Chicago Office of the President, Mason Administration, contain no restrictions and are open for research in accordance with the University of Chicago Library's "Policies and Regulations Governing the Use of Manuscript and Archival Collections."

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: University of Chicago. Office of the President. Mason Administration. Records, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Historical Note

Max Mason served as President of the University of Chicago from 1925 to 1928. Not only was Mason the first president who had not been a founding member of the university faculty, he also came from outside the university, and had comparatively little administrative experience. By recruiting a young researcher from outside the university, the trustees sought new ideas, dedication to research, and strong relationships with students and the public.

Hailing from Madison, Wisconsin, Mason had previously served on the mathematical physics faculty of the University of Wisconsin. During World War I, he headed a large research project that developed the "hydrophone," a submarine-detection device that was the basis for later sonar equipment during the war.

During Mason's tenure as president, the university began the second phase of a major development campaign that would result in new facilities for a number of science departments, a new Divinity School building, a new football stadium and many other major building projects. The size of the faculty also increased by nearly 20 percent during this time.

When Mason resigned in 1928 to accept a position at the Rockefeller Foundation, he concluded a relatively short term as president. Following Mason's resignation, the law scholar and administrator Frederic C. Woodward stepped in to serve as Acting President.

Scope Note

The records of the Office of the President, Mason Administration, represent the activities of President Mason and his immediate circle of Central Administration associates, as well as work in the University of Chicago's divisions, departments, committees, and other administrative units. The collection thus constitutes not only documentation of the Office of the President, but a varied record of the administrative activities of the university.

While most of the documents in the collection date from the years in which Mason served as President, material dating to earlier administrations can also be found - staff of the President's Office often collected such material to provide historical or biographical context to a current topic.

The collection is divided into five series, each of which contains alphabetical subject files. This organization, including the file headings themselves, is generally consistent with the original arrangement of files kept by staff in the Office of the President.

Series I, General Files, contains a variety of correspondence, publications, reports, minutes and other administrative material. File headings include personal names, administrative units, and topical terms. Headings are sometimes very general ("France") while others are quite precise ("Housing and Real Estate, Office of, property holdings outside the University, Rawson, Frederick W. Laboratory of Medicine").

Series II-IV are organized according to the larger administrative units of the university - The departments, divisions and schools that compose its academic structure. Also arranged alphabetically, these files contain financial and personnel material, as well as correspondence, reports, publications, and routine administrative documents.

Series V contains budgets and personnel appointments, arranged alphabetically by administrative unit. Related correspondence, notes and drafts are also filed with appointments and budgets.

Most researchers will find it necessary to browse the alphabetical inventories in order to identify files relevant to a specific subject. For example, a study of student life might involve consultation of files such as "Discipline of individual students," "Foreign students," "Moral, Social and Religious Welfare of Students, Committee on," "Student Organizations, Publications and Exhibitions, Board of," "Undergraduate Council," and so on.

Correspondence of key administrators is distributed across the collection, some of it located under the name of the individual and some under the name of a department, school, or other institutional unit. To search for the correspondence of important administrators such as Frederic C. Woodward, Harold Swift, or Henry Gordon Gale, the researcher will need to be aware of which administrative responsibilities each held and locate headings in the inventory related to those roles.

Related Resources

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html>

University of Chicago. Board of Trustees. Minutes

University of Chicago. Office of the President. Harper, Judson and Burton Administrations. Records

University of Chicago. Office of the President. Hutchins Administration. Records

University of Chicago. Office of the President. Kimpton Administration. Records

University of Chicago. Office of the President. Beadle Administration. Records

University of Chicago. Office of the President. Levi Administration. Records

University of Chicago. Office of the President. Wilson Administration. Records

University of Chicago. Office of the President. Gray Administration. Records

University of Chicago. Office of the President. Sonnenschein Administration. Records

Subject Headings

- Mason, Max, 1877-1961
- Woodward, Frederic Campbell, 1874-
- University of Chicago. Office of the President
- University of Chicago --Administration

- University of Chicago -- History
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