Guide to the University of Chicago Society for Social Research Records 1923-1956
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Descriptive Summary

Identifier ICU.SPCL.SSR

Title University of Chicago. Society for Social Research. Records

Date 1923-1956

Size 3 linear ft. (6 boxes)

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

Abstract The Society for Social Research was established in 1921 as an association of graduate students in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. The records of the Society consist of constitutions, minutes, correspondence, and abstracts of papers from the Society's regular meetings, as well as correspondence, programs, and abstracts from its annual Summer Institute.

Information on Use

Access No restrictions

Citation When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: University of Chicago. Society for Social Research. Records, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Historical Note

The Society for Social Research was established in 1921 as an association of graduate students in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Unlike the Sociology Club, an earlier group which had admitted students, instructors, and others acceptable to two-thirds of its members, the Society limited membership to graduate students and those who had "attained professional standards of research" (1:1). Robert E. Park, a leader in forming the organization, was elected the first president of the Society and played a significant role in defining its goals and programs. Other faculty members who served as officers or participated actively in the Society's affairs included Ernest W. Burgess, Fay-Cooper Cole, Ellsworth Faris, Everett C. Hughes, Gordon Laing, William F. Ogburn, Stuart Rice, Lloyd Warner, and Louis Wirth. While intended originally to encourage empirical research in sociology, the Society's interdisciplinary approach also attracted support from anthropologists, economists, historians, and political scientists at the University.
In 1923, the Society held its first Summer Institute, a forum for papers and round-table discussions by students, faculty, and alumni of the University and leading social scientists from other institutions. Themes for individual Summer Institutes ranged from "Regionalism and Crime" (1932), "Morale" (1941), and "Wartime Trends and Post-War Planning" (1943), to "Communications and the Urban Community" (1949). Reports on sessions of the Summer Institute and regular meeting programs of the Society appeared in its Bulletin, a publication which also provided abstracts of selected scholarly papers, lists of books available through the Society at reduced rates, and brief notices on the research interests and activities of Society members.

The Society for Social Research continued as the graduate student organization of the Department of Sociology and as publisher of a new series of the Bulletin initiated in 1975.

Scope Note

Series I: GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Although incomplete, the administrative records of the Society for Social Research contain important information on the development of social science research at the University of Chicago. Minutes of the executive committee (1:2) record suggestions by Park and other faculty members on the Society’s role and programs. The general minutes (1:3-4) provide brief summaries of lectures delivered at the Society’s meetings, including Albion Small on distinctions between types of research (May 1924); Fay-Cooper Cole on the culture area (March 1928); Harold Lasswell on the objectification of psychoanalytic interviews (June 1933); Ernest W. Burgess on family research in Russia (December 1933); John Gaus on social science and social planning (June 1934); and Thomas French on a psychodynamic analysis of Karl Marx (February 1945). Membership applications to the Society (1:7-2:2) contain biographical data and notes on individual research projects, while the general correspondence (2:3-5) deals with the scheduling of guest speakers and the operation of the Society’s book sales program. Guy Johnson, Max Rheinstein, Hans Speier, and Walter Sulzbach are among the scholars represented in a group of more complete abstracts (2:6) from 1936-1937.

Series II: SUMMER INSTITUTE CORRESPONDENCE AND PROGRAMS

All correspondence, memoranda, and programs for the Society’s Summer Institutes have been arranged chronologically beginning with the Fifth Institute in 1927. In the case of four Institutes (1932-1934 and 1942), abstracts of papers by Edward Buehrig, Evelyn Crook, Philip Hauser, Homer Hoyt, E. H. Sutherland, Louis Wirth, Florian Znaniecki, and others are included.

Related Resources

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

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**Subject Headings**

- Park, Robert Ezra, 1864-1944
- University of Chicago. Society for Social Research
- Social sciences-Study and teaching
- Social sciences-Research

**INVENTORY**

**Series I: General Administration**

**Box 1**

**Folder 1**

Constitutions of the Sociology Club (1916, amended 1923) and the Society for Social Research (undated)

**Box 1**

**Folder 2**

Executive Committee minutes, 1924-1929, 1938-1944

**Box 1**

**Folder 3**

General minutes, 1924-1933

**Box 1**

**Folder 4**

General minutes, 1934-1935, 1943-1945, 1952

**Box 1**

**Folder 5**

Financial records, 1927-1945

**Box 1**

**Folder 6**

Membership lists, 1925, 1945, and undated

**Box 1**

**Folder 7**

Membership applications and renewals, 1926-1942

**Box 1**

**Folder 8**

Membership applications and renewals, 1943

**Box 2**

**Folder 1**

Membership applications and renewals, 1944-1945

**Box 2**
Folder 2
    Membership applications and renewals, 1946
Box 2
Folder 3
    General correspondence, 1926-1932
Box 2
Folder 4
    General correspondence, 1933-1939
Box 2
Folder 5
    General correspondence, 1942-1945, 1951-1953
Box 2
Folder 6
    Abstracts of papers delivered at regular meetings, 1936-1937
Box 2
Folder 7
    C. R. Henderson Criminology Society, financial records and membership list, 1949-1950

Series II: Summer Institute, Correspondence and Programs
Box 3
Folder 1
    1927
Box 3
Folder 2
    1928
Box 3
Folder 3
    1929
Box 3
Folder 4
    1930
Box 3
Folder 5
    1931
Box 3
Folder 6
    1932 (includes abstracts)
Box 3
Folder 7
    1933 (includes abstracts)
Box 3
Folder 8
    1934
Box 3
Folder 9
    1934 abstracts
Folder 6
  1949
Box 5
Folder 7
  1950
Box 5
Folder 8
  1951
Box 5
Folder 9
  1952
Box 5
Folder 10
  1952
Box 5
Folder 11
  1956

Series III: Addenda

Box 6
Folder 1
  Zeta Phi Record Book
Box 6
Folder 2
  Zeta Phi correspondence, etc.
Box 6
Folder 3
  SSR correspondence and constitution
Box 6
Folder 4
  Newsletter
Box 6
Folder 5
  Annual Institute
Box 6
Folder 6
  Dept. of Sociology
Box 6
Folder 7
  Society for Social Research
Box 6
Folder 8
  SSR records
Box 6
Folder 9
  Society for Social Research, 1958-9
Box 6
Folder 10
Minutes of the Steering Committee, SSR
Box 6
Folder 11
Institute for the Society of Social Research, 1960
Box 6
Folder 12
General correspondence
Box 6
Folder 13
Executive Committee
Box 6
Folder 14
Histories
Box 6
Folder 15
Announcements
Box 6
Folder 16
Talks
Box 6
Folder 17
Financial
Box 6
Folder 18
Sociology, University
Box 6
Folder 19
Miscellaneous