Harcum Junior College records
1918-2016, 80 linear feet

Finding aid prepared by Sarah Leu and Anastasia Matijkiw through the Historical Society of Pennsylvania's Hidden Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories using information provided by Harcum College Archives

This finding aid was produced using the Archivists’ Toolkit
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## Summary Information

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<th>Repository</th>
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<td>Creator</td>
<td>Harcum Junior College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Harcum Junior College records</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date [inclusive]</td>
<td>1918-2016</td>
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**Abstract**

Harcum College is a two-year associate degree granting school located in Bryn Mawr, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. Established as Harcum Post Graduate School by pianist and music educator Edith Hatcher Harcum in 1915, Harcum began as a university preparatory school for women, but added junior college-level classes shortly thereafter and officially became Harcum Junior College in the 1920s. In 1955, Harcum became the first two-year college in Pennsylvania authorized to grant associate degrees. As of 2016, the school, now known as Harcum College, offers over 20 degree programs to traditional and non-traditional students. The Harcum Junior College records, 1918-2016, consist of administrative records, printed matter and published materials, photographs and audiovisual materials, oversized materials, newspaper clippings, ephemera, and other materials documenting the school and its faculty, students, buildings, curriculum, and activities.
Biographical/Historical Note

Harcum College is a two-year associate degree granting school located in Bryn Mawr, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. Established as Harcum Post Graduate School by pianist and music educator Edith Hatcher Harcum in 1915, Harcum began as a university preparatory school for women, but added junior college-level classes shortly thereafter and officially became Harcum Junior College in the 1920s. In 1955, Harcum became the first two-year college in Pennsylvania authorized to grant associate degrees. Harcum started admitting men in the 1970s, but didn't become officially co-educational until 2003. As of 2016, the school, now known as Harcum College, offers over 20 degree programs to traditional and non-traditional students.

"Harcum College from its inception has sought to enrich its graduates by broadening their intellectual and cultural horizons with practical, experiential education and exposure to the liberal arts. The origin of Harcum can be traced back to February 1913 when Edith Hatcher, a talented concert pianist and daughter of prominent Virginia clergyman and educator Dr. William E. Hatcher, married Octavius Marvin Harcum, another Virginian.

"Mrs. Harcum studied music, performed piano concerts in Europe and the U.S., and was head of the music department at The Shipley School in Bryn Mawr, PA. She decided after the birth of her first child that 'the concert career did not offer a chance for family stability' so the couple chose a venture that would combine her 'talents as an educator and artist and his business vision and ability.'

"The Harcum Post Graduate School opened on October 1, 1915 in Melville Hall in Bryn Mawr which was home to the Harcum family as well as the School's academic building. The first class had three students and five pianos. Mrs. Harcum's stated goal was to 'start a school where the individual talent of each girl would be treated as an integral part of her education.' To help her plan the curriculum, she had as consultants her sister Orrie Hatcher, a faculty member at Bryn Mawr College, a faculty member from Harvard University, and the President of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Though her own expertise was in the fine arts, Edith was also committed to providing a strong academic program.

"In its early years, Harcum was a preparatory school, giving women students the skills needed for college study. It quickly grew, soon adding junior college-level courses. The 'lower school' program was eliminated in the 1920s, and the junior college program was put in place. Edith Harcum was head of school, and Mr. Harcum, or 'Uncle Marvin' as the students called him, was responsible for finances. When he was killed in a car accident in 1920, Edith assumed the Presidency. She remained in that post for more than 30 years with the exception of one academic year, 1945-1946, when Dr. John Barber served as President.

"Harcum grew steadily through the 1930s and 1940s with a student enrollment of 185 in 1948. Mrs. Harcum's individualized approach placed the academic focus on the needs of each student. However, Harcum was a proprietary institution and faced financial difficulties. In 1952, it could no longer run as a profitable enterprise; Mrs. Harcum declared bankruptcy.

"The Junto is a non-profit educational corporation founded in 1941 to promote adult education in the Philadelphia region, adopting the name of a group originally co-founded by Benjamin Franklin. In 1952
The Junto purchased the assets of Harcum College for possible use as a residential college for adults but soon decided to continue its mission as a two-year college for women. Philip Klein, one of the founders of The Junto assumed leadership of Harcum and it was re-opened under a nonprofit charter. In 1955, Pennsylvania granted the College the right to be the first two-year college in the Commonwealth's history to confer the associate of arts and the associate of science degrees. Mrs. Harcum passed away in 1958 at the age of 80, leaving a legacy of compassionate and dedicated service to students and the community.

"Extensive building and expansion occurred at Harcum in the 1960's under the direction of President Michael Duzy, with the addition of the Academic Center, Pennswood Hall, and Klein Hall. Through expansion in its neighborhood, the Bryn Mawr campus reached a size of 13 acres. Harcum opened a nursery school for teacher training, and in the 1960s and 1970s, began programs in medical sciences. [Starting in 2000], Harcum launched programs in nursing, occupational therapy assistant, physical therapist assistant, interior and residential design, and radiologic technology, among others.

"Since 2007, under the leadership of Dr. Jon Jay DeTemple, Harcum's Charles Trout Library underwent a $1.2 million refurbishment, the historic Little Theatre was completely renovated, new programs were added, and Harcum expanded its academic offerings throughout the region with many Partnership Sites in Philadelphia, Reading, and Chester, Pennsylvania as overall enrollment increased to nearly 1,700, the highest in its history.

"Harcum will continue to help students find appropriate directions for their academic and personal development leading to specialized careers, while, as Mrs. Harcum noted 'respecting each student as an individual with personal needs, interests, aptitudes and aspirations.'"

**Bibliography:**


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**Scope and Content Note**

The Harcum Junior College records, 1918-2016, consist of administrative records, printed matter and published materials, photographs and audiovisual materials, oversized materials, newspaper clippings, ephemera, and other materials documenting the school and its faculty, students, buildings, curriculum, and activities. There are several artifacts, books, artworks, and other objects associated with this collection that were not included as part of this survey. A more complete inventory listing is available on-site.

Administrative materials include department records, subject files, financial materials, curriculum materials and syllabi, and other administrative records. A sample of available materials is below.

- Administrative records (articles of incorporation and amendments, tax documents, and other records), 1925-1990
- Blank admissions application, 1927
Harcum Junior College records

- Board materials (may be restricted), 1980s-1990s
- Class information (some materials are restricted), 1943-1997
- Commencement speeches and programs, 1940-2016
- Financial aid materials
- Institutional research (restricted), 1997
- Library Archives Files: Folders with administrative records, donation materials, materials on artwork in the Library, grants, statistics, correspondence, committee meeting minutes and agendas, staff meeting minutes, event materials, library newsletters, sales records, surveys, work study materials, library aid applications, Friends of the Library program materials, circulation records, annual reports, inter-library loan agreements, college history materials, expansion materials, staff records, and other materials
- Middle States Accreditation materials (restricted), 1985-2006
- Planning and assessment materials (e.g. student surveys, statistics, Provost direct reports, end of year reports, research and master plan, and other materials), 1980s-2000s
- Policy and Procedure Committee records (restricted), 2003-2006
- Research files on past presidents ("Harcumites")
- Subject files: Section I. Departmental and committee files (meeting minutes, memos, reports, guidelines); faculty and student committees (Science Division, Student Affairs Committee, dental program, and other subjects); Section II. Organized by year with programs, ephemera, events materials, printouts relating to events, and other materials, 1958-2015; Section III. Alphabetical administrative files (admissions, business office, alumni, governance, counseling services, curriculum, development, faculty affairs, financial statements, long term plans, grants, various college divisions and programs, graduation, and others)
- Syllabi collection, 1991-2003

Printed matter and published materials from the school include school publications, student publications, promotional materials, and other printed matter. A sample of available materials is below.

- Alumni publications (newsletter, booklets), 1950-1974, and "Patches" alumni magazine, 1974-2015
- College catalogs, 1925-1934, 1940-2016
- Handbooks for faculty, staff, students and committees, 1950-2016
- Harcum brochures and look books, circa 1930s-2004
- "Murals at Harcum, 1967-1987" (publication)
- Student newspapers, 1980s-2000s
- Yearbooks, 1918-2016 (Names for the yearbook include: "Purple Yarns" in early years, "Purple Patches" from 1923 to 1953 or 1954, and "Harlequin" after the 1950s.)

Other printed materials in the collection include a large number of newspaper clippings (both paper and electronic "clippings" available on a hard drive), mostly from local publications, relating to Harcum and its activities, 1920s-present; histories of the College, buildings, dental program, and Bryn Mawr, PA; and maps, booklets, and brochures for Greater-Philadelphia Area, Toronto, and elsewhere. There are
also various types of College ephemera and memorabilia, 1920-1952, 1950s-1960s, some of it stored in scrapbooks.

Photographic materials, 1918-2016, include: prints, negatives and contact sheets, slides, framed images, graduation proofs, professional commencement albums and other albums and photographic materials that depict the people, places, events, and buildings (and renovation projects) of Harcum College.

A/V and digital materials, circa 1920-2016, in the collection include: VHS cassettes, U-matic tapes, reel-to-reel films, DVDs, audiocassettes, CDs, and flash drives. A finding aid for the audiovisual materials is available on-site. These materials are organized into groupings: promotion and marketing, commencement exercises, lectures/events, interviews, and histories. Some images and films relate specifically to the dental program, but there are also "home movies" of Harcum, 1920-1940, with commentary recorded in the 1980s, and other materials. There is an audiocassette with an oral history conducted by Charles H. Trout of Virginia Lee Hutcheson (Class of 1933) reminiscing about her time at Harcum and related memories, including anecdotes and memories of Edith Hatcher Harcum. The oral history has been transcribed and digitized onto a flash drive.

Oversized materials in the collection include screen printed posters for theatrical productions, awards and certificates, technical drawings for renovations, maps, floor plans, display boards from various departments with photographs and technical drawings, and other materials.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Harcum College Archives

Conditions Governing Access Note

Contact Harcum College Archives for information about accessing this collection. Some materials in this collection may be restricted. Existing restrictions are listed in this description when known, but additional restrictions may be in place.

Processing Information Note

Summary descriptive information on this collection was compiled in 2014-2016 as part of a project conducted by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania to make better known and more accessible the largely hidden collections of small, primarily volunteer run repositories in the Philadelphia area. The Hidden Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories (HCI-PSAR) was funded by a grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

This is a preliminary finding aid. No physical processing, rehousing, reorganizing, or folder listing was accomplished during the HCI-PSAR project.
In some cases, more detailed inventories or finding aids may be available on-site at the repository where this collection is held; please contact Harcum College Archives directly for more information.

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials Note
Harcum College Archives: Harcum College Archives small manuscripts collection

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

• Harcum Junior College

Geographic Name(s)

• Bryn Mawr (Pa.)
• Montgomery County (Pa.)

Subject(s)

• Junior college libraries
• Junior college students
• Junior colleges
• Junior colleges--administration
• Student newspapers and periodicals