

Inventory of the

# **Associated Women Students**

In the

Northern Illinois University Archives

**UA 45**

## INTRODUCTION

The University Archives acquired the records of the Associated Women Students (A.W.S.) organization of Northern Illinois University when the group dissolved in 1973. Literary rights are dedicated to the public and there are no restrictions on access to these records.

3 boxes, 1 oversize volume  
2.75 linear feet  
1942-1973

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Associated Women Students collection documents the history of an important social organization for women on the Northern Illinois University campus from the early 1950's to the dissolution of the group in 1973. Correspondence, meeting minutes, and financial records document the business affairs of the Associated Women Students while programs, handbooks, and scrapbooks trace the social and charitable activities Associated Women Students pursued. Most records from the Women's League, the Associated Women Student predecessor, have been lost.

## HISTORICAL SKETCH

In November of 1941, five Northern women attended a state convention of the Illinois Association of Women's Leagues in Rock Island to learn about the purposes and activities of the group. Delegates from eight other Illinois colleges attended that meeting whose theme was "Women and the Present Day Crisis." On the morning of November 8, the Illinois Association of Women's Leagues invited the Northern delegation to become members. After returning to DeKalb, these students spent the winter organizing a local chapter.

The first meeting of the Women's League on the campus took place March 20, 1942. The charter members drafted a constitution to establish a group whose objective was "to coordinate women's activities, to create a spirit of unity among college women, to develop a sense of responsibility toward each other, to encourage the women of the school to make their citizenship operative, and to promote student government." All women students enrolled at Northern automatically became members.

The League sponsored many social activities: Women's Week, Bridal Fair, Big-Sister program of Freshman Week, Christmas Tea, Mom's Day, and Friday night dances soon became campus traditions. The League also published student handbooks and promoted the growth of student rights and student government.

In 1947, the Northern Women's League voted to affiliate with the National Conference of the Intercollegiate Associated Women Students but did not change its name on the local campus

until May 17, 1954. For twenty years the Associated Women Students at Northern continued to pursue the goals set in that first meeting in 1942. Finally, the group disbanded in 1973 and its role since then has been taken by several campus programs which address the collective problems and goals of women on the Northern Illinois University campus, the Women's Studies Center and University Resources for Women.

### COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	1	Constitution, History, 1953-1972
	2	Correspondence, 1944-1972
	3	Financial Records, 1942-1972
	4	Minutes: A.W.S. Meetings, 1953-1964
	5	Minutes, Mass Meetings, 1954-1971
	6	Minutes, Officers' Meetings, 1954-1971
	7	Newsletters, 1962-1972
2	1	Activities Calendars, 1958-1971
	2	Activities Carnival, 1952-1958
	3	Big-Little Sister Tea, 1958-1965
	4-5	Bridal Fairs, 1963-1973
	6	Christmas Programs, 1957-1972
	7-8	National Convention, 1967-1969, 1971
	9	Dad's Day Program, 1954-1957
	10	Miscellaneous Programs, 1954-1971
	11	Scrapbooks, 1942-1943
	12-13	Leadership Development, 1960-1970
3	6 vols.	Scrapbooks