

UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES
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CAMPUS UNREST
COLLECTION, 1965-1979
1.75 linear feet

ACCESS: The collection is open for research.

PROCESSED BY: Sabina S. Nizami, 2001, and Amber Place, 2003.

Background

In the 1960s, a time characterized by anti-war protests and the Civil Rights Movement, college campuses around the world began to take part in widespread political and social activism. In 1968, Fresno State College (now California State University, Fresno), became another player in this political struggle as its campus was transformed from a traditional, primarily agricultural and teacher's college, into one in which conservative and liberal factions openly and publicly fought, both through the administrative structure of the university and through campus-wide protests, which often turned violent.

Campus unrest at Fresno State began in 1968 when Frederic Ness, the president of the university, chose not to retain English faculty member Robert Mezey in spite of a fervent recommendation from both the English Department and Dale Burtner, the dean of the School of Arts and Sciences. Mezey had become a source of controversy on the campus and in the larger community when, in November of 1967, he was invited to speak at the "Panel on Pot," a debate and discussion about marijuana. During the presentation, Mezey commented that marijuana had not been proven harmful and that the laws against its consumption were unjust. After these statements were made public, and often misinterpreted as an endorsement for drug use, complaints about Mezey's liberal and unlawful politics began to pour into Ness's office and the local newspaper, *The Fresno Bee*.

After Ness terminated Mezey's employment, student and faculty protests began. They continued as Ness released a prominent Black Muslim instructor, Marvin Jackman (Marvin X). His termination brought on more protests. The publicity and scandal associated with these cases led to Ness's resignation in the fall of 1969.

On October 28, 1969, Karl Falk was appointed as acting president. After only five days, Falk announced a massive realignment of the college structure. Dale Burtner, the dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, was reassigned and replaced with Phillip Walker. Harold Walker, the executive vice president, was reassigned and replaced with James Fikes. These reassignments once again caused a rift in the campus community, resulting in even more protests. Falk also instigated layoffs and curtailing of funds in the Experimental College, the Ethnic Studies Program and the Educational Opportunities Program.

These changes resulted in peaceful as well as violent student activism. Protests continued and began to be connected with larger societal issues, including the Vietnam War.

With the campus in an uproar, the search began for a permanent administrator to relieve Falk of his duties. On July 14, 1970, Norman Baxter was inaugurated as the president of Fresno State College. His presidency was marked by the cancellation of the La Raza Studies program and campus unrest in response to his administrative policies. The Student Senate, in a vote of nineteen to four, administered a vote of "no confidence" in Baxter's ability to run the school.

Background (cont.)

At three o'clock on Friday, December 4, 1970, the tension and distrust of the Baxter administration increased exponentially. The dean of the School of Humanities, Ralph Rea, accompanied by campus policemen, marched into the English Department and hand delivered letters of dismissal to Eugene Zumwalt, the department's chairman, and Roger Chittick, the assistant chairman. The men and the department's secretaries were then forcibly removed from the office. Another police officer and a maintenance man entered and began sealing the office and its contents, padlocking filing cabinets and barricading the entrance with metal plates. Policemen also guarded the door.

Rea continued exerting control of the English Department as he was made the acting chairman, replacing Zumwalt. In an effort to calm what the administration thought was an ideologically radical faculty, Rea altered faculty roles, fired instructors, and changed programs within the department.

Scope and Content Note

The Campus Unrest collection measures 1.75 linear feet and dates from 1965 to 1979 and undated. The collection is arranged in five series: Administrations, Ethnic minorities, Faculty and student activism, Other universities, and Policies and reports. It primarily covers unrest that took place on the campus of Fresno State College but also contains information about unrest around the state, country, and world. This information was collected over time by the University Archives from various sources.

The **Administrations** series (1967-1979 and undated) provides detailed information about the administrations that were in power during the period of campus unrest on the Fresno State campus. This specifically includes records relating to presidents Frederic Ness, Karl Falk, and Norman Baxter. The series is arranged in the order of their presidencies.

The Frederic Ness subseries primarily covers personnel issues that his administration dealt with during his presidency, with specific details about the dismissals of Marvin Jackman (Marvin X) and Robert Mezey. There are also records related to Ness's resignation.

The Karl Falk material deals primarily with public opinion and personnel issues, including the demotion of Dale Burtner. There is also significant information about the public opinion surrounding Falk's actions as president of the university as well as the protests that ensued in response to his administrative policies.

The Norman Baxter section includes information about how Baxter dealt with personnel issues, protests that took place on campus and in the community, and public opinion concerning his administrative policies. The Baxter-Volpp faculty survey and Fresno Review Panel folders

Scope and Content Note (cont.)

give information about official audits that investigated the lawfulness of the administration's actions.

The **Ethnic minorities** series (1968-1971, 1978-1979 and undated) details the actions of minority students on campus and the policies that affected their education. There is specific information about African American and Chicano students as well as the Educational Opportunity Program (E.O.P.) and the Ethnic Studies Program

The **Faculty and student activism** series (1965-1971 and undated) contains information on political activism on the Fresno State campus. This consists of information on Viet Nam War protests, a grape boycott with the United Farm Workers and Black Panthers' activity as well as issues specific to the university, including publications from Students for a Democratic Society (S.D.S.), and activism related to academic freedom.

The **Other universities** series (1965-1971, 1978 and undated) provides information about campus unrest at other universities.

There is detailed information about unrest that took place at other California universities. This primarily consists of information regarding activities that took place at other schools within the California State College system, with a specific emphasis on the San Francisco campus, and those within the University of California system. There is also information on Stanford University and the University of Southern California.

The information on universities in the United States details campus unrest that took place on campuses across the country, primarily on the East Coast or in the Midwest.

The International subseries contains information on unrest that took place on college campuses in Europe, including the Free University of Berlin and the London School of Economics.

There are also Editorials and speculation as to the cause of campus unrest, both in the United States and internationally. This includes diagnoses of the problem as well as ideas for change.

The **Policies and reports** series (1967-1973, 1979 and undated) includes information on the policies of Ronald Reagan, Governor of California, and Glenn S. Dumke, Chancellor of the California State College system. There are also numerous reports on the unrest at Fresno State College. These include an identification of the problem, description of campus activities, and proposals for dealing with the unrest.

Related Collections

Frederic W. Ness Papers

Contains information on Ness's presidency, including the Marvin X and Robert Mezey incidents. There is also a report that Ness wrote while on leave from Fresno State College titled *Student Unrest in Great Britain* (1969). See Box 2, Professional; Fresno State presidency and Box 2, Professional; Reports.

University Archives

President Ness's address to the Board of Trustees presenting the master plan, June 26, 1968 (1/4" reel to reel)

Marvin X television statements, October 1969 (1/4" reel to reel)

Seib, Kenneth A. *The Slow Death of Fresno State: A California Campus under Reagan and Brown*. Palo Alto: Ramparts Press, 1970. (fac LD729.6.F7 S44 1979)

Box no. Description

Box 1

Administrations

Ness, Frederic

Editorials, 1967-1970 and undated

Newspaper clippings, 1968-1969, 1977 and undated

Personnel issues

General, 1968-1970 and undated

Consultative procedures, 1965-1969

Jackman, Marvin (Marvin X)

General, 1969-1970 and undated

Memoranda, 1969

Newspaper clippings, 1969 and undated

Mezey, Robert

Memoranda, 1968

Newspaper clippings, 1968-1969, 1971-1972 and undated

Opinion

Pro-Mezey

General, 1968 and undated

Ad Hoc Committee for Academic Freedom, 1968 and undated

Pro-Ness, 1968

Petition of grievance against Phillip Walker, 1968

Resolutions, 1968

Ronwin, Edward 1969

Resignation, 1969-1970 and undated

Walker, Harold E. (Executive Vice President), 1968-1969 and undated

Falk, Karl

“Academic Freedom–Academic Anarchy” (speech given by Falk for the Fresno County Bar Association), 1970 and undated

Fikes, James (Executive Vice President), 1969-1970 and 1979

Memoranda, 1969-1970

Newspaper clippings, 1969-1970, 1977 and undated

Opinion

General, 1969-1971, 1976 and undated

Against Falk

General, 1969-1970

American Federation of Teachers (AFT), 1970 and undated

Speeches, 1969-1970

Official councils, committees, reports, 1969-1970 and undated

Support for Falk, 1969-1970

Box No. Description

Box 1 (cont.)

Administrations (cont.)

Falk, Karl (cont.)

Personnel issues

General, 1969-1970 and undated

Burtner, Dale

General, 1969-1970 and undated

Chronology of events, 1969-1970

Memoranda, 1968 and 1970

Newspaper clippings, 1969-1970 and undated

Petition of appeal, 1970 and undated

Procedural violations committed by Falk, undated

Review of Dean Burtner, 1970

Consultative Procedures Committee

Petition of Appeal, 1969

Response, 1969

Rebuttal, 1970

Response to Rebuttal, 1970

Decision, 1970

Murray, Paul F., 1970

Walker, Evelynne, 1970

Walker, Harold, 1969-1970

Press releases, 1969-1970

Protests

General, 1969-1970 and undated

Law enforcement and legal issues

General, 1969-1970

Detention of Phillip Walker, 1970

Walker, Phillip (Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences), 1969-1970 and undated (see also University administrations; Falk, Karl; Protests; Law enforcement and legal issues; Detention of Phillip Walker)

Baxter, Norman

Memoranda, 1970-1971

Newspaper clippings, 1970, 1977-1979 and undated

Opinion

General, 1970, 1978-1979 and undated

Official councils, committees, reports

General, 1970-1972, 1978-1979 and undated

Baxter-Volpp faculty survey, 1978 and undated

Fresno Review Panel, 1978 and undated

Box No. Description

Box 1 (cont.)

Administrations (cont.)

Baxter, Normal (cont.)

Personnel issues

General, 1970-1971, 1978 and undated

Buzick, William A., 1970 and undated

Frost, Everett, 1970 and undated

Toney, Joseph, 1970-1972 and undated

Zumwalt, Eugene and Chittick, Roger, 1970-1972 and undated

Protests, 1970-1971, 1978 and undated

Volpp, Louis (Vice President of Academic Affairs), 1978-1979

Box 2

Ethnic minorities

African American students, 1968-1971 and undated (see also Faculty and student activism; Black Panthers, 1968 and undated)

Chicano students, 1969-1970 and undated

Educational Opportunity Program, 1969-1970, 1979 and undated

Ethnic Studies Program

General, 1969-1970 and undated

Black Studies, 1969-1970

Chicano/La Raza Studies, 1969-1970 and 1978

Native American Studies, 1970

Faculty and student activism

General, 1967 and 1970

Academic freedom, 1968-1971 and undated (see also Administrations; Falk, Karl; "Academic Freedom—Academic Anarchy," 1970 and undated)

Black Panthers, 1968 and undated

Students for a Democratic Society (S.D.S.), 1966, 1968 and undated

United Farm Workers, 1968-1970 and undated

Viet Nam War

Newspaper clippings, 1967-1970 and undated

Protest and demonstration leaflets, 1965, 1967-1970 and undated

Other universities

California

California State College (CSC) system

General

General, 1967-1970, 1978 and undated

Public opinion, 1968-1969

Box No. Description

Box 2 (cont)

Other universities (cont.)

California (cont.)

California State College (CSC) system (cont.)

CSC, Chico, undated

CSC, Hayward, 1968

CSC, Long Beach, 1968-1969

CSC, Los Angeles, 1968

CSC, San Fernando Valley, 1968-1969

CSC, San Francisco

General, 1969

Black Panthers/Gene Murray, 1968 and undated

Correspondence, 1968-1969 and undated

Daily Gater, 1968-1969

Newspaper clippings, 1967-1969, 1971 and undated

Resolutions, 1968

Stanford University (Palo Alto), 1968 and undated

University of California (UC) system

General, 1967-1968 and undated

UC, Berkeley, 1965, 1968-1969 and undated

UC, Riverside, undated

UC, Santa Cruz, undated

University of Southern California, 1969

United States

General, 1967-1970 and undated

Columbia University, 1967-1969

Harvard University, 1969-1970

New York University, New York, 1967-1968

Northwestern University, 1968

University of Illinois, 1968

University of Minnesota, 1968

International

General, undated

Free University of Berlin, 1967

London School of Economics, 1969

Editorials and speculation, 1966, 1968-1970 and undated

Policies and reports

Congressional Record, 1969

Dumke, Glenn S. (Chancellor of the California State College system)

Correspondence, 1968 and undated

Box No. Description

Box 2 (cont)

Policies and reports (cont.)

Dumke, Glenn S. (cont.)

Memoranda, 1968 and 1970

Newspaper clippings, 1969-1970

Statements, 1968-1969

“The Present Crisis at Fresno State,” 1969-1970 and undated

Program proposal in response to campus unrest, undated

Reagan, Ronald (Governor of California), 1967-1971, 1973 and undated

“A Report on the Fresno Free College Foundation Covering the Period March
1968 through August 1972,” 1972

“Report on Fresno State College,” 1971

“The Slow Death of Fresno State” (Seib, Kenneth)

Initial report, 1970

Miscellaneous, 1970-1971, 1979 and undated

“The Strangulation of Fresno State” (Hillenbrand, Barry), 1971