



Western Kentucky University

UA1C11 WKU Archives Photo Collections

Subseries 93 WKU Forensics Team Photo Collection

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Administrative History:

The debate team was known at various times as the Western Debaters, Debate Squad, Intercollegiate Debate Team, Western Debate Association/Associates, Forensic Union, and the William E. Bivin Forensic Society. Since 2006, it has been the WKU Forensic Team.

Competitive debate began for Western at the precursor institution, Ogden College, in the 1870s. In 1919, the Congress Debating Club was established at the Western Kentucky Normal School. Debate and oratorical skills were practiced at CDC meetings and members often participated in competitions as individuals and as part of a debate team. During World War II, scarce resources ended debating for a while, but returned in the late 1940s. Women had their own debating clubs (ex. Girls Debating Club, formed 1928) and contests (sponsored by the AAUW and SNEA), but were not prominent in debate competition in the 1930s and 1940s. They were allowed to join the Congress Debating Club and returned to competitive debate in about 1950.

The debate team was administered by the English department until Speech and Theatre was separated into a new department in 1968 and became its new home. WKU first awarded debate scholarships in 1963. Speech and Theatre became Communication and Theatre in 1976.

The forensics program was once again discontinued in the early 1980s, but was reestablished in December 1987 by the Regents as the William E. Bivin Forensic Society and was the "responsibility of the Department of Communication and Broadcasting." Forensics stayed with Communication when Broadcasting moved to the School of Journalism & Broadcasting in 1999.

After a decade of advocacy, Judy Woodring was able to convince the administration that a forensic team was a good investment. Between 1999 and 2003, she was able to increase the coaching staff and establish a more professionalized approach to forensic competition. Deadlines for writing drafts of speeches and performance of a piece for a coach before being scheduled to compete are two examples.

In 2004, the forensics program established the Elizabeth McWhorter Harden Forensics Alumni Association, named after a 1956 graduate, former debate team member, and first woman president of the Congress Debating Club. In 2008, Forensics was separated from Communication and now reports directly to the office of the Provost.

The WKU Forensics Team is unique among its competitors because it competes successfully in both speech (dubbed individual events) and debate.

"Our program has won more national forensics titles in the last ten years than any other team in the country. WKU is the only team to win the American Forensic Association national title, National Forensic Association national title, NFA debate national title and the International Forensic Association title all in the same year, a benchmark the team has set six times." Ganer Newman, 2015, <https://www.wku.edu/forensics/>

Sources:

Board of Regents meeting minutes, December 1987

Chandler, Chris, Email re: Forensic Team Context Statement, 1/15/2016

Wilson, George, Western Debate as Old as the Hill, CHH 04/21/1965

WKU Speech Program Starts Alumni Group, PCDN 07/14/2004

Wood, Willson, History of the English Department 1907-1972, UA68/6/1

<https://www.wkuforensics.com/historical-archives/>

Description: Photographs created by and about the WKU Forensics Team.

Dates: 2002-

Extent: 6 cd-roms

Subject Analytics:

Debates

Forensic orations.

Forensics Team (WKU)

Photographs

Western Kentucky University

Digital Commons:

Photography

Speech and Rhetorical Studies

Accession Information: These records transferred to the WKU Archives from the WKU Forensics Team in accordance with the records retention schedule.

Access Restrictions: none

Allied Materials:

Preferred Citation: UA1C11/93 WKU Forensics Team Photo Collection, WKU Archives, Bowling Green, Kentucky, USA.

Processing Information: Records processed and collection inventory created 2019.

Finding Aid Report

04/14/2021

UA1C11.93	Print, Photographic	Date
Level	Subseries	Linked toUA1C11
Title	UA1C WKU Archives Photograph Collection	
Collection	Series 11 Collections	
Scope & Content	Subseries 93 WKU Forensics Team Photo Collection	
	WKU Archives	
	Photographs created by and about the WKU Forensics Team.	

Container List

Container	Folder	Creator	Date	Title
CD Box 3	CD1032	Forensics Team (WKU)	2004	Photographs
Description	26 Digital Images, 19 mb			Subjects Photographs Tourism
	CD1032-00 Joelle Perry, Evelio Silvera, Margaret Au, Courtney Wright, Jennifer Corum Billman, and Ashley Courtney Brasfield			
	CD1032-0 Joelle Perry, Evelio Silvera, Courtney Wright, and Elizabeth Au			
	CD1032-1 Ashley Mack, Jennifer Corum Billman and Nick Romerhausen			
	CD1032-2 Corey Alderdice and Nick Romerhausen			
	CD1032-4 Jennifer Corum Billman			
	CD1032-5 Courtney Wright			
	CD1032-8 Courtney Wright			
	CD1032-9 Jennifer Corum Billman and Corey Alderdice; Nick Romerhausen on far left			
	CD1032-12 Ashley Courtney Brasfield and Jennifer Corum Billman			
	CD1032-13 Elizabeth Au and Jennifer Corum Billman			
	CD1032-15 Coach Jace Lux, Nick Romerhausen, and Joelle Perry			
	CD1032-16 Jennifer Corum Billman, Courtney Wright, and Nick Romerhausen			
	CD1032-18 Ashley Mack, Margaret Au, Ryan Howell, and Elizabeth Au			
	CD1032-19 Courtney Wright and Jennifer Corum Billman			
	CD1032-23 Jennifer Corum Billman			
	Spain			
CD Box 3	CD1033	Forensics Team (WKU)	2007-10/12	Photographs
Description	12 Digital Images, 136 mb			Subjects Photographs Awards Trophies
	CD1033-1 Barbara Burch, Provost, awards coach Jace Lux			
	CD1033-2 Elizabeth McWhorter-Harden, Raymond Cravens			
	CD1033-3 Barbara Burch, Elizabeth McWhorter-Harden			
	CD1033-4 Angela Jerome speaks. Jace Lux looks on			
	CD1033-5 unidentified			
	CD1033-6 Jody Richards, Elizabeth McWhorter-Harden			
	CD1033-7 Jody Richards			
	CD1033-8 Jody Richards			
	CD1033-9 unidentified			
	CD1033-10 Jace Lux, Jody Richards, Judy woodring			
	CD1033-11 Jody Richards and wife Neva			
	CD1033-12 Jody Richards and wife Neva, with Kentucky Speaker of the Year award			

Elizabeth McWhorter-Harden Forensic Alumni Association

CD Box 3	CD1034	Forensics Team (WKU)	2006	Photographs
Description	1 Digital Image, 38 mb Forensics Team (WKU)			Subjects Photographs
CD Box 3	CD1035	Forensics Team (WKU)	2006	Photographs
Description	1 Digital Image, 26 mb Forensics Team (WKU)			Subjects Photographs
CD Box 3	CD1037	Forensics Team (WKU)	2002	Photographs
Description	2 Digital Images, 10 mb Forensics Team (WKU)			Subjects Photographs
NC	N13388-N13389	Forensics Team (WKU)	ca. 2005	Negatives
Description	Correspond with some F3405 N13388-1 Justin Cress with award and Jennifer Corum in a tournament hotel lobby N13388-2 Doug Mory (debate coach) and Justin Cress with award N13388-3 Justin Cress with award N13388-4 Jennifer Corum with award in a tournament hotel lobby N13389-1 Caleb Williams N13389-2 (l-to-r) Jennifer Corum and Hannah Reliford N13389-3 part of an unknown university campus, on the site of a forensic tournament N13389-4 Nick Romerhausen Corum, Jennifer Billman Cress, Justin Mory, Doug National Parliamentary Tournament of Excellence Reliford, Hannah Digges-Elliott Romerhausen, Nick Williams, Caleb			Subjects Awards
PC	F3405	Forensics Team (WKU)	2005-2006	Photographs
Description	8 Corum, Jennifer Billman Cress, Justin Forensic Team 2006 Heugel, Adam National Parliamentary Tournament of Excellence Romerhausen, Nick Williams, Caleb			Subjects Awards Group portraits