2019

UA12/2/28 Forensics Team

WKU Archives

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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 was 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

Description: Records created by and about the forensics / debate team.

Dates: 2008-present

Extent: 7 folders, oversize, digital files

Subject Analytics:
Forensic orations. Forensics Team (WKU)
Forensics (Public speaking) Western Kentucky University

Digital Commons:
Communication Speech and Rhetorical Studies
Rhetoric

Accession Information: These records transferred to WKU Archives upon its creation.

Access Restrictions: none

Allied Materials:
UA1C11/93 Forensics Team Photo Collection
UA68/3/2 Communication Student Organizations

Preferred Citation: UA12/2/28, WKU Archives, Bowling Green, Kentucky, USA.

Processing Information: Records processed and collection inventory created 2019.
UA12.2.28

**Records**

**Date**

**Level**

**Subseries**

**Title**

**UA12 Student Affairs**

**Series 2 Student Activities, Organizations & Leadership Office**

**Subseries 28 Forensics Team**

**Container List**

**Scope & Content**

WKU Archives

Records created by and about the forensics / debate team.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Creator</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Forensics Team (WKU)</td>
<td>2003, 2011, 2016</td>
<td>Proclamations and Awards</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

Tribute to Western Kentucky University's William E. Bivin Forensic Society, Congressional Record, 5/7/2003  
Proclamation in honor of the WKU Forensics Team from the Kentucky State Senate, 2011  
WKU Forensics Celebration (list), 11/14/2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
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<tr>
<td>Box 1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Forensics Team (WKU)</td>
<td>1921, 1987, 2004-2005, 2016</td>
<td>Correspondence and Clippings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

AAUW Oratorical Contest  
Au, Elizabeth  
Bivin, William E.  
Capps, Randall  
Chandler, Chris. Email re: Forensic Team, 1/15/2016  
Congress Debating Club  
Corum, Jenny  
Courtney, Ashley  
Denhardt, Robert  
Forensics Team (WKU)  
Forsythe, Earl  
Harden, Elizabeth McWhorter. Letter to Gary Ransdell re: Her Memory Book, ca. 2005  
Harvard Debate  
Hoover, Judith  
Howell, Ryan  
International Forensics Association Championship Tournament  
Jenkins, William. Letter to Judy Woodring re: Congress Debating Club members, nd  
Miller, Russell H.  
Nave, Lindsey  
Perry, Joelle  
Romerhausen, Nick  
Rudloff, Bill  
Silvera, Evelio  
Taylor, Richard  
William E. Bivin Forensic Society  
Woodring, Judy

**Subjects**

Awards  
Alumni & alumnae  
Biography  
Clippings  
Correspondence  
Debates  
Forensic orations.  
Memory  
Public speaking  
Reminiscing  
Scrapbooks  
Tournaments
### Box 1

**Description** Fund Administration Agreement of the J. Richard Oexmannn Forensics Award, 1991

**Subjects** Alumni & alumnae Gifts

**Scholarships**

### Box 1

**Description** Appalachian Winter Classic, January 1993, January 1994

**Subjects** Debates Forensic orations. Programs Schedules (Time plans) Student works Tournaments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forensics Team (WKU)</th>
<th>1972, 1991-1994</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barbee, Trey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black, Adam</td>
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<td>Butler, Greg</td>
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<td>Capps, Randall</td>
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<td>Cecil, Eric</td>
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<td>Christian, Christie</td>
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<td>Class of 1994 (WKU)</td>
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<td>Crabtree, Janay</td>
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<td>Davis, Julie</td>
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<td>Eaton, Steve</td>
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<td>Fleming, Chris</td>
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<td>Gibson, Steve</td>
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<td>Governor's Classic Tournament, October 1993</td>
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<td>Hollon, Cory</td>
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<td>Interstate Oratorical Association, May 1972</td>
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<td>Jones, Melony</td>
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<td>Kendall, Tojuana</td>
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<td>Kentucky Forensic Association State Championships, February 1993</td>
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<td>Mattingly, Rob</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Forensic Association National Championships, April 1994</td>
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<td>Otterbein Debate Tournament, October 1991, January 1993</td>
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<td>Otterbein Tournament, January 1993</td>
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<td>Racer Classic Tournament, February 1993</td>
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<td>Roberts, Chris</td>
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<td>Snodgrass, Amy</td>
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<td>Spears, Andy</td>
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<td>Stewart, Amy</td>
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<td>Thompson, Bill</td>
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<td>Trippel, Andrew</td>
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<td>Walsh, Chris</td>
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<td>Whitaker, Samantha</td>
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<td>William E. Bivin Forensic Society</td>
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<td>Woodring, Judy</td>
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<td>Woods, Matt</td>
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<td>Zorn, Woody</td>
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### Box 1

**Description** 3rd Annual Eastern CEDA Debate Workshop, July 1993

**Subjects** African Americans Blacks Debates Forensic orations. Performances Programs Student works Tournaments

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambam, Andrea</td>
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<tr>
<td>As We Make History: Black in America Today: A Black History Performance Symposium, 2/24/2016</td>
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<td>Badjie, Haddy</td>
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<td>Black Excellence Exposition, 2/28/2017</td>
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<td>Black History Month</td>
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<td>Bowling Green Black Lives Matter</td>
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<td>Brown, Damon</td>
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<td>Chandler, Chris</td>
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<td>Cross Examination Debate Association</td>
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<td>Davis, Lyric</td>
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<td>English, Kayla</td>
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<td>Essence in Harmony</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Green, Durwan  
McLarty, Tiffany  
O’Connor, Brent  
Phi Alpha Phi Fraternity  
Render, Brandon  
Wasuge, Asha  
WKU Invitational Speech and Debate Tournament, November 1991 (high school, list)  
William E. Bivin Forensic Society  
Woodring, Judy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 1</th>
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<th>Forensics Team (WKU)</th>
<th>2012-2017</th>
<th>Events - Showcase</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Description** | Acosta, Camille  
Allen, Celena  
Allseits, Mark  
Anderson, Brian  
Armstrong, Megan  
Badjie, Haddy  
Brazier, Sarah  
Burke, Murphy  
Champagne, Claire  
Chandler, Chris  
Coaches and Staff (list)  
Collins, Emma  
Corum, John  
Courtney, Liz  
Covert, Marshall  
Cox, Meg  
Dawkins, Janniqua  
Devia-Allen, Gabriella  
Dwyer, Ian  
Dukes, Nefertiti  
Elliott, Alexis  
Evans, Carolyn  
Fraser, Ellis  
Garber, Ashton  
Gilyard, Nick  
Green, Durwan  
Groves, Austin  
Heyne, Richard  
Jones, Jasmine  
McLarty, Tiffany  
Medero, Kristina  
Membership (list)  
Milby, Curtis  
Moore, Sam  
Murdock, Frank  
Nellans, Lily  
Newberry, Jamaica  
Nguyen, Mario  
O’Connor, Brent  
Oelowski, Spencer  
Pratt, Elle  
Prochazka, Tyler  
Reynolds, John  
Rife, Tyler  
Roberts, Ray  
Rodriguez, Justin  
Rung, Bailey  
Settles, Paige  
Sledge, Lauren  
Taylor, Susan  
Thomas, Elijah | **Subjects** | Charity  
Debates  
Forensic orations.  
History  
Performances  
Showcases  
Speeches, addresses, etc. |

**Subjects**  
Charity  
Debates  
Forensic orations.  
History  
Performances  
Showcases  
Speeches, addresses, etc.
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<th>Events - Banquet</th>
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<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Acosta, Camille Coaching Staff (list) Collins, Emma Dalley, Tyler Dukes, Nefertiti Furgerson, Jessica Glaser, Dan Groves, Austin Knapp, Blake Lowry, Dawn Lux, Jace Mann, Evan Membership (list) Newberry, Jamaque Newman, Ganer Nguyen, Mario O'Conner, Brent Peckham, Seth Rainey, Todd Ransdell, Gary Robin, Ben Waid, Amanda Whittley, Robert</td>
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<td>Subjects Photographs</td>
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<td>Subjects Video recording</td>
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<td>Subjects Photographs Video recording</td>
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<th>OS Box 121</th>
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<th>Forensics Team (WKU)</th>
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<th>Posters</th>
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<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Chandler, Chris Green, Durwan Williams, Lataya WKU Forensics Showcase</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Subjects Charity Debates Forensic orations. Performances Posters Showcases Speeches, addresses, etc.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
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<td>Description</td>
<td>VHS Tapes - 2 digitized</td>
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<td>Subjects Awards Trophies Debates</td>
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<td>Amy Jones, poetry interpretation, nd, m1284.mp4</td>
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Allen, John
Barnett, Stephen
Blaser, Keith
Chamberlin, Andrew
Dickerson, Shadana
Eubank, Miranda
Forensics Team (WKU)
Gerbig, Matt
Jones, Amy
Knuckles, Shellei
Lux, Jace
Ponananta, Alisa
Richardson, Kerri
Shirley, Wesley
Wilkins, David
Wininger, Phillip

Promotional video - m1283.mp4 - https://youtu.be/RLYttko8aw0

Speeches, addresses, etc.
Forensic orations.
Public speaking