Finding Aid for Bowie State University Early Student Records

Description of the Collection

This collection contains various student records, including personal files, medical records, attendance reports, grade books, entrance exams, applications, correspondence, syllabi, term papers, and other reports and documentation about the school and its students.

Title and dates of Collection:

Bowie State University -- Early Student Records, 1912-1977 [AR-15]

Papers created by:

Bowie State University (no acquisition records available).

Size of collection:

18 linear feet; 35 archives boxes and 1 oversize folder

Historical Note

Bowie State University is the oldest historically black college in the state of Maryland, founded in 1865 as the Baltimore Normal School for Colored Teachers. Bowie State University is an outgrowth of the first school opened in Baltimore, MD, on January 9, 1865, by the Baltimore Association for the Moral and Educational Improvement of Colored People, which was organized on November 28, 1864 to engage in its self-appointed mission on a statewide basis. The Baltimore Normal School had received occasional financial support from the City of Baltimore since 1870 and from the state since 1872. In 1871, it received a legacy from the Nelson Wells Fund. This fund, established before Wells' death in February 1843, provided for the education of freed Negro children in Maryland. On April 8, 1908, at the request of the Baltimore Normal School, which desired permanent status and funding as an institution for the education of Negro teachers, the state legislature authorized its Board of Education to assume control of the school. The same law re-designated the institution as a Normal School No. 3. Subsequently, it was relocated on a 187-acre tract in Prince George's County and by 1912 it was known as the Maryland Normal and Industrial School at Bowie.

A two-year professional curriculum in teacher education, which started in 1925, was expanded to a three-year program. In 1935, a four-year program for the training of elementary school teachers began and the school was renamed Maryland State Teachers College at Bowie. In 1951, with the approval of the State Board of Education, its governing body, Bowie State expanded its program to train teachers for junior high schools. Ten years later, permission was granted to institute a teacher-training program for secondary education. In 1963, a liberal arts program was started and the name was changed to Bowie State College.

In 1970, Bowie State College was authorized to grant its first graduate degree, the Master of Education. A significant milestone in the development of the graduate studies at Bowie State was achieved with the Board of Trustees' approval of the establishment of the Adler-Dreikurs Institute of Human Relations in 1975. Currently, the University offers bachelor's and master's degree programs and two doctoral degrees. Included in the inventory of degree programs is the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Science in nursing, Master of Arts, Master of Arts in teaching, Master of Education, Master of Science, Master of Science in nursing, Master of Business Administration and Master of Public Administration.
On July 1, 1988, Bowie State College officially became Bowie State University, a change reflecting significant growth in the institution's programs, enrollment and service to the local area. On the same day, the University also became one of the constituent institutions of the newly formed University System of Maryland.

Scope and Contents of Collection

This collection includes grade books, entrance exams, applications, individual student records, medical information, class averages, syllabi, testing materials, demonstration school records, and other documents that pertain to Bowie State University students from 1919 to 1973. The bulk of the collection is made up of student files and grade books.

Organization and Arrangement of Collection

The Early Student Records contain thirteen Series that include Student Files; Medical Records; Entrance Exams; Applications; Grades; Class Averages; Miscellaneous; Term Papers; Syllabi; Meetings; Teachers Report and Demonstration School Records. Each series is arranged alphabetically or chronologically, if known. Some of the materials are difficult to arrange in this way due to a lack of information, or being rebound in the last quarter of the 20th century.

Access to Collection

Access to this collection is restricted due to the amount and types of personal information contained in the records. Please contact the archives for further information.

Provenance and Acquisition Information

The early student records were acquired from the Bowie State University at an unknown date. No acquisition records have been located at the time the collection was processed.

Processing Information

These records were collated during a reorganization of the Bowie State University Archives & Special Collections in 2009. The collection was processed by Tasha Martinez in 2013.

Preferred Citation of Collection

Please include all citations in the following format: University Archives, Early Student Records, Box [x], Bowie State University, Thurgood Marshall Library, Archives and Special Collections.

Series Descriptions

Series I. Student Files, ca. 1912-1950. (Boxes 1-19)

These boxes contain individual student files, and may include high school records, applications, correspondence, entrance examinations, and health examinations, as well as other types of documents. Some folders are dated with the year the student graduated. These dates are posted on the upper right-hand corner of the folder. Other folders are marked with other information such as deceased, poor scholarship, and change of last name, if married. Arranged in alphabetical order according to last name; missing many names in the range of N-R.

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**Series II. Medical Records, 1934-1949. (Box 19)**
This box contains student health information from medical examinations and Tuberculin tests. Arranged chronologically.

**Series III. Entrance Exams, 1935-1950. (Box 20-22)**
Contains high school psychological tests, results, and entrance exams. See also oversize folder, “Sophomore class – Errors made in English Entrance Test – 1939”. Arranged chronologically.

**Series IV. Applications, 1921-1959. (Box 22)**
Contains applications, admission letters, and enrollment figures. Arranged chronologically.

**Series V. Grade Sheets, 1919-1963. (Boxes 22-25 and 35).**
Grade sheets for groups of students; some are divided into two semesters of grades. Others are organized by 9-week courses, midterms, juniors, seniors, and temporary grades. Arranged chronologically.

Folders are labeled according to student’s last name (Box 25) in alphabetical order. SEE ALSO “Student’s Report of College Record,” 1935-1955, in two bound volumes, and “Students Report”, 1943-1950, in three bound volumes. (Box 35)

**Series VI. Class Averages, 1930-1942. (Box 26)**
This Series consists of sheets listing student names and their grades for student teaching, and comprehensive exams. Some folders also contain other documents, such as correspondence. Arranged chronologically.

**Series VII. Miscellaneous documents, 1918-1977; n.d. (Box 26)**
Includes: Teachers attending summer school (1918); class schedules (1930s); National Negro Health Movement (1937-40); survey of community fund agencies regarding creed and color (1938); junior class project on Maryland history (1953); registration and enrollment records (1955-56). Arranged chronologically where date is known.

**Series VIII. Term papers, 1952-1973. (Box 26)**
Community Recreation Project and Western Civilization. Arranged chronologically.

**Series IX. Syllabi, 1959-1972, n.d. (Box 27)**
Various subjects. Arranged chronologically.

**Series X. Meetings, 1952-1954. (Box 27)**
This box contains information on summer workshops for faculty. Arranged chronologically.


Contents include “The Teacher’s Improved Class Book” (Boxes 28-31). Some have faculty names inside. Arranged by name where known.

The Class Record Four bound volumes of grades (1945-64) (Box 32) arranged in chronological order.

**Series XIII. Bound Attendance Records, 1939-1953. (Boxes 33-34)**

This series contains bound volumes of student teachers’ class attendance records. Also includes student personal information, standardized testing, and mental ability tests. Arranged chronologically.

Volumes are titled:

- Principal’s Monthly Report on Attendance, 1944-52. (Box 33)
- Register of Attendance in Public Schools: One bound volume, 1939-1953. From public elementary schools in Prince George’s County (probably from student teachers). (Box 33)
- Record of Attendance: Three bound volumes. 1949-50; 1951-52; 1952-53. (Box 34)