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The original Alcor group was formed as a project by the Senior Girls Association (SGA) during the 1936-1937 school year, and for a short time was known as the Senior Girls Honorary Sorority before changing its name to Alcor Honorary Sorority in fall of 1937. Members were chosen from female members of the junior class on the basis of scholarship, leadership, and service. Once chosen, they were “tapped” on the day of May Fete (May Fest/May Day), presented to the May Fete queen, and were pinned with a blue and gold ribbon. Alcor officially became the Alcor Chapter of the nationally known organization, Mortar Board, in April 1961. The chapter began accepting male members, as directed by the national organization, in 1975. Mortar Board was established in 1918 as a national honor society for outstanding college seniors. Mortar Board has historically selected as its members those persons who have demonstrated scholarship, leadership and service. Such recognition is not only a statement of achievement but also an affirmation of potential. Collection includes background information; clippings, 1950-1996; minutes, 1937-1949; scrapbooks, 1950-1955, 1959-1960; newspaper clippings; a history of Alcor written in 1949 which includes membership lists and the constitution; “Last Chance Talks/Last Lectures Series” lectures by Ion Agheana, Dale Austin, Virginia Beard, David Clark, Jane Dickie (audiotape and digital), D. Ivan Dykstra, Lars Granberg, Charles Green, Edward Hansen, Steven Hoogerwerf, Mark Husbands, Arthur Jentz, Robin Klay, Dianne Portfleet, James Prins, Maura M. Reynolds, Edward Savage, Robert Vickers, Kenneth Weller, Donald Williams, Fred L. Johnson III (2010), James E. Bultman (2012), Donald Luidens (2014), and Charlotte vanOyen-Witvliet (2017).
states: We, the undersigned, recognizing the advantage of a national union of senior honor societies, do hereby unite to form a national society whose purpose shall be to facilitate cooperation among these societies, to contribute to the self-awareness of its members, to promote equal opportunities among all peoples, to emphasize the advancement of the status of women, to support the ideals of the university, to advance a spirit of scholarship, to recognize and encourage leadership, to provide service, and to establish the opportunity for a meaningful exchange of ideas as individuals and as a group.

The mortarboard is a symbol of ancient honor and distinction which carries certain and serious responsibilities. In early universities, students who adopted the clerical or monastic robes did so as a sign that they were devoting their lives to the profession of learning, in recognition of which they received certain privileges.

Scope and Content


Container List

Box 1

Advertisements, n.d.
Advisor Annual Report, 1983
Alumni File, 1938-1997 (2 folders)
Awards, 1995-2014
Booklet, College Senior Honor Society, 1982-1985
Chapter Officer and Advisor Handbook, 1997
Constitution, n.d.
Correspondence, 1952-1999
Effort to Obtain a Mortar Board Chapter, 1951-1952, 1960
Elections Procedure Plan, 1980
Financial
Account Readouts, 1981, 1997
Budget, 1998
Handbook
  Advisor’s, n.d.
  Chapter Officer and Advisor, 1997

History
  Background information, 1962-2006
  Constitution/List of Members, 1936-1956, 1961
  National Mortar Board, 1979
  “History of Mortar Board: Nationally and at Hope,” by Jacob Nyenhuis, 2000

Homecoming Tea, 1964
Initiation Certificates, n.d.

Last Lecture Presentations
  Austin, Dale, “Off the Record: Adventure, Purpose, Service,” 11/11/2019
  Beard, Virginia, “Grace and Beauty, Death and Life—Now and Yet to Be,” 11/04/2013
  Dickie, Jane, “Last Change Lecture,” 05/03/1979 (audiotape cassette)
  Dykstra, D. Ivan, “Last Chance Speech,” 04/13/1962
  Green, Charles, “You Ain’t No Mother Teresa Anyway: Everyday Justice for Everyday People,” 11/03/2014
  Hoogerwerf, Steven, “Some Things That Really Matter (and a few complications),” 03/30/2014
  Husbands, Mark, “Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night,” 02/21/2012
  Johnson, Fred D., “He Did His Part…‘Let It Not Be in Vain’,” 02/17/2010
  Luidens, Donald, “As I Was Saying…” 02/24/2014
  Granberg, Lars, “Did Your Vaccination Take?” 03/23/1966
  Prins, A. James, “Last Change Talk,” 04/28/1967
  vanOyen-Witvliet, Charlotte, “The Last Lecture: Flourishing in a Messy Life,” 04/26/2017

Master Planning Calendar, 1981, 2004

Membership
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Minutes
   Executive Board, 2009-[ongoing]

Box 2

Minutes (cont.)
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Project Lead Analysis, 2014
Wearing of Blue Breakfast, 1993, 1998

Box 3

Scrapbook, 1950-1955
Signature Book, 1961-1972