

Hope College

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### H88-0384. Religion Department. Records, 1967-2011. 10.50 linear ft.

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**H88-0384.** Religion Department.  
Records, 1967-2011. 10.50 linear ft.

Abstract

Hope College has instructed students in religion since its incorporation as a liberal arts institution in 1866. Initially considered a theology department, its instructors worked closely with both Hope's professors of philosophy and Western Theological Seminary's professors of theology to teach classes. Coursework included classical languages, church history, theology, and biblical studies. In 1877, Hope suspended instruction in the department in order to focus funds towards other areas of the college. Religion courses started again in 1884, but only one course was taught to each year of students. Its instructors, called the Bible and Philosophy Department, did not have a central mission or structured catalog of courses within Hope until the late nineteenth century, in 1895. The two disciplines finally split into two departments in 1922. Following the end of the World Wars, enrollment at Hope and in the Religion Department increased. The department hired more full-time faculty to accommodate student interest. Although there was great demand for religion courses and they were required within general education guidelines, students could not major in religion until 1964. Beginning in 1966, Hope began to hire professors specializing in a wider variety of subjects within the spectrum of religion: church history, theology, biblical literature, ethics, and more. The department graduated several students each year, and invited several temporary professors, scholarship donors, and guest lecturers to Hope between the 1970s and the early 2000s. It continues to instruct students on a diverse assortment of religious and ethical topics today. The collection contains the minutes, meeting notes, correspondence and other records of the Hope College Religion Department. It includes video and audio recordings of speeches from the Danforth Lecture Series, as well as informational materials on classes, enrollment, scholarship awards, papers, and departmental reviews.

Accession No: H88-0384  
Provenance: Religion Department  
Donor: H88-0384  
Photographs: 283 images (Box 7)  
Processed by: Sarah Lundy, February 2019

History

Hope College has instructed students in religion since its incorporation as a liberal arts institution in 1866. Initially considered a theology department, its instructors worked closely with both Hope's professors of philosophy and Western Theological Seminary's professors of theology to teach classes. Coursework included classical languages, church history, theology, and biblical studies. In 1877, Hope suspended instruction in the department in order to focus funds towards other areas of the college. Religion courses started again in 1884, but only one course was taught to each year of students. Its instructors, called the Bible and Philosophy Department, did not have a central mission or structured catalog of courses within Hope until the late nineteenth century, in 1895. The two disciplines finally split into two departments in 1922. Following the end of the World Wars, enrollment at Hope and in the Religion

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### Scope and Content

This collection contains the minutes, meeting notes, correspondence and other records of the Hope College Religion Department. It includes video and audio recordings of speeches from the Danforth Lecture Series, as well as informational materials on classes, enrollment, scholarship awards, papers, and departmental reviews.

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