

University Center for Adult Education (UCAE) Records

1960-1982 (predominantly, 1967-1972)

9.5 linear feet--7 storage boxes, 1 manuscript box, 4 oversized scrapbooks

Accession Number: 374

Scope & Contents

The University Center for Adult Education (UCAE) was one of six units within the Division of Urban Extension of Wayne State University. Founded in 1957, and initially sponsored by Wayne State University and the University of Michigan, UCAE was one of the few non-degree, university-level programs in the country with joint institutional sponsorship. With faculty from both institutions, the Center offered a wide range of courses for adults in the humanities, communications, the behavioral sciences, and continuing education in the professions. Programs were offered mornings, afternoons and evenings in Detroit's Cultural Center and at several campuses of the sponsors: the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor and Dearborn; Wayne State University, Detroit and Southfield; and in other locations in southeastern Michigan. Eastern Michigan University was a sponsor from 1962 until July of 1970.

The mandates of UCAE were to conduct non-credit educational programs; assist other institutions to do so; exert adult educational leadership; develop and use mass communications media appropriately; involve other campus units of both universities in its continuing education activity; encourage research in continuing education; undertake community development; and conduct experimental programs. Major client groups served included citizen leaders of poverty programs; senior citizens; professionals and paraprofessionals in almost all professions; housewives; women returning to the labor force; Detroit public school board members and teacher aides; parents of retarded children; community agencies coping with problems in mental hygiene, drug addiction, death and dying, and veterans.

In addition to offering non-credit instruction to some 8,000-10,000 students annually in over 500 courses, UCAE activities also included lecture, concert, discussion and film programs. Many were given collaboratively with community cultural enterprises and were available without charge to UCAE students. UCAE also developed special programs in many disciplines upon request from business and civic organizations. A special quality of UCAE was its ability to undertake cooperative educational activities with many organizations and cultural institutions. Its activities included community development and urban affairs; applied behavioral and social sciences; liberal arts and (liberal) sciences; management and professional development; and environmental studies. The most popular areas were natural science, behavioral science, and art. Short courses concerning the discipline of children and youth attracted the largest audiences.

UCAE lent programming skills to courses or problems developed by the University of Detroit, Department of Library Science at Ball State University, and Detroit's Mayor's Committee for Human Resources Development. UCAE also co-sponsored a significant number of courses and events with the Ann Arbor Public Schools, the Detroit Institute of Arts, and Wayne State University units such as the Center for the Teaching About Peace and War.

UCAE staff taught graduate professional courses to train adult education personnel, attended the meetings of state and national organizations, maintained membership in numerous professional associations, and published catalogs which received creativity awards.

The Center expanded its program in 1972-73 of musical training and performance for amateur and professional singers with participation in the Rackham Symphony Choir, the Rackham Singers and the Rackham Summer Chorale. These groups performed before some 14,500 persons in Detroit. An additional 12,000 persons attended lecture and film series held on the W.S.U. campus and the Rackham Building. A summer dance workshop and a workshop on Managing the Human Resources Development Function drew representatives from organizations in the United States and Canada. A Behavioral Science Film Fair was held to help teachers, program chairmen, and other community leaders cope with the knowledge explosion in the area of educational films in the behavioral sciences such as learning and motivation, drug abuse, child and adult development and human relations.

Almost every major phase of UCAE's activities contained an element of experimentation. For example, among the subject matters were courses concerning Chinese Language and Culture. The Center offered a consultation service, called Educational Diagnostics, to agencies having training or educational programs for adults. This service utilized UCAE staff and affiliated consultants to evaluate ongoing programs on business, industry, and community organizations. Among the clients served were DME Plastics Corp., Weight Watchers Inc., Briggs Corp., Creative Universal Corp., the Wayne Westland School District, and the Oakland County Community Mental Health Center. This program was an experiment for UCAE as was a program to allow a limited number of UCAE students to assist university faculty in scientific research. While staff and budget reductions prevented both programs from reaching maturity, they did lend variety and depth to UCAE offerings.

UCAE was the headquarters for Great Decisions, an annual discussion program with citizens meeting informally in their own communities to discuss eight key foreign policy topics of critical importance to the U.S. More than 1,000 communities throughout the nation took part in the project. The series was started in 1955 by the Foreign Policy Association, a non-partisan educational agency. Study material for the discussions came from a non-partisan fact booklet published by the Foreign Policy Association and included such topics as Red China-Menace or Paper Tiger?; Germany-Key to Europe; Vietnam-Is Victory Possible. Those who participated in this series helped to formulate national policy by completing opinion ballots which were then passed on to the clearing house of the League of Women Voters.

Subjects

Adult Education Association of Michigan
Archdiocese Opportunity Program
Behavioral Science
Colored People's Time
Community Action Program

Detroit Adventure
Detroit Institute of Arts
Eastern Michigan University
East Side Voice of Independent Detroit
Ethnic Studies
New Detroit
Neighborhood Service Program
Planned Parenthood League
Project Outreach
Total Action Against Poverty
Rackham Symphony Choir
Toxicology
University of Michigan

Correspondents

Richard Austin
Percy L. Moore
Robert C. Schultz
Robert M. Smith
Milton R. Stern

Transfers

Several photographs have been placed in the Archives Audiovisual collection. There are four oversized scrapbooks in the collection.

Related Collections

Wayne State University Archives

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