

Peter P. Klassen Papers

An Inventory of his Papers at the University of Illinois at Chicago

Overview of the Collection:

Repository: University of Illinois at Chicago

Creator: Peter P. Klassen

Title: Peter P. Klassen Papers

Dates: 1949-1974

Quantity: 1.5 linear feet

Abstract: Peter P. Klassen was a professor of sociology at the University of Illinois Navy Pier and Chicago Circle campuses, Director of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Director of the Office of Demographic Studies, and Chair of the Academic Advisory Committee to the Administration of Criminal Justice Curriculum. The Klassen Papers contain materials relating to Klassen's role as a sociologist and demographer, the creation of the University of Illinois Chicago Circle campus, and the development of the Criminal Justice Department on that campus.

Identification: 011-22-20-01

Language: The records are in English.

Biographical Note:

University of Illinois at Chicago faculty member Peter P. Klassen (1905-1977) was a specialist in demography and one of the country's foremost social science analysts. His work influenced the decision to establish a four-year University of Illinois Chicago campus and he was instrumental in developing the Criminal Justice program at the University's Chicago Circle Campus. Born in Simferopol, Crimea, Klassen and his family moved to Canada in 1925. Klassen worked in a furniture factory in Canada before coming to the United States to study at Denison University in Ohio, where he received his B.A. in 1931. Klassen did graduate studies at the University of Chicago, working with William Fielding Ogburn, who inspired his interest in demography. He received his MA in 1938 and later returned to obtain his PhD. with a major in demographic studies in 1949.

As Senior Social Science Analyst for the U.S. State Department (1943-1944) and Chief Area Social Science Analyst in the Office of Strategic Services (1944-1947) during WWII, Klassen prepared demographic analyses and public content analyses. He taught at the College of the Ozarks (1938-1939), Pennsylvania State University (1939-1941), and the University of Florida (1947-1948) before joining the faculty of the Chicago Navy Pier campus of the University of Illinois in 1948. Klassen became the senior sociologist in the Division of Social Sciences for the undergraduate division. He typically taught nine hours a semester and was especially fond of introductory classes, in which the opportunity to shape young minds was greatest. Klassen was later remembered as a witty lecturer whose presentations were enhanced by humor and by anecdotes and examples from his travels. Beginning in 1954, Klassen also lectured each summer at the School of Financial Public Relations at Northwestern University.

In the 1950s and 1960s, Klassen began extensive demographic research for the University of Illinois' Executive Vice President, the Office of the Provost, the State of Illinois

Higher Education Commission, and various legislative commissions. As a demographic consultant to the Randolph Commission, his studies helped establish a rationale for developing a four-year Chicago campus of the University of Illinois. Klassen's work was also influential in shaping the 1963 Illinois Board of Higher Education master plan for the development of the state's colleges and universities.

When the new University of Illinois Chicago Circle campus opened in 1965, Klassen became the head of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. In 1966, the departments separated. Klassen returned to teaching and in 1967 he was appointed Director of the newly established Office of Demographic Studies. The department was an outgrowth of Klassen's earlier demographic studies and was designed to meet the continuing need for follow-up and new studies. The Office of Demographic Studies was administratively located in the Office of the Chancellor but also closely allied with the program in demographic studies in the department of sociology. It also provided services to local and state agencies and conducted several all-university surveys. At the end of June 1972, the Office of Demographic Studies was phased out.

In 1961, Superintendent of Police Orlando W. Wilson approached University of Illinois Chancellor Norman A. Parker with a request to establish a Criminal Justice program at the university. Parker appointed a committee composed of Klassen, Dean Robert E. Corley, Dr. A.D. Pickett and Dr. Milton L. Rakove. Klassen became Chair of the committee. The Academic Advisory Committee to the Administration of Criminal Justice Curriculum was charged with defining goals for a program to introduce students to law enforcement and with offering guidance on academic issues to the Director of the program. In April 1965, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences announced that the Illinois State Board of Higher Education had approved a Bachelor of Arts degree in the Administration of Criminal Justice. The program was the first, and at that time the only, baccalaureate degree program in police sciences in the State of Illinois.

In June 1967, Attorney General Ramsey Clark approved a grant submitted by Klassen to the Department of Justice to develop a curriculum. The Committee conceived a broad-based liberal arts curriculum that included studies in racial and cultural minorities, the sociology of the city, and social problems. Courses in the psychology of adjustment, political science, and applied sociology or physiology statistics were also required. In September 1967, the second stage of the grant helped increase academic personnel, expand the program, develop extramural programs, expand library resources, and disseminate information to prospective students. In 1971, with the support of the Administration of Criminal Justice Advisory Committee on Curriculum, the Criminal Justice program was awarded departmental status by the University of Illinois Board of Trustees.

In the 1960s, Klassen held several offices, including president, in the Illinois Sociological Society. He was also a Fellow of the American Sociological Association. During his career, Klassen wrote over 50 monographs, published numerous articles, and was a frequent presenter at scholarly conferences. Klassen retired from active teaching in 1973, although he continued to lecture in the University of Illinois at Chicago University Honors Program as a professor emeritus. He died in 1977 at the age of 72.

Scope and Content Note:

The Peter P. Klassen Papers contain material from several of Klassen's major professional areas of interest. The collection is organized into four series: **Sociology, Demography and Campus Planning, Development of the Criminal Justice Department, and Other Professional Activities**. Material within each series is arranged chronologically and spans the period from 1949-1974.

The **Sociology Series** contains materials related to Klassen professional role as a sociologist. It includes several syllabi from undergraduate division classes in sociology at the University of Illinois Navy Pier campus. The series also contains copies of the records of the Illinois Sociological Association from 1956-1968 and material from a 1970 Illinois Sociological Association meeting.

The **Demography and Campus Planning Series** relates to Klassen's demographic studies and the establishment of the Chicago Circle campus of the University of Illinois. Materials include newspaper clippings, an undated demographic study by Klassen, correspondence and papers from the Office of Demographic Studies, and a study analyzing student response to the new campus prepared by Louis A. Berman.

The **Development of the Criminal Justice Department Series** contains materials relating to the establishment of a Criminal Justice Program at the University of Illinois Chicago Circle. It primarily includes materials from the Academic Advisory Committee to the Administration of Criminal Justice Curriculum, which Klassen chaired. The materials include correspondence, proposals, reports, and curriculum materials and are useful in tracing the development of the program from a sub-area within the Department of Sociology and Anthropology through the campaign for independent departmental status.

The **Other Professional Activities Series** contains program material for a 1962 University of Illinois Conference, and correspondence relating to the American Association of University Professors.

Restrictions on Use:

None

Related Material:

Miscellaneous biographical materials can be found in the Peter P. Klassen Biography File, University Archives, University of Illinois at Chicago. A list of related materials removed at the time of the original accession may be found in the collection file.

Index Terms:

This record Series is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Persons:

Klassen, George P., 1905-1977

Organizations:

University of Illinois at Chicago Circle, Department of Criminal Justice
University of Illinois at Chicago Circle, Department of Sociology and Anthropology
University of Illinois at Chicago Circle, Office of Demographic Studies
University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign), Chicago Undergraduate Division.
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Illinois Sociological Association

Places:

Chicago (IL)
Navy Pier (Chicago, IL)

Subjects:

Criminal Justice
Sociology
Demography
University of Illinois at Chicago Circle. Planning.

Administrative Information:

Preferred citation: [item description], [box and folder number], Peter P. Klassen Papers, University Archives, University of Illinois at Chicago

Acquisition Information:

There were two acquisitions of the Peter P. Klassen Papers. UA 78-16 and UA 78-30 were received in 1972 and 1978 respectively.

Processing Information:

This collection was arranged and described by Peggy Glowacki in 2005.

Bibliography:

Peter P. Klassen Biographical File, University Archives, University of Illinois at Chicago.

Detailed Description of the Collection:

Series I: Sociology

Box 1

1. "World Patterns and World Problems: Syllabus in Social Sciences 113, 1949
2. "Bases of Contemporary American Life: Syllabus in Social Science 112," 1949
3. "The Individual in Society," Social Science 111 Committee – preliminary syllabus, 1950
4. "The Individual in Society: Syllabus in Social Science 111," 1951
5. Illinois Sociological Association – archives files, 1956-1968
6. Juvenile Delinquency – reference file, 1958-1960
7. Illinois Sociological Association – meetings, 1970

Series II: Demography and Campus Planning

Box 2

8. "The Challenge Implicit in Population Dynamics," undated

9. University of Illinois Chicago Circle campus transition planning – newspaper clippings, 1959
10. University of Illinois Chicago Circle campus transition planning – newspaper clippings, 1959-1960
11. University of Illinois Chicago Circle campus transition planning, 1960-1961
12. South Chicago Suburbs – newspaper clippings, 1960-1962
13. Office of Demographic Studies, 1971-1972
14. “A Bunch of Strangers: Summer Students’ Reactions to Chicago Circle,” Louis A. Berman, 1974

Series III: Development of Criminal Justice Department

15. Criminal Justice – course outlines, 1965-1968
16. Academic Advisory Committee to the Administration of Criminal Justice Curriculum – notebook, 1965-1969
17. “Administration of Criminal Justice Curriculum, UICC,” 1967
18. Criminal Justice – program development proposals, 1967-1969

Box 3

19. Academic Advisory Committee to the Administration of Criminal Justice Curriculum – secretary’s file, 1968-1969
20. Academic Advisory Committee to the Administration of Criminal Justice Curriculum, 1969
21. Academic Advisory Committee to the Administration of Criminal Justice Curriculum – background material, 1969
22. Academic Advisory Committee to the Administration of Criminal Justice Curriculum – program proposals, 1969
23. Criminal Justice – program proposals, 1969-1970
24. Academic Advisory Committee to the Administration of Criminal Justice Curriculum, 1970
25. Academic Advisory Committee to the Administration of Criminal Justice Curriculum – correspondence, 1970-1971

Series IV: Other Professional Activities

26. “University of Illinois and International Affairs,” conference, 1962
27. American Association of University Professors, 1969-1970