

**A General Introduction To Doing Research  
in the UIC University Archives  
[Last Revised: 17 November 2005]**

The records in the University Archives of the University of Illinois at Chicago are organized by **provenance**, meaning that they are arranged according to what office or individual created them. This is sometimes confusing to researchers unfamiliar with conducting research in archives. A general familiarity with the structure of the University is important to conducting successful research in the University Archives.

Below are a few tips when researching a subject on UIC's history.

**What time period is being researched?**

- **1859-1982:** Prior to 1982, what is now the “West Side” of UIC was a separate university called the **University of Illinois at the Medical Center (UIMC** – also called the **Chicago Professional Colleges (CPC)** from the 1940's through the 1960's). UIMC/CPC had it's own Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor's and Senate and has records going back to 1859 for some programs. The Colleges of Medicine, Pharmacy, and Dentistry all have roots going back to private colleges founded in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Most of these records are stored at the Library of the Health Sciences. However, information on them can be found in the archives database.
- **1946-1965:** From 1946-1965, the University of Illinois operated a two-year branch campus at Navy Pier known as the **Chicago Undergraduate Division**. Most of these records are located at the RJ Daley Special Collections Department.
- **1965-1982:** In 1965, the Chicago Undergraduate Division became the four-year **University of Illinois at Chicago Circle (UICC)**, located at Harrison and Halsted. The new campus had its own Chancellor and Senate. Most of these records are located at the RJ Daley Special Collections Department.
- **1982-Present:** In 1982, the UIMC and UICC merged to form the **University of Illinois at Chicago**. Most central administration records and records from the “East Side” of campus are kept at the RJ Daley Special Collections Departments. However, records from colleges that were connected with the old UIMC (the “West Side” of campus) are still kept at the Library of the Health Sciences Special Collections Department.

**Clipping Files, Ready Reference Files, and Biographical Files:** These files contain information on common research questions. Many common questions on specific individuals or university events can be answered in one of these three files. If a clipping cannot be found, but a general date is know, browsing the **school newspapers** and other **university publications** may find additional information.

**Is a specific faculty member involved?** As of 2004, the University Archives had over 70 collections of faculty papers. These may contain material on the faculty member's role at UIC, their research, their professional activities, or their personal lives. Searching the University Archives database for “faculty papers” (or the last name of a specific faculty member) will identify these collections. Also, check the **biographical files**,

which may contain vita, biographical statements, clippings, obituaries, and other assorted items that the University Archives received on a specific member of the faculty or staff. An index of faculty members who have biographical files in the University Archives is on a database maintained by the archives. At the time of writing, the biographical files database is not available on the internet, although it can be searched by staff at the Special Collections Reference Desk.

**Does the subject involve a specific department or college on campus?** Some campus units have deposited large amounts of records in the University Archives, others very few. Check with the reference desk in the Special Collections Reading Room to identify what records a particular department or college have deposited in the University Archives. The University Archives database can also be searched for specific names or keywords. However, many descriptions in the database are very general, so users should double check with the reference desk. Also keep in mind that many departments, colleges, and offices have changed names over time. Records are often found under older names depending on when they were created and/or deposited in the University Archives.

Department Heads generally try to keep the Dean of their college informed of their department's needs, accomplishments, and problems. Likewise, a college's Dean tries to keep the Chancellor informed of the college's needs, accomplishments, and problems.

**Does the subject involve the physical infrastructure of UIC?** The Office of Capital Programs oversees the creation of new buildings on campus, while the Physical Plant oversees their ongoing maintenance. The Vice Chancellor for Administration oversees both operations. New buildings and major renovations must be approved by the Board of Trustees, so information on building construction can also be found in the **Board of Trustees Reports and Agenda Documents**.

**Would the campus-wide faculty be interested in this subject?**

Each University of Illinois campus has a faculty Senate that exercises "legislative functions in matters of educational policy, such as requirements for admission to colleges and schools, requirements for degrees and certificates, and the academic calendar. Each senate shall also recommend candidates for honorary degrees, and may propose amendments to the Statutes through the University Senates Conference to the President and the Board of Trustees." The UI/UIC/UICC/UIMC **Senate minutes** may contain information on issues that the faculty discussed at the senate meetings. These meetings are indexed from the 1950's until the mid-1980's. Minutes from subsequent meetings are also available, but they can only be examined by browsing.

**Was the campus administration involved?**

- The **Chancellor's Office** is generally kept informed of major events on campus, so the Chancellor's Central Files contain a great deal of information on the campus' history, including many annual reports.
- The **Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs** (Provost) is generally involved in issues involving curriculum and the faculty.

- The **Vice Chancellor for Administration** oversees the overall infrastructure and administration of the campus.

### **Was the University of Illinois Board of Trustees involved?**

The Board of Trustees must approve any major changes to the University, including the creation of new departments/programs, approving key appointments, and authorizing funds. The Board of Trustees decisions are published every two years in the Board of Trustees Reports (Call Number LD 2351). Each report is indexed, although a comprehensive index does not exist. The Supplements to the Report (or the “Grey Book”) contains lists of all faculty employed by the University along with their salaries. The University Archives also receives the agenda documents that are passed out at each of the meetings from 1996 forward (along with some previous years as well). The agenda documents may sometimes include detailed information that is only referenced in the published report.

### **Would the U of I President or the Vice-Presidents be involved?**

The University of Illinois President supervises the entire University of Illinois system. Most decisions that involve multiple campuses will need the president’s input. Most of these records are at UIUC University Archives. Copies of some mass disseminated reports may be in record group 002.

### **Was Money Involved?**

Check the Board of Trustees Budget Reports (RG 001/02). The Budget Summary for Operations is the budget for the current year. The Budget Requests for Operating and Capital Funds is the request for two years out. Also check the “*Financial report [of] organizations at the University of Illinois ... student activities, athletics, publications, dramatics, concerts [and] alumni activities*” (Call Number LD 2353.A3). The records from individual departments and the Chancellor’s Central Files may have additional information on the budget decisions for specific programs on campus. For budget decisions from the campus consolidation in 1982 through 1994, also see the records from the Office of Planning and Resource Management (Record Group 060).

### **Accreditation Reports**

Circle Campus and UIC was accredited by the North Central Association of Schools and Colleges in 1970, 1976, 1987, and 1997. The University Archives has the self-studies prepared by the University that describe how the campus changed since the last accreditation, a description of the major programs currently in existence, and the campus’ plans for the future. The University Archives also has the final report prepared by the NCA. Many colleges, departments, and programs may be accredited by specific professional organizations. These reports are sometimes found in the Chancellor’s Central Files or the Dean/Administration/Directors files for specific units

### **Campus Newspapers**

A number of campus papers have existed over the years. Check the Newspapers binder in the reading room for the lineage of some of the major ones. Very few campus publications are indexed, so they can only be used by browsing.

### **Yearbooks**

Up to about 1960, the Professional Colleges (Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Nursing) usually had sections in the UIUC yearbook *Illio*. The professional colleges published 4 yearbooks in the 1960's, then stopped publishing them. The Navy Pier campus published yearbooks in 1950 and 1951. Circle Campus published yearbooks from 1965-[1978?], then one more time for 1980-81, then stopped publishing them.

### **Photographs**

A general subject photograph file for Navy Pier/ Circle Campus/ UIC is at RJ Daley Special Collections. The subjects included in this collection can be found in Records Group 086 UA 90-999. A general subject photograph file for the Medical Center is also kept at the Library of the Health Sciences Special Collections Department. A binder containing subjects found in this collection can be found in the reading room of LHS Special Collections.

Be aware that many additional collections also contain photographs. Please contact the University Archivist for information on these additional collections.