Main Entry:
City University of New York. City College. Department of Chemistry.

Title:

Physical Description:
24 boxes; 10 linear feet

Scope and Contents:
This record group contains reports, correspondence (including the Letterbooks of Charles Baskerville), curriculum materials, departmental publications and miscellaneous files for the period 1906—1977. There are also minutes of various departmental committees (not always complete runs) and materials relating to the accreditation of the chemistry program by the American Chemical Society in 1970—71. Also a collection of undergraduate honors papers written between 1931 and 1945. Other materials document the Department’s relationship with officers of the College administration and with the doctoral program in chemistry offered at the Graduate School of the City University of New York starting around 1965. These records document primarily the chairmanships of professors Baskerville (1904—1922) and Benjamin Harrow, Nathan Birnbaum, Abraham Mazur and Theodore Axenrod (1944—1978), with a small amount of material from the intervening period. Also included is a collaboration of detached autographs of famous chemists, the gift of Professor Hugh W. Salzberg.

Preferred Citation:
City University of New York, City College, Department of Chemistry Records, 1904—1977, City University of New York, City College, Library, Archives.

Biographical/Historical Notes:

The records for 1969—1977 cover years during which the Department had to meet the challenges of “Open Admissions”, move into and adjust to the space in the New Science Building (now Marshak Science Tower), and then move to new space within the building when the School of Biomedical Education was established. The Department also had to deal with hiring freezes, retrenchments and budget cuts associated with the fiscal crisis in New York City in 1976.

In order to reflect how the Department met these various challenges, a number of routine memos, and items such as security reports have been selectively retained in the files.

BJD 10/93
Chairs of the Department of Chemistry 1946—1977

Professor Benjamin Harrow 1944—1954
Professor Nathan Birnbaum 1954—1969
Professor Abraham Mazur 1969—1972
Professor Theodore Axenrod 1972—1978

Finding Aid:
Inventory available in reading room; folder level control.

CITY COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY
RECORDS 1906—1969
Bulk Dates: 1906—1945

These records represent materials transferred about 1967, although some of the material may have been received earlier in small, partial transfers. They document the department from the time it was established as the College moved from 23rd Street to the St. Nicholas Heights campus. The Letterbooks of Professor Charles Baskerville for 1906 and 1907 and the annual reports for the 1920’s provide an unusually full view of the work of the Department as it was establishing itself. (See also the Baskerville papers in the Memorabilia section.) Publications by the Department which describe its work and a collection of honors papers and curriculum materials round out the picture of the Department’s work. There are also several memorabilia items, including a collection of detached autographs of famous chemists, a number of whom visited the Department and lectured there.

INVENTORY 1906—1969

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[includes list of faculty who served in World War II] Box 2

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1919 (Inorganic Chemistry only). Box 1
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1963? Box 1
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Correspondence
Letterbooks of Professor Charles Baskerville.
[copies of all letters written by him as Chair of Department]. 2vols.
Sept. 1904—Oct. 16, 1906
Oct. 17, 1906—April 1, 1907

Misc. Corres.  

Box 2

Curriculum

Extension Course in Physical Chemistry. 1910.  
Chemistry 1a and 2a (General Chemistry). c. 1953.  
Chemistry 103. (Quantitative Analysis for chemical engineers). c. 1953.  

Box 1

Box 1

Box 1

Box 1

Box 1

Box 1

Box 1

Departmental Publications

City College of New York. [Pamphlet] Presented to the Eighth International Congress of Applied Chemistry. Sept. 1912 [at its meeting held at the College]  
Science Survey: Chemistry [contributions by various members of the Department, edited apparently by Prof. Benjamin Harrow]. 1929.  

Box 1

Faculty

Dissertations in Chemistry by members of the Department. Printed editions only. 14 dissertations published between 1908 and 1936. Faculty members represented in this collection are: P.M. Apfelbaum, J.A. Babor, S.M. Edmonds, C.B. Kremer, A. Lehrman, L. Lehrman, D. Lifschitz, C.A. Marlies, B. Naiman, M.A. Paul, M. Neidle, D. Perlman, W.L. Prager and R. Stevenson.  
Also offprint of article by B. Harrow (with Casimir Funk).  

Graduate Programs

Joint City College—Hunter College Masters Degree Program. n.d. Report on the graduate program. 1963-64.  

Box 2

Honors Papers (Undergraduate)

c. 1931—1945.  

Boxes 3, 4, 5

Memorabilia

Dedication of the Chemistry Building. June 1908. Invitations. [named Baskerville Hall in 1955]  
Meeting of the Department at the Chemists’ Club on May 12, 1922 in recognition of the election of Herbert Raymond Moody as president. [Hand lettered menu with signatures]  
Collection of detached autographs of famous chemists [donated by Professor Hugh Salzberg]  
The City College of the 19th century did not have a departmental structure in the modern sense. Each subject taught had a Professor of that subject. As enrollment grew, additional instructors were hired as needed and given the rank of tutor. By the time of the college’s move to St. Nicholas Heights, the rigid curricula of the 19th century had given way to a modified elective system. As course offerings expanded, a departmental structure emerged. The ranks of Instructor, Assistant and Associate Professor began to be represented, although the overall table of organization remained low until the 1950s.

While the term “Chairman” does not appear to have been used until the 1930s, the “Professor” was most often the head of a department as the rank conferred administrative responsibility. Thus the first three names in the list below were not officially chairs, but filled that role by virtue of the rank they held. In 1938, a revision of the Bylaws of the Board of Higher Education permitted the election of department chairs at three year intervals.

Wolcott Gibbs, the first Professor of Chemistry, became director of the Lawrence Scientific School at Harvard University in 1863. Robert Ogden Doremus began his connection with the college in 1852 as Professor of Natural History, Anatomy, Physiology and Hygiene. He resigned in 1861 and went to Europe to study, returning in 1863. He was appointed Professor of Chemistry at the College to succeed Wolcott Gibbs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wolcott Gibbs</td>
<td>1849—1863</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert Ogden Doremus</td>
<td>1863—1902</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles Baskerville</td>
<td>1904—1922</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Died suddenly, January 28, 1922)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Herbert Raymond Moody</td>
<td>1922—1938</td>
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<td>(Retired August 1, 1938)</td>
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<tr>
<td>William L. Prager</td>
<td>1938—1944</td>
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<tr>
<td>Benjamin Harrow</td>
<td>1944—1954</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nathan Birnbaum</td>
<td>1954—1969</td>
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<td>Abrahm Mazur</td>
<td>1969—1972</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theodore Axenrod</td>
<td>1972—1978</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael A. Weiner</td>
<td>1981—1984</td>
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<tr>
<td>Samuel H. Wilen</td>
<td>1984—1987</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donald L. Sloan</td>
<td>1987—1990</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael E. Green</td>
<td>1990—1996</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stanley Radel</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The records for 1969—1977 document years when the department had to meet the challenges of “Open Admissions”, move into and adjust to the space in the new Science Building (now the Robert E. Marshak Science Building), and then move to new space within the building when the School of Biomedical Education was established. The Department also had to deal with the hiring freezes, retrenchments, and budget cuts associated with the fiscal crisis in New York City in 1976.

In order to reflect how the Department met these various challenges, a number of routine memos and items such as security reports have been selectively retained.

The Department's interactions with other departments, divisions and schools of the college, as well as with the City University of New York Ph. D. Program in Chemistry and with outside agencies and firms are also documented in these records.
Articulation. Reporting. 1972
[Chemistry and chemical technology courses at the two year colleges which parallel Dept. courses]. 7, f. 9-10

Educational Technology Facilities Report. 1972
[A CUNY-wide survey]. 6, f. 5

Executive Committee in Biochemistry (CUNY). Minutes. 1969—1971 1, f. 9

Minutes. 1970
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Ph. D. Program in Chemistry. 1969 1, f. 15

Chemistry Executive Committee. Minutes. 1971—1972 2, f. 1

Chemistry. Minutes. June—December, 1972. 6, f. 7

Chemistry. Executive Committee. Minutes. 1974. 8, f. 8


Chemistry. N.Y.S. Evaluation. 1974. 8, f. 7

Chemistry. Executive Committee. Minutes. 1975. 9, f. 12

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1974 8, f. 3
1974 8, f. 15
1975 8, f. 28

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1973. [Memo by Chair on possible program for Visiting Committee]. 7, f. 11

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Physical Chemistry. Graduate Faculty Meeting. 1969. 1, f. 7

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Sub-committee on Slow Speed Computer Terminal. 1974. 8, f. 16

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Corres. 1971 (A. Mazur) [Desk copies]. 6, f. 17
Staff notices. 1971—72
[Includes notices relating to move to Science Bldg.]. 2, f. 8
Annual Report to the Dean of CLAS. June 1972. 7, f. 6
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SCHOOLS AND OFFICES AT CITY COLLEGE

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Division of Science. Personnel and Budget Comm. Minutes. 1964—1969. [For Vita see City College Administrative Reports in 16.4. 1, etc. 
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Department of Chemistry response to proposed program. 1968.  

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