

A History of The American University.
As Seen through The Eagle: 1925-1990.

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Author's Note:

A capstone is defined as being the culmination of a four year program at American University, symbolizing the work completed at the institution and also paving the way for the future. In this project, I feel I have completed both goals by creating a tribute to the school that I have both given many hours and received many opportunities, friendships and insights.

Throughout my academic career, I have attempted to gain a working knowledge of the history of the University to talk with fellow students about and try to increase the awareness of our shared history. Those who walk through the campus today mimic their predecessors in many ways, but rarely realize the connection.

The tradition of service on this campus is the deepest and most important connection that I have discovered, and it is one that must be maintained. From the founding of the undergraduate college up until today, American University has been focused on changing the world through the education of youth. As we stand on the cusp of a new strategic plan and new directions, we must not lose sight of the traditions that have brought us to where we are today.

Other traditions have since died out long ago and remain gone, but not forgotten. Some would not be appropriate in today's world, such as freshmen rules, or a "Best loved girl" competition on campus, but others, if brought back, could help enrich campus life and create a connection to our history and alumni.

This project has been my attempt to try and get on paper the many bits of trivia that I have compiled through days of searching through the American University Archives, the online archives of The Eagle, and through searching documents in the Admissions department.

As any academic work must have a set due date, this work is being turned in covering the history of 1925-1990. Much more of American University history remains unexplored and it is my hope that this project continues with the help of more students and the resources of the University Library. With a greater eye towards the past and from where we have come, we can have a better vision of the future.

The help of the University Librarian and University Archivist have been invaluable. The efforts of the University Library to keep, maintain, and expand the institutional knowledge is commendable and should be enjoyed by all members of the campus community. This project, as with many others completed at American University, would not exist without their tireless efforts to help the student body, and for that, I am forever grateful.

I hope you enjoy this perspective of American University, taking into account it is the view through two filters, that of the Eagle at any given moment, and through my own. It is by no means exhaustive, but it represents what the student view has been.

Pro Deo et Patria

1925 – 1930 Humble Beginnings

On November 20, 1925, the first copy of *The American University Eagle* was published in conjunction with the founding of the College of Liberal Arts, the first incarnation of the current undergraduate program at American University. Among advertisements for optimists and service stations, the four page paper also includes an article about the opening of the College of Liberal Arts giving a brief overview of the University up until 1925. Though almost everything about campus was still new, the students looked to the future and would proudly proclaim to be the first students of American University¹.

Along with the advent of the undergraduate program came the regular features of a University. On November 5, 1925, the American University football team played its first game against George Washington University. The team, impaired by lack of experience, let up 6 touchdowns in the first half, but quickly gained experience and kept the game to be a 55-0 shutout². Though the first showing wasn't the strongest, the crowd stayed in the game, cheering for every tackle that the American players made and showing their loyalty to their new university. Though most are familiar with the red, white and blue colors of American University today, the original colors, as voted on by students were orange and blue. Both colors were described as very bright, with the blue hue being selected as the color of a professor's gown. In addition to the color scheme, the motto of the school was chosen. *Quae Sursum sunt quaerite* or 'look to higher things' was selected as the motto of the school.

¹ November 20, 1925.

² Ibid.

In addition to athletics, student activities were also being started around campus, with the constitution of the government being approved by the faculty of the University. As with student governance today, a residence hall association was also created among the women's dorms with the goal of creating a more pleasant atmosphere for the women on campus, as well as provide for some self governance by the students.

As both student governments started up on campus, the opinion page of the Eagle made a plea that is familiar to student at American University today: one of Civitas. Though the name hadn't been coined for the program yet, the early editorial on behalf of the paper implored students to help around campus by cleaning up the quad, not parking their cars on the sidewalk, and to pick up garbage.

As the first semester of the undergraduate program finished the campus was beginning to take shape. University Hall, later to become the Mary Graydon Center, housed much of the University, including the dining hall, female residence halls and reception parlors that were used to host the first reception to celebrate the opening of the College of Liberal Arts. Hurst Hall was also in use for regular classroom instruction as well as laboratory classes. At the Board of Trustees meeting on December 8, 1925, preparations were made for the first library building to be built on campus, the Battelle Memorial building³. The addition of Battelle to Hurst, University Hall, and the McKinley building would bring the American University campus closer to the current quad design seen today. Though the main campus at the corner of Nebraska and Massachusetts Avenues was the focus of the construction, the University also had campuses located in the city, at 1901 and 1907 F street NW. These campuses held the graduate programs, as

³ December 17, 1925.

well as the “School of the Political Sciences,” a precursor to the current School of Public Affairs, but not considered the first form of SPA⁴.

The Board meeting was notable for the enthusiasm of the Board members and the Chancellor of the University, Lucius Clark. The meeting was the first time that the Board had met since the creation of the undergraduate program, and was at the conclusion of construction for University Hall and the Chancellor’s house, helping to start the physical presence of the campus in Washington. The one moment of sadness in the meeting was the noting of the passing of William Jennings Bryan, who had been a Trustee on the Board, and had been involved in helping to build American University.

In April of 1926, the plans of the Battelle building, the first library of the University were released. The library was going to have three floors to accommodate books, study rooms, instruction space, a museum and a place for special collections. The main feature of the building was going to be a two-story main reading room that was based on the first floor⁵.

The building was named after Gordon Battelle, the youngest trustee of American University at the time of his death. Gordon Battelle was the son of John Battelle, who had made his money in the steel industry and passed on his wealth to his son. Gordon Battelle took an interest in the scientific method and to research, while also running two steel companies. Gordon Battelle died at the age of 40 from complications of an appendectomy, and left most of his estate to the creation of the Battelle Memorial Institute. The Battelle building at American University was made at the bequest of Gordon when he passed away⁶.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ April 23, 1926.

⁶ <http://www.battelle.org/ABOUTUS/history.aspx>

On May 21, 1926, the first commencement of the College of Liberal Arts was held, with the graduates having a brunch luncheon in the dining hall at twelve o'clock and continuing all day with the cornerstone lying of the Battelle Building, an academic procession, commencement address, and finally an alumni dinner. In looking back at the year, the Eagle noted that the young university had produced not only the first traditions to look back upon, but an undefeated debating team, and two new buildings on campus. The first year created high hopes for the students of American University that would continue on through the early years of the school⁷.

The second class to come through American University was almost double the size of the first year, with 67 men and 67 women enrolling. In addition to the class size increasing, the retention rate of the school was at 80%, helping to keep the school growing during the vital early years⁸.

With all the new students coming into the school, the start of freshman hazing also appeared, with a notice to all freshmen to abide by the rules set forth in a freshman handbook that was disseminated early in the year. The editorial for the first issue of the Eagle was also on "Freshmen Learning Humility," a sentiment that would be surprising to see in the Eagle today.

At the end of the first semester in 1926, both the new Battelle Library and a new gymnasium behind the library were opened for use. The gymnasium was not completely finished when first used by the "basketeers" in their game against Maryland University, but the floor and spectator space was ready to host for the basketball game⁹.

⁷ May 21, 1926.

⁸ October 8, 1926.

⁹ December 26, 1926.

Though American University still only had one undergraduate college, the College of Liberal Arts, the makings of future schools began to take shape in the early years of the University. A School of Political Sciences based in the downtown campus provided undergraduates who had at least two years of college experience a course of studies in government, history and foreign affairs. Graduates of the school would leave with a Degree of Bachelor of Political Science. As with this pre-cursor to the current School of Political Affairs, a chapter of the International Relations Clubs, endowed by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, opened at AU in 1927. The chapter was the first such club to open in the District of Columbia and operated as a political science honor society rather than an academic unit, but signaled the future specialty in International Relations AU would take on in the future¹⁰.

In the start of 1928, the university received the accreditation of two organizations that would help establish the University as a recognized leader in higher education. The first accreditation came from the University Senate of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and placed the College of Liberal Arts at the same footing as all other Methodist Universities across the country. In addition, the accreditation meant that the University would also receive funding from the Methodist church, which has continued to this day and has proven vital during economic downturns¹¹.

The second organization to accredit the school was the American Association of Colleges. This accreditation was further distinguished by the fact that no school had ever been accredited before its fourth year of existence with the AAC. The speed in which the

¹⁰ October 15, 1927.

¹¹ January 13, 1928.

College of Liberal Arts was able to receive these accreditations was attributed not only to the faculty and condition of the University, but mainly the work of the students.

By the end of 1928, the University had received full accreditation with the Secondary Schools of the Middle States and Maryland as well as the Commission on Higher Institutions of Learning. This meant that the first full graduating class would have accredited degrees and be able to seek graduate degrees at other institutions, as well as being able to state that American University was on the same footing as Georgetown or George Washington¹².

Another first was attained in 1928, with the first athletics trophy being won by the women's basketball team for a free throw contest among area colleges and athletic leagues. The women's team was able to sink 42 out of 50 free throws defeating George Washington, Gallaudet, the YWCA and Marjorie Webster. Though this was the first time American had won a trophy, the focus of the Eagle was towards sports in the future to add to the trophy collection¹³.

As the campus began to grow, with the planning of a new men's dormitory, the area around American University also began to grow. The District Government began to develop the roads, and in 1929, it was announced that the intersection of Nebraska and Massachusetts Avenues would be the site of a statue of Artemus Ward that would be erected by Harvard University.

Starting in the fall of 1929, with an action taken by the Board of Trustee, fraternities and sororities were allowed to form on the campus. Within the first year of the decision, Greek organizations began to form, and have students rush. Greek news was

¹² December 19, 1928.

¹³ Ibid.

published in the Eagle listing those who were rushing each organization as a matter of public knowledge¹⁴.

¹⁴ September 26, 1929.

1930-1935

Building the American University.

Though American University had been co-ed since the start, there was only a residence hall for women on campus for the first years. By 1930, with a growing enrollment and higher class sizes every year, Hamilton Hall opened as the first men's residence hall. The building accommodated about 40 students when it opened and at the time, enjoyed a view of rolling hills and countryside in Maryland and the District.

In addition to on campus buildings, American University welcomed one of its first neighbors to the campus with the construction of the National Methodist Church across Nebraska Avenue. The Church was designed to be built at the main entrance of the L shaped quadrangle that was originally proposed. The Church still stands at the top of this long forgotten "quad" which has McKinley as the crux of the L.

As life on campus got into a familiar pace, the University faced a potentially crippling problem. Fundraising efforts began to slow as the nation was plunged in the Great Depression. With a deficit budget for the 1931-1932 school year, the school could have been headed for an early demise. But the quick action of the University helped quell the financial losses. The Board of Trustees created a promotion committee, whose job it was to further the interests of the University by helping to put the institution on a sound financial footing. In addition, budget cuts helped keep the institution operating with a yearly surplus rather than deficit for the 1932-1933 school year and beyond. All these measures were taken without any notable cuts for the students¹⁵.

¹⁵ November 02, 1932

The University continued to operate despite the funding problems, and excelled in academics in 1932, beating out Oxford University in a debate over war reparations¹⁶. The victory garnered the admiration of the entire school for the two debaters, and helped establish the school academically. The success of the debate team was also accompanied by some changes in the University leadership, as Chancellor Clark stepped down, and was appointed to be the dean of the graduate school. His replacement, Bishop Edwin Hughes was appointed as the temporary Chancellor by the Board of Trustees to run the University¹⁷. This shift in organization also allowed the Dean of the undergraduate College of Liberal Arts to focus his attention on one school, as he had previously been the acting Dean for the Graduate School as well.

Another shift in the University took place later in 1933, with one of the trustees, Daniel Roper, taking a position in the President-elect's cabinet as the Secretary of Commerce for President Roosevelt¹⁸. Roper stayed on as a trustee of the University and provided a connection for students into the world of the federal government. He granted interviews with the Eagle and entertained a group of AU students at his office while secretary.

In 1933, the Chancellor position also changed hands with the Board of Trustees appointing Dr. J. M. Gray to become the Chancellor of the University. Dr. Gray replaced Bishop Hughes, who had been the interim Chancellor. Both men had a strong affiliation with the Methodist church in keeping with the close ties the University had to the church.¹⁹

¹⁶ December 1st, 1932.

¹⁷ January 12, 1933, A1.

¹⁸ February 24, 1933, A1

¹⁹ November 9, 1933.

Before Chancellor Gray took the reigns of the University, American played host to the National Student Federation of America conference from December 28 to December 31, 1933. The Conference brought over 200 students from over 80 different institutions across the country. The NSFA also made use of the Washington area connections by having a meeting with the first lady, Eleanor Roosevelt in the White House, as well as numerous politicians addressing the conference at forums, dinners and receptions. The forum focused on problems that faced universities at that time, which included the pressures of the Great Depression on higher education. A speech by an Assistant to the Commerce Secretary that started the conference had the topic of “A Laboratory of Leadership in Public Affairs,” only months before the founding of the School of Public Affairs at American.²⁰

With the excitement of the conference passing at 1934 began, American University began to start back into the normal paces of a University. The debate team still attracted the most attention of any club on campus, and the football team battled local rivals at GW and Gallaudet. But come March, as spring approached, American had yet another opportunity to pause and reflect on the future of the campus. The Inauguration of Dr. Gray as Chancellor was planned for March 3rd with an academic procession of over 200 institutions from around the world²¹.

The Inauguration itself was distinguished by the presence of the President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt, who gave an address encouraging American citizens learning about their government, and the growth of trained personnel in government. At the Inauguration, another milestone was achieved at American

²⁰ December 28, 1933.

²¹ February 21, 1934.

University, with the founding of the School of Public Affairs. David Lawrence, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, announced the founding at the Inauguration. SPA took on a very different character in its founding, mimicking the current Washington Semester program. Students from around the country would attend American for one semester over the summer taking six credits with a non-traditional curriculum. The School would focus on interactions with Members of Congress, administration officials, and business leaders to help students understand and learn about the parts of government. Students who were interested were also able to get the chance to learn first hand about parts of the government that interested them. This foundation of encouraging interaction between political and community leaders with the student body has carried through the 75 years of the school and continues on with adjunct professors who are expert in their fields, and the practice of sending students on internships to learn first hand from the local political experts²².

The practice of using the resources around Washington was not only limited to the political science department. The English department at American assigned freshmen papers in “obscure topics” necessitating that the students go do research at the Library of Congress. The Library of Congress had to add staff to keep up with the increased demand as about 50 freshmen descended on the library on Saturdays in April to write their papers²³.

With the end of the 1933-34 school year, American had made many advances, opening its first school beyond the College of Liberal Arts, and inaugurating a new Chancellor to lead the school. A new dean for the graduate school had also been named,

²² March 7, 1934.

²³ April 25, 1934.

but he passed away suddenly over the summer from a blood clot leaving the school temporarily without a leader²⁴.

The new school year started with the traditions that had grown to become part of welcoming new freshmen to campus. A weenie roast was held to help the freshmen get to know each other and the school. Traditionally, the football team made its first appearance at the barbeque to help acquaint the new class with the cheers and songs of American University²⁵.

American also celebrated the conclusion of the first meeting of the School of Public Affairs. The school was largely made up of faculty from other institutions that taught American, but the notable difference was the informal meetings between students and government officials that took place on campus in University Hall (MGC)²⁶.

In addition to the growing facilities and schools on campus, more student activities were added to help beef up the campus life part of the University. A boxing team was added to the varsity program with a wrestling program being started for intramural competition. The boxing team had its first match against Hampden-Sydney, a small liberal arts college in Virginia. Though the team didn't win in its first showing, the team proved to be a popular addition to the campus²⁷.

²⁴ September 26, 1934.

²⁵ September 26, 1934

²⁶ September 26, 1934

²⁷ February 7, 1935.

1935-1941

A Growing Campus Defines Itself.

As the campus grew, the area around American also started to develop with the construction of Ward Circle. The addition of the circle allowed American to be placed prominently near a major intersection in the city. The installation of the statue would take about a year, and though not all supported Ward being moved into the circle as the Eagle advocated for “American University Circle,” over time Ward would become a part of the University persona²⁸.

Though American continued to grow on its own in Washington, world events continued to shape the campus. The drumbeat of war was growing louder and louder around the world, and student activists began to organize. Jeanette Rankin, the first female member of Congress, and only member of Congress to vote against both World War One and Two, came to help rally an American University Peace Committee and to speak in favor of a Student Strike. The issue came up year after year during the mid 1930’s until 1936, when the University refused to recognize the peace committee as being a campus club²⁹. The refusal came from the University’s dislike of the idea of a student strike, and the ability for students interested in international affairs to join other clubs on campus.

A familiar name to American University made campus news in 1939 as Stafford Cassell was appointed to be the Athletic Director for the University after graduating in 1936 from AU. Cassell had made a quick rise in the department, becoming Director of Intramural Activities and an instructor in physical education. His appointment as Athletic

²⁸ November 15, 1934.

²⁹ April 10th, 1936.

Director made him one of the youngest Directors in the country and starting a life long affiliation with the University³⁰.

The creation of a Student Union was a particularly important issue for the undergraduate school since there was not a place for students to congregate outside of classes. The college council, a mixed governance body of faculty and students, and the Board of Trustees approved a plan to raise money for a new Student Union that could host students during the day and create a new sense of spirit and pride in the campus. One of the ways that money was raised in the first year was through concerts at American that were put on by the staff. The first ever “Name Band” to play in the gym, Dave McWilliams, also helped to raise money for the building³¹. By late 1940, the dream of a Student Union Building was realized when the College Council approved the purchase of a building across the street from the campus to be renovated as a Student Union for space use by campus groups.

With the Great Depression still affecting the country, there were signs that the economic troubles began to affect campus. Though there were capital improvements being made, with expansions to the library and funds being raised for a new student union, a question of the University’s accreditation came up in 1940³². The rumors about the University losing accreditation became so overwhelming that Chancellor Gray scheduled an address to help assure students that the University was on sound footing. Gray pointed to the expansion of facilities on campus, an increasing endowment and an effort to reduce the deficit the University faced.

³⁰ March 16, 1939.

³¹ March 19, 1940.

³² March 19, 1940.

Despite the University's best efforts and the protests of Chancellor Gray, the University lost its accreditation with the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. Gray's reaction was that there was no concrete reason that the University lost the confidence of the MSA. The news threw the campus into a mild panic as students worried about the potential impact this would have on their diplomas, faculty worried about their jobs, and the administration worked on how to gain accreditation again³³. In later 1940, Chancellor Gray was replaced by a committee of University faculty to act in lieu of a President, with an acting President named soon after³⁴.

With a new acting President in office, the University prepared for another inspection to regain the accreditation of the MSA. The Board of Trustees created a new plan to divide the University into a College of Arts and Sciences and a School of Social Sciences and Public Affairs³⁵.

The University continued on with an acting President through the inspection of the MSA, and until April when the Board appointed Paul Douglass as the President of The American University³⁶. Douglass had been a Vermont state senator and a professor before being appointed as President at American. His legislative experience, as well as academic credentials, fit well with the University that needed someone who could provide a public face.

Immediately after Douglass' appointment as President, the University once again regained its accreditation with the MSA. The University had been inspected again in March and with the appointment of Paul Douglass as President, American had completed a series of reforms to regain this crucial stamp of approval. The reorganization of the

³³ May 7, 1940.

³⁴ November 19, 1940

³⁵ January 21, 1941.

³⁶ April 15, 1941.

University involved the entire campus from the Trustees on down in recognition of how important the accreditation process is³⁷.

After accreditation was regained, the campus officially inaugurated Dr. Douglass as the President of American University in October of 1941. The ceremony involved representatives from campuses across the country and the involvement of many members of the government. Members of the diplomatic corps, the administration of the Federal Government, and Members of Congress were invited to attend. These connections of American University and the federal government had been forged early on in the founding of the College of Liberal Arts and School of Public Affairs and continued to be strengthened with campus ceremonies³⁸.

But the connections to the Washington community did not end with the government. In November 1941, American University made an alliance with the Phillips Memorial Art gallery to help launch the arts programs at American and help establish a degree in creative art³⁹.

³⁷ April 22, 1941.

³⁸ October 7, 1941.

³⁹ November 18, 1941.

1941 – 1951.

The World War II Era.

With the University headed towards new heights with the arts partnership and the alliance with the Phillips gallery, it seemed that the future was limitless. Though like many campuses across the country, American was shocked by the attack of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. The first reaction of the campus newspaper was the safety of those on campus with a banner headline on “A.U. Rushes Preparations for Raids⁴⁰.” Though there were many new issues to be faced with a war in the future, there was the very real feeling that Washington could be attacked and that students would have to take shelter on campus. Air raid drills were held at night in the dorms on campus and during the day in Hurst during classes. A fire fighting crew was established in case of broken gas lines on campus and a health service was headed by the campus nurse⁴¹.

Many of these preparations were made easier by the fact that there were shelters on campus from the work the government did during World War I with chemical weapons, but it affected the campus greatly to have to worry about an air raid during classes. Air raid practices continued on to help students practice in case of an attack on Washington, but the daily life of campus carried on despite the now apparent war. Some changes were made as more and more campus members started to sign up for service in the armed forces. Younger members of the faculty began to join up and leave American for service to Uncle Sam. A curriculum for an associate’s degree was introduced in 1942 to allow students to receive some education before induction into the armed forces. Still, the male student population also began to drop and some sports were dropped because of

⁴⁰ December 16, 1941.

⁴¹ Ibid.

that. Notably, the football and baseball programs were halted in the 1942-1943 school year due to the lack of male athletes⁴².

Though the strains of war continued to affect American, the basic tenets of public service and inclusiveness continued through the hostilities. In a poll taken on campus, a majority of students were in favor of having Japanese students on campus, even during the height of the war, “.. the principles for which we are fighting this war declare this to be the obvious reply,” stated one student in responding to the survey⁴³.

In February of 1943 worries of air raids and the draft were relieved for a day as the University celebrated its 50th anniversary. The Eagle printed a special edition to review the founding of the University by Bishop Hurst and revisiting the original plans for campus. With a look back towards the service of the University to the country during World War I, plans were being drawn up for adding more barracks for WAVES of the US Navy to move in on campus in 1943. In addition to the female WAVE barracks, a Navy Bomb disposal school, the American Red Cross, the Committee for the Organization of World Peace, and local draft headquarters were all stationed on campus during World War II. Though the celebration of American tried to ally concerns about the war, over half of the men on campus were reservists in the armed forces and were at risk of being called up to fight in the war⁴⁴.

With all the new people on campus for the war effort, American continued to try and make the campus area welcoming with plants and trees. Where the current SIS building is, Korean Cherry Blossom Trees were planted in 1943 in a ceremony attended by the Provisional President of the Republic of Korea, Syngman Rhee. Rhee spoke of

⁴² September 23, 1942.

⁴³ November 17, 1942.

⁴⁴ February 23, 1943.

how the trees were Korean in origin as opposed to the better known Japanese Cherry Blossoms. These trees were saved when the SIS building was constructed and now surround the building and flower every spring, washing the building in a beautiful pink⁴⁵.

Tragedy struck the University near the end of the school year in 1943 as the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Bishop Alan Wright Leonard, was killed in a plane crash while on a service trip visiting American soldiers in the European theater⁴⁶. Bishop Leonard had also been chair of the Methodist Board of Education as well holding positions in the governance of other Methodist Schools. Currently, the Leonard Hall residence hall is named in honor of Bishop Leonard.

With the ups and downs of the war, American continued on and looked towards what education would look like at the end of the war. With the passing of the G.I. Bill, some universities were unsure of what the incoming veterans would do to education. President Douglass maintained that the incoming veterans would be a benefit to education and not as “educational hobos,” a term coined by the President of the University of Chicago⁴⁷. Dr. Douglass argued that the G.I. Bill would make education more democratic by opening the doors to those who would have never had the chance to go to college.

The dedication of the University during World War I and II was recognized in 1945 with the dedication of a victory ship named the S.S. American Victory⁴⁸. The ship was launched in California to be put into service as a cargo ship. In addition, at the end of the war, the campus played host to a victory conference on the industrial transition back into peace time production.

⁴⁵ April 13, 1943.

⁴⁶ May 18, 1943.

⁴⁷ January 15, 1945

⁴⁸ May 15, 1945.

The first signs of the School of International Service also appeared as an International Center was founded at American. Though it was smallish facility, it represented the University's commitment to international relations in the volatile post war period.

As the campus began to return to normal, with the military leaving campus and more students arriving, student demands for traditional campus features grew. Housing was built for veterans with their families in what is now the quadplex behind the library. Student demands for a football team also reached the Board of Trustees, which voted not to bring football back in the spring of 1946⁴⁹. The students did not agree with this decision, and staged a walk out of classes during the spring of 1948, with more than 500 students walking out of Hurst Hall chanting "We Want Football⁵⁰!" The disturbance became so large that the fire department was called in to extinguish a bonfire lit by the protesting students.

Though football met its demise in the 1940's the sports program at AU went through some changes and expansion in the later part of the decade. American joined the NCAA in 1948, and also changed the uniforms to add red, white and blue warm ups. Though blue and orange continued to be the colors of the College of Arts and Sciences, red, white and blue became the colors for the University⁵¹.

With one program ending, another opportunity began as WAMC, the first campus radio station was established in January of 1947. The programs were described as "mostly musical," made by students, for students⁵². A big break for the communications program came in 1950 when AU students presented "A Christmas Carol," that was

⁴⁹ May 23, 1946.

⁵⁰ April 7, 1948

⁵¹ October 13, 1948.

⁵² January 17, 1947.

broadcast across the nation⁵³. After only four years on air, WAMC suffered an equipment failure, but was quickly replaced by WAMU as the new campus radio station in 1951⁵⁴.

The new addition of the radio station was only part of the new campus services offered after the transition back into peace time. One of the former military buildings on campus was turned into a student union called the Leonard Center, after the former trustee. The Leonard center had a bowling alley, swimming pool, a television room, a snack bar, bookstore as well as space for art displays⁵⁵. The moniker of “The Eagle’s Nest” also was christened in 1947 for a cabaret night performance in the snack bar.

During a cold night in December of 1947, a fire broke out in one of the fraternity houses on campus. The entire Alpha Sig house was destroyed in a 2-alarm fire detected around 5 a.m. The building was a complete loss, and though the building was insured, the contents were not⁵⁶.

In the spring of 1949, American University added an important addition when the Washington College of Law was merged in with the University. WCL had been 53 years old at that point and was the District’s first coeducational law school, being founded by women. The law program was added to American’s downtown campus, which housed most of the graduate programs, with main campus housing the undergraduates⁵⁷.

1951 – 1968.

The era of Anderson.

⁵³ December 18, 1950.

⁵⁴ October 4, 1951.

⁵⁵ October 15, 1947.

⁵⁶ December 3, 1947.

⁵⁷ May 27, 1949.

With all the post war changes on campus, more students moving in, and a greater national prominence, AU was about to go through another change. In October of 1951, President Douglass resigned after almost 11 years of serving the school. An interim President was named in November of the same year while a search began to replace Douglass⁵⁸. With the departure of Douglass, the school also hit a period of hard financial times, turning to the Methodist church for help in 1952. The church provided the University with much needed funds in exchange for becoming owned by the church. No major changes were made to the structure of the University, but all Trustees had to be vetted by the Methodist Board of Higher Education before being seated⁵⁹.

The Presidential search process was completed in 1952 when Hurst Anderson was selected to become the next President of American University. Dr. Anderson was featured on the front page of the Eagle with a portrait of himself and his family. Almost immediately upon taking office, President Anderson announced plans to expand the campus and add buildings. In late 1953, plans for the Radio/TV building were announced as well as the first of the buildings to be built in the quadplex. The quadplex buildings were used as residence halls and replaced dilapidated apartments used for veterans⁶⁰. By 1957, all four current buildings of the quadplex were complete, though the original use for all of them was to be residence halls for men on campus, while Mary Graydon continued to be used as the women's residence.

Not only were the buildings on campus being expanded, but the University was also being expanded with a business school being added in 1955, making it the first business school in the District of Columbia⁶¹. The new business school moved into the

⁵⁸ November 1, 1951.

⁵⁹ May 15, 1952.

⁶⁰ December 3, 1953.

⁶¹ May 3, 1955.

McKinley building, which had been occupied by the local phone company for the previous ten years but was converted back to classroom space in 1955⁶².

With all the changes that had happened at the University, the yearbook decided to change its name from the AUCOLA to the Talon. AUCOLA referred to the American University College of Liberal Arts, a name which had not been used since the 40s, and with the addition of the business school, the law school, and the school of public affairs, the name AUCOLA did not represent the entire university anymore. The Talon became the official yearbook starting in 1956⁶³.

Though the campus was being expanded under President Hurst, not all the changes he instituted were welcomed by the students. More rules were established for the residence halls, and curfews were placed on the residence halls. The most dramatic rule change was the prohibition on alcohol that President Hurst instituted. Students were also dismayed when the rules were enforced in a haphazard manner, allowing some to get away with violations⁶⁴.

A resolution to the problems with campus violations was reached in the start of 1957, with a new judicial code being instituted on campus. The new system created for the first time, a student court where violations of the code would be prosecuted. The student government organizations at the time approved of the new system, as well as the faculty⁶⁵.

The battles between the administration and the structure of the student court played out as the first cases went to trial. At first, there were both open and closed hearings, but this policy was quickly restricted to have only closed hearings. The Eagle

⁶² October 13, 1955.

⁶³ November 3, 1955.

⁶⁴ February 9 1956.

⁶⁵ February 20, 1957.

editorialized harshly against the student government at the time for making changes in the Constitution too quickly and not allowing students enough time to take in the information and proposed changes⁶⁶.

The student court was put to use many times over the course of the 1958 school year with a contested election in the junior class, with a student winning with only vote. The election was deemed illegal and a new election was ordered along with the stipulation that a winner must receive at least 40% of the vote⁶⁷. The court also had to adjudicate a “panty raid” on the nearby Mount Vernon women’s college. Eight students were suspended for the fall term, with eleven others receiving fines for being spectators to the event. The student court handed out the punishments with the concurrence of President Anderson⁶⁸.

As the battles played out over campus life, the buildings on campus continued to be expanded, with the library receiving an addition from the donation of Charles Tompkins. The building’s name was changed to reflect Mr. Tompkins’ generosity, and became the Battelle-Tompkins library⁶⁹. The largest change on campus though, was the addition of the new School of International service. The building’s groundbreaking was attended by President Eisenhower, as the idea of the School was formed during a White House conference on education that was attended by Dr. Anderson. The school welcomed 80 students the first year in 1958 from all over the world⁷⁰.

The campus also added the first Honors Program for advanced students in 1959 as a part of the College of Arts and Sciences. The original program worked with advanced

⁶⁶ March 26, 1957.

⁶⁷ May 21, 1957.

⁶⁸ May 21, 1957

⁶⁹ March 26, 1957.

⁷⁰ <http://www.american.edu/sis/about/traditions.htm>

placement programs at local District of Columbia high schools to bring in honors students into the University⁷¹. The program started as a General Honors two year program for freshmen and sophomores with a series of colloquia. After that was completed each student would move to more specific tutoring in their field of study to complete the honors program.

In the fall of 1959, the first of the high rise residence halls was completed, what is now Hughes hall and Mary Graydon ceased being the women's residence. Mary Graydon became a student center, with sororities having space in the building along with administrative offices, and a publications board.

As the campaign for President in 1960 heated up, Sen. John F. Kennedy made a stop on campus after a televised debate with Richard Nixon. Kennedy stopped by the campus at around 9 PM on October 7th to address students from all over the Washington area that came to American to hear the Senator. An estimated 3,500 students attended the rally in which Senator Kennedy spoke for about a half hour.

After Kennedy was elected President, he quickly maintained the relationship with American by having a National Conference on Youth Service Abroad held on campus. This conference helped create the modern Peace Corps, which would later be established by Executive Order and an act of Congress later in 1961⁷². The first director of the Peace Corps, R. Sergeant Shriver gave an address on the purpose of the program in the Clendenen gym as part of the conference. Hubert Humphrey also joined in the conference and gave an address to the campus community⁷³.

⁷¹ May 27, 1959.

⁷² February 10, 1961.

⁷³ April 7, 1961.

The end of the year dance in 1961 featured a local celebrity when Duke Ellington brought his band to the Indian Springs country club to play for the Junior-Senior prom. The dance was advertised as a regal affair and capped off a busy year for the university⁷⁴.

Through the early 60's, numerous buildings were started on campus to both increase the size of the undergraduate student body, and also move operations from the downtown campus to the main campus in northwest Washington. What is now the McDowell residence hall, what is now Letts hall, a new home for the law school, the Watkins art gallery, and the Kay spiritual life center were all started between 1961 and 1963⁷⁵. The new residence halls allowed the undergraduate population to grow and to let other halls, like the Mary Graydon Center, house more campus life space.

The new law school, where the Kogod School of Business is currently located, celebrated its groundbreaking in March of 1963 with the former dean of the law school breaking ground on a building that would be named after him. The Myers law school building helped complete the main quad to its current size, with Kay capping one end of the quadrangle.

With a period of such growth on the University, it seemed fitting that American secured its most famous commencement speaker in 1963. President Kennedy came to deliver the commencement address on the athletic fields on the north side of campus to a crowd of over 10,000 people⁷⁶. Kennedy's address would later make history as being one of the first speeches to call for a reduction in tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States. The speech is used at the start of the movie, JFK, and is regarded as the start of the nuclear test ban treaties that were signed between the two superpowers.

⁷⁴ May 10, 1961.

⁷⁵ March 8, 1963.

⁷⁶ May 24, 1963.

Coming off of the involvement by President Kennedy, the interest in politics continued on campus leading to one of the most bizarre events to take place on American University. In 1963, the student government held a civil rights rally in the Leonard Center, where the Katzen building is currently located, and led a discussion on the House Un-American Activities Committee. The first speaker went to talk and was interrupted by deliberate coughs and noise from the audience. As the hecklers were being led out, they started shouting “Heil Hilter,” and “Abolish HUAC.” The hecklers were members of the American Nazi Party there to protest the HUAC, and throughout the evening tried to stop the event with jeers. Fourteen members of the American Nazi Party were arrested by the end of the evening and almost cause a riot in what was supposed to be a discussion for the campus community⁷⁷. In response, the student government closed their next campus discussions on civil rights to only members of the student body, and broadcast the proceedings on WAMU for the general public⁷⁸. After public scrutiny for this decision, with The Eagle calling it a “Nazi Victory,” the student government voted once again to allow the discussions to be open to the public⁷⁹.

The growing tensions on campus over the civil rights discussions reflected the feelings of the nation in general, with Martin Luther King Jr. coming to local Howard University and suggesting that terror might take over some cities if a civil rights bill wasn’t passed. It took one day in November to make the entire country stop.

The assassination of President Kennedy is an event that is burned into the memory of the United States, but it also hit American University with a tremendous blow due to the amount of work Kennedy had done with the campus. Students described losing

⁷⁷ October 11, 1963.

⁷⁸ October 15, 1963.

⁷⁹ October 22, 1963.

as member of their family due to the attachment Kennedy had with the mission of the University and college students in general.

The campus struggled to get back into the pace of daily life after the assassination of President Kennedy. The pace of new additions to campus, both academically and physically made the process easier. In the fall of 1964, the school expanded to add another school in conjunction with the local Sibley hospital. The Lucy Webb Hayes School of Nursing was founded in 1964 with its first class entering in 1965⁸⁰. The School was integrated as part of the University so that nurses could receive a liberal arts education in addition to their specific professional development.

In addition to the School of Nursing, a school for part time study was added to the University in 1964, with the first class entering in 1965. The College of Continuing Education was designed to attract adult students and those seeking professional development⁸¹. Rather than having part time students taking classes “cafeteria style” the new school would offer specific tracks for those who were interested in certain topics.

Also in 1964, the new Myers Law School building was dedicated by the Chief Justice of the United States, Earl Warren. Warren noted that the year 1964 was also the 175th anniversary of the Supreme Court being founded. Warren said at the juncture of celebrating a new law school, and remembering the heritage of court is a good time for thought and reflection at that there must be a rededication of “the principles which have sustained the freedom which made our growth possible⁸².”

Developments were also made at the undergraduate level with the first general education plan being proposed on campus. The first “General University” requirements

⁸⁰ October 23, 1964.

⁸¹ November 13, 1964.

⁸² November 3, 1964.

stated that students must take 12 hours in humanities, 12 hours in social sciences, 12 hours in science and math, and then four non credit “points” in physical education⁸³.

The top of the American University quadrangle was also finished in 1965 when the Kay Spiritual Life Center was opened and dedicated as a place for all denominations to come and worship⁸⁴. The Center was completed at a time when discrimination based on religion on campus was being banished. In 1964, Greek organizations prohibited discriminating on the basis of religion.

Though the campus community had a chance to come together over religion, the campus was soon hit by a scandal that ended up with a large protest at the Mary Graydon Center. The local head of the American Association of University Professors was not rehired by the University, which the professor said was because of his activities with the organization. The University cited poor grammar and laziness as the primary reasons, but the students stood behind the fired professor. A rally of 500 students came to the front of the Mary Graydon Center at the sounding of a bugle, the traditional call for American University students to gather⁸⁵. The University later welcomed any review of the process by the national organization to prove that it was in the right.

Later in the spring of 1966, a living legend on the campus of American University passed away. Stafford “Pop” Cassell had been called AU’s greatest fan, taking positions as a coach, athletic director, administrator, and as a student athlete. Cassell had been the captain of all the teams at Dickinson Junior College, and captained all the teams at American when he came to campus. A telling story about Cassell’s nature is that he loved

⁸³ November 6, 1964.

⁸⁴ October 5, 1965.

⁸⁵ March 18, 1966.

having couches around to sit and reminisce with students, as he felt uncomfortable talking to people from behind a desk.

Cassell worked up until the very last hours of life to help promote AU, meeting with a student only two hours before his passing⁸⁶. Cassell has been honored on campus with the dedication of the competition floor in Bender Arena and the athletic hall of fame.

The American community also commemorated President Kennedy with a scholarship dedicated to his name that would be given out at the Honors Convocation. The first award was given in 1966 by Sen. Robert Kennedy who told the crowd to share their abilities with the world⁸⁷.

Late in the fall of 1966, the Kreeger Music Building was opened on campus to create an arts center on campus along with the existing Watkins Art Gallery. A proposed “speech arts” building was planned, but never completed. Watkins and Kreeger would be replaced in the 21st century with the completion of the Katzen Art Gallery. Watkins would be remodeled into classrooms, while Kreeger remains closed entirely⁸⁸.

As the Vietnam War raged on, and the draft started to affect those on campus, students start to become more and more active both on and off campus. When the director of the Selective Service came to give a speech to 700 students in the Leonard Student Center, a group of students protested the General and the Vietnam war⁸⁹.

Senators Ted Kennedy and John Tower came to campus early in 1967 to debate the merits of the war in the Kay Spiritual Life Center. The face to face debate was

⁸⁶ April 19, 1966.

⁸⁷ May 20, 1966.

⁸⁸ November 22, 1966.

⁸⁹ January 12, 1967.

broadcast later on television, but allowed AU students to see first hand the two sides of the war⁹⁰.

Not everyone thought that American University was an active campus however. In 1967, the Washington Post described the campus as a “hotbed of apathy,” to the great disgust of campus leaders. In response, the student government president planned a protest at the Washington Post building with signs quoting “hotbed of apathy,” on them.⁹¹

Through much of this growth period, President Hurst Anderson was the one who led the way on building new campus facilities, and expanding the school’s academic profile. In the spring of 1967, Anderson announced his retirement from the Board, just as another building, the Beeghly Chemistry Building, opened up for student use⁹².

Just as President Anderson announced his retirement, the campus began preparations to celebrate its 75th anniversary of being chartered by Congress. Some had disputed the actual founding date, since a charter from the District of Columbia had been obtained two years before the Congress took action, but 1893 became the date that American chose to celebrate its founding⁹³. To help celebrate an actor came dressed as the founder of the school Bishop John Fletcher Hurst to accompany President Hurst Anderson for the kick off of the anniversary events⁹⁴.

Part of the anniversary events with the 75th celebration was an address by Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge that drew much attention and protest from the student body. As soon as Lodge began his speech at the convocation, 62 students walked out on him as he received an honorary degree. The professors and students that left expressed

⁹⁰ March 23, 1967.

⁹¹ April 25, 1967.

⁹² May 2, 1967.

⁹³ September 18, 1967.

⁹⁴ September 22, 1967.

dismay that the University would honor a man that had served as the U.S. Ambassador to South Vietnam and help spur on the Vietnam War. Lodge's address to the student body was about how education can help prevent war⁹⁵.

The action taken by the students was only the beginning of the activism taken by a new committee on campus called American University Committee to End the War in Vietnam. The group took part in a protest at the Pentagon in October where over 100,000 gathered and over 600 were arrested for their actions⁹⁶. Protests also continued through 1968, with members of the AU community protesting the draft and the arrest of Dr. Benjamin Spock and other peace leaders at the Department of Justice.

In the fall of 1967, the Cafeteria in Mary Graydon was the site of a mysterious murder, with a cafeteria employee being beaten to death in the cafeteria in an apparent robbery. Another cafeteria worker that had been beaten by the two assailants crawled his way upstairs to the snack bar to the horror of a group of students. They rushed downstairs to try and help the victim, 45 year old Kenneth Fox, but were too late. It was later found that the man had been living a double life, reported as missing from his family in Maryland four years before the murder. Before becoming Kenneth Fox, the man was known as Dr. William Phillip Christian. Dr. Christian had been a dentist in Maryland and abruptly told his wife one day that she would never see him again, and he disappeared⁹⁷.

Anniversary activities continued through the academic year with a celebration on AU Charter Day, the day the Congressional Charter was established, attended by Vice President Hubert Humphrey⁹⁸. University President Anderson also delivered a report to

⁹⁵ October 20, 1967.

⁹⁶ October 24, 1967.

⁹⁷ October 17th, 1967.

⁹⁸ January 9, 1968.

Congress about the University and the progress that had been made in the past 75 years to Vice President Humphrey.

In a decision that proved to be popular with the student body on campus, the University Senate voted to change the drinking policy in 1968 as well. The previous policy had been a complete ban creating a dry campus for over 75 years. The change allowed alcohol with approval from the University and was celebrated with a champagne toast from the student government leaders, the dean of students and the provost⁹⁹. This announcement was soon followed by the designation of “wet” and “dry” areas of campus, with the first “rathskellar” being proposed in MGC to sell beer and wine and also to provide students with entertainment¹⁰⁰.

The student body also gained one of the most influential student government groups in 1968. The Kennedy Political Union was established in the memory of the slain President who had been so involved with the American campus community. The first speaker was Theodore Sorenson, most famous for being an aide to President Kennedy and later for Senator Robert Kennedy¹⁰¹.

⁹⁹ May 10, 1968.

¹⁰⁰ September 17, 1968.

¹⁰¹ September 17, 1968.

1968 – 1980

“Era of Protest” and Beyond.

In the fall of 1968, the Presidency of American University changed hands once again as Dr. George Williams was inaugurated as President at the Reeves Athletics Fields on October 15¹⁰². Dr. Williams took over from Dr. Hurst Anderson, who had presided over an age of great change and great expansion of the American University campus, but also clashed with students regarding his strong stance on the alcohol policy and on campus rules.

The turbulent times, however, kept students constantly at odds with University officials as protests grew louder and louder. Student strikes were conducted, and protests were held on campus. When comedian Dick Gregory was going to hold his “inauguration” in protest at AU, the University refused. Students responded by taking over the administration buildings in Asbury and the President’s Building. The University went to court and received an injunction preventing students from taking over the Ward Circle Building that was never served, but printed in the Eagle. The problem came to resolution with the formation of a committee of students and faculty to work on the differences between the groups¹⁰³.

The committee to help reconcile the differences only ended in more protest as the proposed 50% make up of students on University committees was reduced to 33%. This caused a walkout among students who were watching the proceedings. Escalation in the Vietnam War also exacerbated conditions on campus as more and more students became active in protests. The Student Association sought to have the University flag lowered to

¹⁰² October 14, 1968.

¹⁰³ February 28, 1969.

half staff for the rest of the Vietnam War, which was refused by President Williams. In addition, students remained active in protests around the city, regularly sending students into downtown to make their voices heard.

In May of 1970, conditions boiled over as news of the Kent State shootings spread. Students poured into Ward Circle for a demonstration and to spread literature and demonstrate against the slayings of the students at Kent States. The Metropolitan Police Department responded by sending in officers and a civil disturbance unit that shot tear gas at the students. Student medics helped the protestors recover in the Kay Center as the entire university responded. Faculty joined students in Ward Circle to protest while President Williams came out to ask the police to depart and to stop gassing the students¹⁰⁴. This was a prelude to a larger protest in Washington by students who came to act against President Nixon's action in Vietnam and the Kent State shootings. American became a host to many protestors who stayed in the residence halls and all over campus to prepare for the protest. The student association tried to help with what they could, including providing bail for students that were arrested in the protests.¹⁰⁵

On May 4th, 1971, The Eagle and The Hatchet combined for a special edition regarding a city wide protest to try and shut down the government in protest of the Vietnam War. Over 7,000 people were arrested in the protest that planned to block most major traffic circles in the city and disrupt government processes. American and GW were the only universities in Washington that played host to the thousands of protestors that came into Washington. American University remained calm and open for business as the thousands of protestors descended on campus having been thrown out of parks around

¹⁰⁴ May 8, 1970.

¹⁰⁵ May 22, 1970.

the city. In a savvy maneuver, the Student Government made a statement that the campus was no longer playing host to any new protestors after the other universities had been closed, but there was no way to determine “old” and “new” protestors, allowing AU to become a safe haven for those seeking a shower and a place to stay. The city’s police department also left campus alone for the most part, and only minor disturbances at Ward Circle forced the police to act¹⁰⁶.

Campus life saw a break from the constant protests and anguish on campus with one of the largest concerts to ever be held at American. The Grateful Dead came to perform in the fall of 1972, performing to over 20,000 students from all across the Washington area¹⁰⁷.

In another bright note on campus, the American University Basketball team got its first ever invite for the NIT. Led by Kermit Washington, an All-American in 1973, the team made history by making it to the invitational tournament. Washington would later go onto play into the NBA, and become the first player to have his number retired in Bender Arena¹⁰⁸.

Campus was startled on a gloomy Saturday morning as a commuter plane on approach to National Airport crashed into the WAMU broadcast tower on campus. The wreckage continued on and ended up in the back yard of the President’s House. All five on the plane were killed in the crash, but miraculously, the wreckage did not injure anyone as it landed on the busy campus¹⁰⁹. The incident was the first time in over 17 years of the broadcast tower being on campus.

¹⁰⁶ May 4, 1971.

¹⁰⁷ October 6, 1972.

¹⁰⁸ March 30, 1973.

¹⁰⁹ January 31, 1975.

The plane crash in many ways symbolized how students were feeling on campus in the mid 1970's, with numerous incidents of crime on campus, including a month with over \$40,000 worth of materials stolen on campus, and a series of attempted attacks on female students on campus. Campus security was increased to 17 members, but still was found lacking by students¹¹⁰.

In addition to the safety woes, financial concerns harried students on campus. The tuition kept going up year after year and the fundraising ability of the campus was questioned. Students attacked President William's promise to raise over \$30 million when he entered the office when the money didn't materialize. A long delayed University Library continued to weigh on students minds as their costs continued to rise, sometimes over 10% in one year¹¹¹.

With the added financial weight on students, many transferred to other Universities, leading to the Student Confederation to censure President Williams twice in one meeting in the spring of 1975¹¹².

Not long after the censures from the student government, President Williams announced his retirement, after a career of presiding over what is now known as the "age of protest" at American¹¹³. Replacing President Williams was Joseph Sisco, who was appointed by the Board of Trustees in February of 1976¹¹⁴. Sisco came from a career in the State Department and symbolized a victory for those on the Board of Trustees who wanted a President that had business or government leadership experience. Sisco had

¹¹⁰ February 21, 1975.

¹¹¹ February 28, 1975.

¹¹² March 28, 1975.

¹¹³ April 4, 1975.

¹¹⁴ February 27, 1976.

been the highest ranking civilian employee at the State Department before coming to American.

In his inaugural ceremony, Sisco spoke of the challenges that faced American University at that time. The ceremony was attended by the Chief Justice of the United States, Warren Burger, who was conferred an honorary degree¹¹⁵.

Soon into President Sisco's tenure, campus was once again hit with a series of public safety incidents. A fire in McDowell Hall raged on as students tried to find misplaced or stolen fire extinguishers. A female student was attacked in Letts Hall while taking a shower, and thefts continued across campus. Bomb threats cause residence halls and classroom buildings to be evacuated at all hours of the day¹¹⁶. The response from the administration was the creation of a coded key card entry system for the residence halls during hours when the desk was not staffed¹¹⁷. Before those measures were enacted, students in Letts started to "buddy up" for showers to remain safe.

As preparations began for the new library to open at the end of the quad, the building that housed the library for over 50 years, the Battelle Memorial Building was sought after by almost every academic unit on campus. The business school emerged as the new occupant with a \$500,000 donation from Robert Kogod, a trustee and alumnus of the business school. In honor of his donation, the school was renamed from the School of Business Administration to the Kogod College of Business Administration¹¹⁸.

A major change in the residence halls also took place in 1979 with the adoption of Leonard as an International Residence Hall¹¹⁹. The move was completed under great

¹¹⁵ October 22, 1976.

¹¹⁶ March 31, 1978.

¹¹⁷ September 15, 1978.

¹¹⁸ March 23, 1979.

¹¹⁹ April 6, 1979.

protest from the residents in Leonard who did not want to be moved from their hall. A compromise was reached between the students and university by delaying the switch a year to allow students to move.

1980 – 1990.

New Facilities, New Challenges.

In the summer between semesters, President Sisco announced his retirement to the Board of Trustees, and the Board quickly appointed then Provost Richard Berendzen as President. The move was questioned by the students as long search processes were underway to find new deans, but the President was replaced quickly and secretly while students were away¹²⁰.

One of the issues that President Berendzen had to face very quickly was the need for a new sports center, and the arrangements that Sisco had made to raise money for a new center. A new center was planned to be built on campus and named after a former coach of the Washington Bullets, but the fundraising stopped abruptly when it was clear that Sisco's administration wasn't certain on whether they were going to go through with it. At the same time, Georgetown had just completed their university's new athletic center paid for by the students, so students took forth the cause to try and get the center built themselves¹²¹.

Another contractual issue cropped up with the change of the food vendor. The long food supplier on campus was replaced with the Marriott catering firm that pledged to invest in the eating facilities on campus and possibly bring in a fast food vendor¹²².

The campus continued to expand as well, with the acquisition of what is now Nebraska Hall to be used a residence hall. The building was previously a privately owned nursing home, but was up for sale and offered AU an ability to expand into a building adjacent to campus¹²³.

¹²⁰ September 28, 1979.

¹²¹ April 21, 1980.

¹²² September 11, 1981.

¹²³ Ibid.

Student activism also increased on campus in reaction to international and national policies. Protests against the newly elected President Reagan and his fiscally conservative policies started to appear on campus and in the city. A protest on campus against an emissary from South Africa led to two students having to be transported and a professor being arrested for disorderly conduct. The campus was protesting against the policies of apartheid in South Africa and surrounded a talk by the emissary. Professor Gary Howe led the charge of protestors into the SIS lounge, where the talk was taking place and was arrested for disorderly conduct, enraging the rest of the protestors¹²⁴. Professor Howe made two court appearances before the charges were dropped. A conference of student, faculty and administration leaders on a retreat agreed to have the charges dropped in an exchange about freedom of expression¹²⁵.

A much larger protest turned out on the quad in 1982 to protest double digit increases in both tuition and housing costs. An 18 percent increase in tuition and 19 percent increase in housing costs helped bring out student government officials, President Berendzen, and over 3100 students on the quad¹²⁶. Part of the hostility from students was over the cost of designing a new logo for the institution. American spent \$30,000 in designing the new logo as part of a visual identity plan that would consolidate what had been 6 different logos into one University wide presentation¹²⁷.

The furor over the proposed tuition increase did not stop with the protest with the Student Confederation doing everything it could to stop the jump. On the day of the board of trustees meeting, the Student Confederation filed suit in court seeking an injunction to stop the increase, using every argument from students will suffer damages

¹²⁴ October 2, 1981.

¹²⁵ October 30, 1981.

¹²⁶ February 19, 1982.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

to a first amendment claim that the charter unconstitutionally ties the school with the Methodist church¹²⁸.

All of these arguments were dismissed by the judge, and the increases went into effect, forcing some students to transfer. The increase in prices also exacerbated a declining enrollment problem, with the 1982-1983 year being almost 400 students less than the previous year¹²⁹. The budget crisis affected everything at the university, including staff cuts and another raise in tuition for students enrolled.

There were signs of improvement, as the University received the highest gift totals in history and had the highest qualified incoming class, but still had to fight against a slowing national economy and a budget deficit¹³⁰.

Part of the University's solution to the budget crisis was to outsource jobs on campus to companies and then layoff campus staff. The most noticeable cuts were to the housekeeping staff, with over 80 being cut right after Christmas of 1982. The workers started to protest AU and began to picket on campus, with the support of students¹³¹. By February of 1983, the University decided to rehire the workers, after students supported the workers and complained about inadequate cleaning services in the residence halls¹³².

The spring of 1984 brought one of the greatest disappointments to campus when the traditional spring concert was cancelled due to a large expected attendance. Anywhere from 10,000 to 100,000 people were expected to come hear the Pretenders, and Stevey Ray Vaughn play in the amphitheater. With the large crush expected, the concert was cancelled to help the permitting process for the new sports center. Had the

¹²⁸ March 4, 1982.

¹²⁹ September 10, 1982.

¹³⁰ September 24, 1982.

¹³¹ January 28, 1983.

¹³² February 11, 1983.

concert occurred and American annoyed its neighbors too much, the process to build what is now Bender Arena could have been delayed for months if not years¹³³.

In 1985, in preparation for the construction of the Sports Arena, the original campus gym, theater and student center, Clendenen Hall, was razed. The building had been the home of many AU traditions and served as the home for the “Cassellmen,” members of Stafford Cassell’s basketball team, as well as countless ceremonies on campus¹³⁴.

Adnan Khashoggi broke ground for the new sports and convocation center that would bear his name in late 1985. The final permits had been obtained, and through Khashoggi’s proposed gift, the center could be completed by the end of the 1980’s¹³⁵.

While the new sports center was being built, excitement was growing for the American Eagles on the soccer field. In what can be considered the greatest accomplishment in American University Athletics history, the men’s soccer team made it to the Division 1 NCAA championship game in Seattle against UCLA¹³⁶. American would lose in the championship game, 1-0, in the longest championship game ever, running 5 overtimes, but forever placing American in the history books for an outstanding season of accomplishments¹³⁷.

At the start of 1986, American expanded its campus to include what is now the Tenley Campus by purchasing the Immaculata Preparatory School in Tenley Circle. Originally, the law school was going to move to the satellite campus, but due to

¹³³ April, 1984.

¹³⁴ October 11, 1985.

¹³⁵ October 25, 1985.

¹³⁶ December 9, 1985.

¹³⁷ December 16, 1985.

neighborhood backlash, the Washington Semester program would be moved to the smaller campus¹³⁸.

The fall of 1986 brought another change that would shift campus life forever. This change was made by the D.C. City Council to raise the drinking age to 21. American University had hosted a tavern on campus that was a full service bar, and regularly had fraternity parties advertise in the Eagle touting how many kegs were purchased. With this one change in law, the social life on campus changed dramatically¹³⁹.

Soon after this change, it was announced on campus that the leases the University had given to fraternities to be located in buildings on the campus would be terminated in the early 1990's when the leases expired¹⁴⁰.

As the fraternities planned to vacate their space, the newest building on campus prepared for new occupants. The Abbey Joel Butler Pavilion, bridging the space between the new sports center and the Mary Graydon Center, opened up in 1987, and quickly filled with University offices. Shops and restaurants in the tunnel level provided a more lively feel for the area as students started to explore¹⁴¹.

¹³⁸ February 21, 1986.

¹³⁹ October 25, 1986.

¹⁴⁰ January 26, 1987.

¹⁴¹ May 4, 1987.