



[COLLEGE ARCHIVES](#)

Folke Bernadotte Memorial Library
Gustavus Adolphus College
800 West College Avenue, Saint Peter, MN 56082-1498

Gustavus Adolphus College Archives St. Peter, Minnesota

Collection of the Gustavus Debate/Forensics Program, 1898-2015.

GACA Collection 207

Collection of the Gustavus Debate/Forensics Program, 1898-2015. GACA Collection 207. 1 Hollinger box and 2 half Hollinger boxes.

ABSTRACT:

The Gustavus Debate/Forensics Program collection contains correspondence and debates from the late 1890s to the mid-1920s as well as scrapbooks, photographs, and Honorary Society materials from the 1980s-2010s. Debate folders contain transcripts of given debates along with related correspondence. There are also copies of speeches given by Gustavus students, a number are complete, authors are unknown for a few, and some speeches are incomplete. The collection also holds correspondence related to hosting and attending debates, finding judges, etc. Most of the information is in English, along with some in Swedish.

HISTORICAL NOTE:

There is a long history of debate and speech at Gustavus Adolphus College. There were many literary clubs for men and women that participated in both inter-mural and extra-mural debate competitions. Besides these clubs, oratory was a required part of the English curriculum.

“Great student interest in oratory and debate resulted in the faculty securing membership in the Minnesota Intercollegiate Oratorical Association in 1901. A loose association of Augustana church colleges also sponsored English and Swedish oratorical contests, and Gustavus students participated in temperance contests as well. On April 4, 1902, a chartered train carried about 250 Gustavus student enthusiasts to Northfield for the first state oratorical contest. Gustavus’s entrant, Harry Hedberg, finished fourth among the representatives of five competing schools, but the event had a greater significance: the College’s colors of black and gold stem from the bunting used on the train coaches, and some of the cheers and songs heard on the trip became traditions in succeeding years.

Declamation and debate remained popular among students during the Johnson era, so much so that the College determined to improve upon the amateur coaching and instruction in that area that had nevertheless produced prizes in forensic and oratory contests regularly. Professor J. Stanley Gray was appointed to the speech department in 1921. In 1923, the College was one of four schools in the state to organize chapters of Pi Kappa Delta, the national forensic honor society. In 1924, Evan Anderson succeeded Gray and began a 39-year tenure that would bring the College national recognition in debate and oratory. Gustavus teams won national debate championships in 1930 and 1934, and the College carried off first prizes in the state and divisional oratorical and the state and national peace oratorical contests in 1931–32, and in the men’s and women’s state oratorical contests in 1941–42. Anderson influenced generations: Hap LeVander, the son of 1932 state oratorical champion Harold LeVander, won the contest in 1962!”

* Taken from “Songs of Thy Triumph: A Short History of Gustavus Adolphus College” by Steve Waldhauser

RESTRICTIONS:

There are no restrictions on the use of this collection for research purposes. The researcher assumes full responsibility for observing all copyright, property, and libel laws as they apply.

Researchers must use collection in accordance with the policies of the College Archives, the Folke Bernadotte Memorial Library, and Gustavus Adolphus College.

COLLECTION CITATION:

Collection of the Gustavus Debate/Forensics Program, 1898-2015. GACA Collection 207. Gustavus Adolphus College Archives, St. Peter, Minnesota.

ACQUISITION:

Phil Voight transferred part of this collection during May 2018.

PROCESSED BY:

Adrianna Darden processed this collection and developed the finding aid during July 2018.

RELATED COLLECTIONS IN THE ARCHIVES:

Department of Communication Studies. Collection of the Department of Communication Studies, 1997-Ongoing. GACA Collection 424.

SUBJECT HEADINGS:

Gustavus Adolphus College. Debate.

Gustavus Adolphus College. Forensics.

GACA Collection 207	Box	Folder
Certificates and Awards, 1961-75, 2004-11, and undated	3	1
Correspondence Concerning Oratorical Contests with Bethany College, 1912-18	1	1
Debate Correspondence, 1911-19	1	2
Debate on Government Ownership of Railroads, ca. 1925	3	2
Debate on Independence of the Philippines, ca. 1922	1	3
Debate Records, 1957-69 and undated	2	4
Development Plan for Evan Anderson Forum, undated	2	5
Evan Anderson Forum, 2015-16 and undated	1	4
High School Oratorical Contest Under Gustavus Auspices, 1923	1	5
Institute of Spoken Word, Summer Camp, 2015	1	6
Inter-Collegiate Oratorical Association of Minnesota, Constitution and By-Laws, 1917-18 and 1923-24	1	7
List of Forensics Members, 1914-77	2	6
Men's Debate on League of Nations, 1923	1	8
Men's Debate on Unemployment, 1924	1	9
Open Shop Debate, 1922	3	3
Photographs, 1970s-80s and undated	1	10
Pi Kappa Delta Honorary Forensic Society, 1950s-70s and undated	1	11
Postcards, 1985-86 and undated	1	12
Publicity, Programs, and Clippings, 1938 and undated	1	13
Recordings, American Forensic Association, National Individual Events Tournament, 1996, 2003, and 2004 (DVDs)	1	14
Scrapbook, 1985-86	2	1
Scrapbook, 2001-03	2	2
Speeches, 1898-1912	3	4
Speeches, 1898-1912 (authors unknown)	3	5
Speeches, 1898-1912 (incomplete)	1	15
Women's Debate on Immigration, 1924	1	16
Women's Debate on Towner-Sterling Bill, 1923	2	3