

College and University Government: Antioch University and the Closing of Antioch College

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Abstract

Antioch College, an independent liberal arts institution located in Yellow Springs, Ohio, was founded in 1852 with a resolution passed by the general convention of the Christian Church.¹ In 1853, the college admitted its first class of six students, four men and two women, with an inaugural faculty of six, one of whom was the first female college professor in the United States to have status and salary equal to that of her male colleagues. With the internationally acclaimed educator Horace Mann serving as the college's first president until his death in 1859, Antioch began from the outset to establish its reputation for educational innovation and progressive politics. Financial difficulties, which beset the college throughout its history, forced its closure in 1862. The college remained closed through the end of the Civil War and reopened in 1865 under the auspices of the Unitarian Church. Another brief closure for financial difficulties occurred in 1881–82. From 1919 to 1921, the college closed for a third time during the reorganization of its curriculum by incoming president Arthur Morgan. The new curriculum, requiring students to combine practical industrial experience with classroom learning, together with its focus on student participation in the governance of the college community, became the educational model many institutions would emulate in the coming years. The 1960s and 1970s witnessed a large expansion in student enrollment, along with the opening of numerous branch campuses, as detailed below, which were subsequently greatly reduced in number. In 1978, before the end of the consolidation, the Antioch College corporation formally changed its name to Antioch University. By the late 1980s, Antioch included five additional units (Antioch University McGregor in Yellow Springs; Antioch University New England in Keene, New Hampshire; Antioch University Los Angeles; Antioch University Santa Barbara; and Antioch University Seattle)

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