

A Glimpse through Campus Culture

Unique in its ability to depict a more in-depth picture of what student life was like, University Archives is the repository for official and unofficial records created by the University's administration, academic departments, faculty, students, and campus organizations. Using this repository, scholars can explore Grand Valley State University history through photographs, event posters, course catalogs, student newspapers, and more.

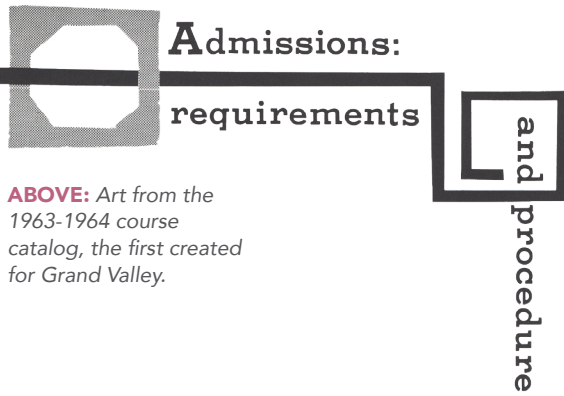
From a 1963 Coloring Student Handbook to issues of the 1980s radical underground newspaper *Wake Up!*, the materials within the University Archives capture aspects of university life that may not appear in historical records of Grand Valley. Thus these items document not only the campus, its people, and its administration, but also its culture.

"Documenting Grand Valley's history not only serves an administrative function, but also provides students and faculty members with a sense of place, and a sense of history. Where they fit into the greater story of this institution, and what makes this institution special or unique," said Leigh Rupinski, Archivist for Public Services & Community Engagement.

"Keeping GVSU's history allows students to feel like they are a part of the institution in a unique way—they feel more connected to their school, and it helps foster a sense of pride."

Rupinski was hired in February of 2017 and in her position will be working to help more scholars use the archives for research. Rupinski said the Grand Valley University Archives are unique in their usability.

ABOVE: Art from the 1963-1964 Grand Valley course catalog cover.



ABOVE: Art from the 1963-1964 course catalog, the first created for Grand Valley.

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"We really are a 'teaching' archive, and all of our materials exist to be used by our community," Rupinski said. "That includes faculty, staff, administrative departments, student organizations, graduate and undergraduate students."

2017 commemorates the 50th anniversary of the first graduating class from Grand Valley (Grand Valley State College at the time). 138 seniors, including 86 members of the original class that started in 1963, received their diplomas from Grand Valley in the spring of 1967.

This pioneering class helped shape GVSC into a reality, not just a plan. They founded clubs, sports teams, and a student newspaper, all with the objective of making GVSC a well-rounded campus full of creative thinkers and respectful leaders.

This legacy can be seen throughout the archives. Ten years after the pioneering class

graduated, Grand Valley hosted the first Women's Harvest Moon Festival in 1977, featuring musical performances from feminist activists. In 1987, Grand Valley State College changed its name to Grand Valley State University and hosted a Handicap Awareness Day, where president Lubbers traveled around campus via a wheelchair. And in 1997, the Grand Valley Opera Theatre was established, adding to Grand Valley's long tradition of creative outlets. Today, there are over 100,000 Grand Valley alumni, all of whom made their mark on the campus culture in some way.

For more information about the Special Collections and University Archives visit www.gvsu.edu/library/specialcollections/

OFF THE SHELF TEAM

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