Information for Contributors

The University of Michigan: An Encyclopedic Survey

Suggestions for New and Updated Entries

What is the University of Michigan Encyclopedic Survey?

In 1937, when the University observed the 100th anniversary of its re-establishment in Ann Arbor, the University Committee on Archives declared that "a treatment, in encyclopedic form, of the University's past and present accomplishments, by those most competent to chronicle them, would form a desirable and unique evidence of the progress of the University since its first establishment in 1817."

This led to an extraordinary collective effort that produced some 400 individual articles on the University's history. These were published in four volumes entitled *The University of Michigan: An Encyclopedic Survey*, appearing from 1942 to 1954. Updates of the entries for many University units were published in the 1970s. In recent years the entire work has been digitized and made available online (https://quod.lib.umich.edu/u/umsurvey/).

In preparation for the University's bicentennial in 2017, the University's Committee on History and Traditions sought to bring the *Encyclopedic Survey* up to date and to make it available in a new and easily navigated digital format and with print-on-demand capabilities. The bicentennial edition collates all versions of a department's entries — e.g., 1940s, 1970s, and 2010s — and may be found here: https://quod.lib.umich.edu/b/bicentennial?page=home.

When are entries added to the bicentennial edition of the Encyclopedic Survey?

Entries are added to the bicentennial edition in three ways:

1. Collated entries for a unit, including past histories and an updated history, are added to the bicentennial edition when an updated history of the unit is produced. Until then, the unit's older entries may still be found in the original digital version of the Encyclopedia (https://quod.lib.umich.edu/u/umsurvey/).

2. When a newer unit that does not have entries in the older volumes of the Encyclopedic Survey completes and submits a history, it will be added to the bicentennial edition.

3. Entries from older versions of the Encyclopedic Survey that do not correspond to a contemporary University unit or organization — e.g., where a unit has been discontinued without successor — are being added to the bicentennial edition

through an ongoing process. If such an entry is not found in the bicentennial edition, it can still be found in the older editions of the Survey.

Who is responsible for preparing new or updated unit histories?

Each unit of the University is being asked to prepare its entry for the Encyclopedic Survey, bringing it up to date through the present.   Ultimately, all versions of the complete Encyclopedia will be incorporated into the bicentennial edition.

When a unit submits an entry, the Encyclopedic Survey editors will undertake light editing for purposes of style, clarity, and tone (see *What to write? How to write it?* below).

How do units complete their entries?

In most units, it is expected that a senior member or retired member of the unit will be asked to undertake the work. In some units, a younger staff member with a particular interest in the unit's history may be the right choice. Units may also choose to engage a freelance writer to prepare the entry.

Unit histories comprise an essential source of institutional memory and a guide to research for U-M faculty, other scholars, students, alumni and other friends of the various departments.

Many units will elect to submit a supplement to the unit's existing entry in the *Survey*—a new section that tells the unit's story from the post-war period to the present day.

Others may elect to commission wholly new entries that would cover their histories since the units were founded. That decision is wholly up to the unit. And those units founded since the original publication of the *Encyclopedic Survey* will, of course, be preparing wholly new entries.

Most submissions will comprise 6,000 to 12,000 words. Eight-to-ten thousand words appears to be a good target.

What to write? How to write it?

To write for an encyclopedia is to enter a distinct genre with it own voice and requirements. The researcher-writer who undertakes this work, even if he or she has written a program description in the past, may find it difficult to decide what sort of information to include and what voice to use in the writing.

Writers are urged to review entries already published online.

Entries need not follow any lockstep format, but they should share these qualities:

- Each entry should be a detailed summary of a unit's evolution over time.

- The entry is intended for a <u>general</u> reader with a particular interest in, and basic knowledge of, the field covered in the entry. It does not assume highly specialized knowledge on the part of the reader. It should be intelligible to an interested undergraduate.

- Each entry should tell a story whose central thread deals with intellectual endeavor and change. The reader should get a sense of the unit moving from one state to another state to another—a story of evolution; often of expansion; sometimes of conflict and setbacks; necessarily of change. The entry should not be a mere list of appointments made, budgets or grants received, or recognitions bestowed.

- No history is wholly objective. Inevitably, each entry will reflect the values and point of view of the writer. The writer's aims should be accuracy, thoroughness and fairness.

- The *Encyclopedic Survey* seeks to record the University of Michigan's many accomplishments, but it is not a "brag book," a public-relations document, or a fundraising tool. Entries should <u>not</u> have the tone normally heard in appeals to prospective donors, as in: *"_____ is a remarkable unit situated at a remarkable university. Our provocative, noteworthy programs, complemented by our impressive _____, have established our role as a leader among university _____s. These accomplishments are in no small part due to the generosity of donors throughout the years…."*

- Writers should make no effort to avoid descriptions of conflict, dissension, and difficulty. The aim is to tell the whole truth.

The following passages show how a good entry might describe change in a department or other unit:

> *"The fundamental change in the direction of the department promoted by Fraser triggered vigorous resistance from some faculty, including senior members of an executive committee newly liberated from the sway of a powerful, long-serving chair. Discord rooted in differences over expectations regarding hiring, promotion, and merit pay persisted for several years."*

> *"The orientation of the Department of History toward an interdisciplinary, transnational cultural history took the form, during the 1990s and 2000s, of an increased number of joint appointments, the establishment of new interdepartmental programs, the creation of an Institute for Historical Studies, and successive reforms of the undergraduate and graduate programs."*

"The growth of the faculty and the proliferation of programs, clusters, and joint appointments has produced intellectual effervescence, but they also have tended to disperse the faculty into a variety of administrative obligations and physical locations. This centrifugal force has been an increasing problem."

A typical departmental entry would include some combination of the topics listed below, though the order of the topics will vary. The list is intended only as a series of options and suggestions, not requirements, and it certainly does not exhaust the possible topics that might be included in any given entry.

Key dates in the department's history since 1950

The department's impact upon the development of its field as a whole, or, in the case of an administrative unit, on the development of the University and/or the development of its administrative function in higher education.

Example: *"Linguistics at Michigan figures prominently in the formative period of the discipline in this country."* (Linguistics)

Important program initiatives, including centers and institutes

Example: *"Striking progress continued in research activity. On the initiative of the School of Social Work and with the support of the Russell Sage Foundation, a new doctoral program was established in 1956, the Joint Program in Social Work and Social Science..."* (Sociology)

Important appointments and their impact on departmental trends in research and teaching

Example: *"...the regular departmental faculty not only retained a stable size but grew with the appointment in 1973 of Luis O. Gomez as Associate Professor of Buddhist Studies, arranged jointly with the University's new interdepartmental Studies in Religion Program."* (Far Eastern Languages and Literatures)

Major research activities undertaken by particular scholars and scientists

Example: *"The largest long-term interdisciplinary project is known as the Tecumseh Study, initiated in 1956 with a grant from the Human Resources Funds of the University... This project became the nucleus for the establishment of the Center for Research on Diseases of the Heart and Circulation and Related Disorders, established in 1961 under the joint auspices of the School of Public Health and the Medical School, with Thomas Francis, Jr. as director and Frederick H. Epstein as associate director."* (Public Health)

- Important reorganizations in departmental structure and curriculum

Example: *"With the addition of the special branches of medicine to general medicine it became necessary to reorganize teaching on the various medical wards. In order to facilitate handling the large number of students at that time, the medical service was divided into four general medical services, a medical outpatient service, a private medical service, a tuberculosis service, and a diabetic outpatient service."* (Internal Medicine)

- Not just major gifts and endowments, but their <u>impact</u>

    Example: *"...in 1961, in consequence of a gift from the Buhl Foundation of Detroit, matched in magnitude by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the means were at hand for the construction of a building designed specifically for the needs of modern human genetics."* (Human Genetics)

    Important sponsored research and cooperative ventures:

    Example: *"Probably the postwar project of greatest direct value to the department was that sponsored in 1946 by the Army Signal Corps to study various aspects of the behavior of microwave magnetron oscillators. This project resulted in the establishment of well-equipped microwave measurement and electron tube laboratories…"* (Electrical Engineering)

- The physical setting of the department

    Example: *"The two buildings available to the department after the war were West Physics and Randall Laboratory..."* (Physics)

- Important additions of physical facilities and equipment

    Example: *"The McGregor Fund then agreed to contribute a total of $100,000 during fiscal years 1948-49 and 1949-50 toward construction and equipment leading to the installation of a much smaller telescope of advanced design in the Stinchfield Woods..."* (Astronomy)

    How the department has responded to changes in its professional field

    Example: *"[Courses in] advertising design…reflected in content the expanding range of skills found in the modern visual communication field — lettering and calligraphy, typography, still and motion picture photography, television graphics, corporate identity, and packaging."* (School of Art)