

[Home](#)

## Finding Aid to the Controversy of 1955 Records

### The Controversy of 1955

The Controversy of 1955, Records, 1954-1956

1.25 linear ft.

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[Biography](#)

[Scope and Content](#)

[Box and Folder List](#)

### OVERVIEW

**Links:** Finding Aid to the [American Association of University Professors Records](#)  
Finding Aid to the [William Treumann – The Controversy of 1995 Records](#)

**Access:** The collection is open under the rules and regulations of the University Archives.

**Provenance:** Donated to the University Archives in 1990 (Acc. 91).

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**Citation:** [Identification of item]. Controversy of 1955 Records, University Archives, North Dakota State University, Fargo.

### HISTORY

North Dakota's top rated news story of 1955 was a controversy involving four NDAC professors and the college President.

The controversy was brought to public attention in 1954 when President Hultz suddenly terminated the Geology department of NDAC. Although not members of the terminated department, there were four NDAC professors who felt this was a violation of tenure. Drs. Cecil B. Haver (Assistant Professor of

Agricultural Economics), Baldur H. Kristjanson (Assistant Professor of Agricultural Economics), Daniel Q. Posin (Professor and Chairman of Physics), and William B. Treumann (Professor of Chemistry) felt that the sudden termination of the department was one in a long chain of actions taken by President Hultz that were inappropriate.

The controversy progressed when the four became angrier with Hultz for other actions, including his criticisms of articles that some of them had published. They considered Hultz's actions a violation of their academic freedom and advocated removing him from his position as President.

The controversy became more heated and the State Board of Higher Education became aware of the disagreement, which had become public by the end of 1954. The State Board studied the matter in early 1955 and found that "an unhappy situation exists which must not continue." They followed by requesting the immediate resignation of the four professors. The professors refused to comply.

One week later President Hultz formally charged the four professors as having "engaged in a course of conduct deliberately intended to interfere with, undermine, frustrate, and render ineffective the administration of the Agricultural College." The professors were discharged from their positions at NDAC "subject to public hearings" which began in May.

The hearings were popular with the public and became the state's biggest news story of the year. After two weeks of testimony a final, secret ballot by the 13 member Advisory Committee was taken. The ballots, and a subsequent vote by the State Board, unanimously dismissed all four professors from their teaching positions at NDAC.

The four appealed to the North Dakota Supreme Court but the court refused to take the case. The American Association of University Professors did review the case and in 1956 censured NDAC for violation of the association's principles of academic freedom and tenure.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT**

The first series is a binder of Advisory Committee notes and minutes. The second series is similar but contains the personal notes and correspondence of committee chairman Frank Mirgain (Dean of School of Engineering). Both are arranged in their original binders.

Subsequent series contain general editorials including the transcripts of broadcasts but Richard C. Joyce regarding the controversy.

The AAUP series contains the association's official reports censuring NDAC as well as correspondence to President Hultz regarding the censure.

The final two series contain copies of pertinent newspaper clippings as well as two original, indexed scrapbooks containing newspaper clippings from around the state dating from October 1954 to April 1956.

## **BOX AND FOLDER LISTING**

<b>Box/Folder</b>	<b>Content</b>
1/1	Finding Aid
1/2	Minutes of Advisory committee and Special Committees
1/3	Advisory Committee Hearing Correspondence of Frank Mirgain
1/4	Richard C. Joyce Broadcast Transcripts
1/5	Editorials
1/6	AAUP Reports and Correspondence
1/7	Newspaper Articles (copies of clippings)
2/8	Scrapbook Index
2/9	Scrapbooks