

I choose to do my research on the history of women's rules within the university system. I tried to stick within the time line of the early 1930's and beyond. As I was looking at the rules and regulations from different universities around the country I decided it was a great idea to do a compare and contrast to those from U of I. In doing so I found that majority of the colleges including our university had similar if not the same rules spread across this time period. I used the first part of my research discussing rules I found at other universities via scholarly journals and books. I then used our archives library to research rules and regulations from the university of Illinois and compared it to the rules that I found at other universities. I also found interviews from women students who attended the university during the 1930's through the 40's and gained insight to how they felt about the rules and regulations they had to deal with during those times. In doing this research I found a lot of interesting, strict, and peculiar rules. I also found ways that women went about to get around the rules and still do their own things.

In recent searches and reviews of different articles I have found that rules and regulations for women in the university system dating back from the 1950's to now have drastically changed. I found that most schools such as the university of Toronto didn't even allow women into the university until the late 1800's and even then it was with a lot of restrictions. Women could only take certain classes, participate in certain activities separate from the men, and they had strict curfew hours way more enforced than the men. In fact there was a big debate within that university after they started accepting women in 1884. Historian George Wrong tried hard to get the school committee to vote on building a separate institution for women only. He claimed that after about ten years of them allowing women to be admitted to the University of Toronto that they started to almost dominate the

student population and excel over the men in academics. He did not want this to be recognized or known of that women were excelling educationally at a faster rate than men so he tried very hard to have the school build a women's only college that would focus on fine arts. He chose fine arts because he assumed that was the proper education for a woman. This was a typical chauvinistic attitude of a male during this time segregating the women from the men trying to cover up any trace of the fact that women are smart and can excel and adapt to a university setting just as easily and quickly as men. His proposal was rejected in based off a vote by the committee of twenty-eight no votes to eight yes votes.

According to the authors of "She's going to college" written by a college physician and a ymca administrator found in the book called "College Girls" by Lynn Peril they claimed that "girls entering college needed guidance". Note that they said girls needed guidance and not the boys going to these institutions. I found in reading a couple passages of this book that among many universities men never had any rules thrust upon them they pretty much did whatever they pleased. Men were always rebellious against university authorities and other students sometimes to the point where violence erupted and serious injuries and even deaths occurred on campus. This was from students who attended UCLA during the late 1890's to the 1960's. Many parents felt like their daughters needed to be safe at college so they created "in loco parentis" which helped provide safety to students especially the female students. In loco parentis is a Latin phrase meaning "in the place of a parent" which in university terms basically meant that colleges had the right even responsibility to restrict and discipline the students".

A male professor at Kansas State Agricultural College claimed, "every young girl living away from home was in need of a foster mother". The author of "The college girl of

America” stated that the rules under in loco parentis would” naturally govern the action of any well- bred girl”. The way that these authors and professors are talking made it seem like girls were just to naïve to fend for and take care of themselves. The professor stating that every girl away from home was in need of a house mother made it seem like the girls were never really allowed to grow up and make their own decisions like the men were because they were constantly being told what to do. Also in the statement about girls being “well-bred” was quite disturbing because to me it speaks as if women are animals and need to be trained to act a certain way, I really don’t think well bred was the proper use of words.

At Wellesley College female students had curfews, specific co-ed visitation times, dress codes, and also were not allowed off campus unless it was a chaperoned event. And if the event was after a certain time the chaperones were not going to accompany the students so they just could not go at all. One female student got reprimanded for going to a local diner to eat breakfast because it was off campus. The students also had to sign in and sign out when they did go places and say where they were going and why. They also had to be back in the dorms by 10pm or the doors would be locked. The administrators and housemothers of the school claimed that the rules, curfew, and sign-out procedures of “in loco parentis” were used to protect student reputations. I find these rules very sexist in a sense that they were supposed to be used to protect student reputations but the only students they were enforced on were women students. They basically were just trying to make interaction between men and women as minimal as possible I guess so that there would not be any sexual interference interrupting the women’s studies. Most of the men attending this college and other universities during this time were grown because many of

them were attending college post serving in the war.

A student named Ella Yates attended Spellman College in the late 1940's, which is an all girl predominately African American college in Atlanta, Georgia. She talked about how the president of the school ran it like a boarding school, similar to how the other housemothers and women presidents of the other majority middle class and rich white schools governed their female students. Like the other schools they also needed permission to leave campus, had bedtime at 10pm, and had to go to chapel daily. She also spoke about how it was unfair to some of the girls there whose religions didn't allow or make it necessary for them to attend chapel still had to go to chapel. They had dress codes that banned slacks and monitored the hems on their skirts, the hairstyles they wore, makeup, and jewelry. Another rule at Spellman was that the dean did not allow the students to visit their parents except once every six weeks. The dean claimed that it made the women mature into adulthood faster by not being able to "run home to their parents all the time".

At Middlebury College in the late 1960's women had to be in dorms by 10 or 11 pm on weeknights, couldn't wear pants to class or the library, and though men were allowed to drink alcohol openly outside of their dorms, women were suspended if they were caught drinking. A lot of colleges had less strict rules, as the women became seniors such as students at Florida State University. If you were a senior they had a special dorm that you could live in that you could stay up as long as you pleased, the curfew was extended to 12am, and you did not have to sign in and out when you left the dorms unless you were leaving the campus. Now of course there was a catch, the women who stayed in these dorms had to have a 3.0-3.5 GPA and they also had to have been in good understanding of the rules and also could not have any record of misconduct on their

academic records.

In “10,000 Rules to Live by” by Frances Mayes she tells the story of a young woman who attended a women’s college called Randolph Macon in the 1950’s. The girl spoke about how women were allowed to wear robes to breakfast but they had to have a belt tied around them to keep it securely closed. Her robe did not have nor need a belt to stay closed but she was still forced by the breakfast monitor to wear a string around herself. The women at Randolph Macon had stricter rules than majority of the schools I researched. They had to wear dresses or skirts to dinner, they could not leave the table until everyone was finished eating and the house mother was done with whatever conversation she was holding, curfew was at ten thirty and they could not ride in cars during the day unless it was with a senior. They also worked on the honor code which meant that if a student was witnessed breaking the rules by another student then that student was suppose to report them to the dean. Also if students were caught smoking or drinking within 19.9 miles of the campus they were to be seen by the dean and sometimes considered for suspension from the university.

For majority of these schools the rules are fairly the same give or take a few. It is amazing how strict and difficult it was for women to receive an education and fully enjoy the life of a college student. It is also saddening and very offensive to know that these behaviors were enforced based purely on sexism and the belief that women cannot survive or act accordingly on their own. Most of the rules I found were from the 1800’s to the late 1960’s so I am assuming that during the 70’s and forth that these rules slowly died off.

The information that I found relating to women’s rules here at the University of Illinois while researching at the archives was very interesting in multiple ways. Most of the

rules that I found were from the early 1930's up until the 1960's then they started to die off. The rules from the 30's that I found were very strict. I think these rules may have been stricter than the ones I researched from other schools. What we had here during those times was something called The Women's League, and what this consisted of was basically rules for all of the women undergraduates to abide by in and out of the housing facilities. The first set of rules I looked at was from 1931-1932 and there were many strict rules in relation to curfew and male visitation. The women had to be in their houses at 10pm and all male visitors also had to be gone by 10 pm because the house was locked. Any women who would be returning to the house after these hours had to have written consent and a verifiable reason to do so, and this could not be a frequent situation. Whenever women were going home for the weekend they had to get consent from their housemother and give a departure, arrival, and return time. Also the women could not go to away games without written consent from their parents, which then had to be approved by the housemother, and they also could not visit frat houses UN chaperoned. Undergraduate women were not allowed to co-habitate or live anywhere that was not approved by the women's league or did not abide by the women's league rules. Women also had to petition for co-ed events like dances on campus and if such events were approved they were due back at their houses within thirty minutes of the end of the event. They also were not allowed to go to any non-university related events.

Throughout the 1930's up until the late 1950's the women's league kept their rules pretty much the same. However in the early 40's some of the rules got a little stricter. They had quiet hours from 8pm to 12 am at night then from 1pm to 4pm in the afternoons. To me this really didn't give them much free time to just hang out and have a nice time. It seems

like once they got out of class and got their work done it was probably time to eat and once that was over it was quiet hours all over again. The whole 8pm to 12 rules didn't really make much sense to me because they could have men callers over until 10pm that was the time the houses were locked. I don't understand how it could be quiet hours/ visitation hours at the same time, clearly if they had visitors they were going to be talking or making some sorts of noises. Also men were not allowed in the houses before 4pm unless it was a weekend. Women were not allowed to go home or anywhere else outside of campus unless they had written permission from their parents. They also were not allowed to ride in cars with other students leaving the campus or city limits without a letter from their parents on file. The women who did have cars weren't even allowed to leave the campus or the city limits without a special permit. To me this rule was the most ridiculous one. I feel as though if the parents allowed the students to have a car then who were the staff to tell them the limits they could drive it to. Evidently if the parents bought the student a car they wanted them to have a safe and reliable way to get back and forth from home or wherever they need to go. Also freshman under the age of 21 or students on academic probation weren't even allowed to operate motor vehicles on campus. I really don't understand the concept of all the written permissions that were needed back in these times. It seems as if the women were treated as children instead of young adults.

During the 1930's and up until the 1960's the University of Illinois had a small handbook that was given to women students to basically go into detail about curfew campus wide, operating motor vehicles, overnight guests, and what to wear to certain occasions. One rule that stood out to me was the fact that not only did they have to have written permission from their housemother to have overnight guests but they were also

charged a fee to have an overnight guest. This is absurd to me, how are you going to charge me for having an overnight guest when I'm already paying for housing. This was just mind boggling to me. Then they actually had a chart mapped out for the type of dresses, shoes, purses, gloves, and even hats the students should wear to certain events. This wasn't like a helpful tip, these were guidelines that the students had to follow. If the chart said no purse then you couldn't have a purse and etc. There was also another book called the Illio, which was from the 1930's and 40's that had a section called "Campus Cues on Appearance". This section literally had questions and answers about dating, what to wear, how to do your hair, what time to arrive, etc. This was very comical to me in a sense that this was the only thing I came across that wasn't strict guidelines, these were just considered helpful hints.

After coming across all of these things I noticed that the Women's league papers and the rulebooks were basically non-existent after the 1950's. The woman at the Archives was telling me how after the 1960's the university and its students were at a different place where all those rules weren't necessary. The rules seemed to have gotten more lenient before they became completely non-existent. On February 20, 1959 the committee of student affairs had special nights called 2 o'clock nights where the women had to return to the residence halls by 2 am. On March 28, 1962 undergraduate women were given "midnight privileges" depending on how many semesters and academic hours they had completed. Seniors had unlimited "midnight privileges". On October 16, 1967 sophomores, juniors, and seniors were allowed to regulate their own hours. On November 30, 1967 all undergrad women students were given midnight privileges. On March 28, 1969 all students were able to regulate their own hours. Also in the late 60's men could stay at women dorms for longer periods of time, co-ed dorms were being built, and women were being allowed



to live off campus.

You can tell by the timeline that it only took about 10 years for all of these transitions in rules to occur. After this there was really no record of any more rulebooks or women's league papers. The rules literally just died off. I believe this occurred due to the swift change in times back then, women started to be looked at as people who were capable of taking care of themselves without their parents. Instead of needing a chaperone around them 24 hours a day to tell them what to do, parents and staff probably felt like it was time for a change. They clearly could not have kept these rules going on up until now because for one they were very sexist because the men didn't have any rules. Also because women would have never been given the opportunity to grow up and be able to think and make decisions on their own. The rules that governed women at U of I and other colleges during these times were basically the same and they all seemed to die off at the same times as well. You can tell that the universities though different decided to stand together on this issue and finally make changes that would benefit women in the future.

The last part of my research project was suppose to be interviews from women who attended the university between the 1930's and the 1960's. While trying to get these interviews I was not successful in getting feedback from alumni. While researching journals and scrap books at the archives, I found out that one of the women who worked there had conducted interviews back in 2001 with some of the women who went here in the 1930's to early 40's. She had transcripts of these interviews that included questions about women's rules here at the university. I only could gather up a few that were relevant to my topic and here are some of the opinions of the women.

The first interview I looked at was from a woman named Ruth Kuhn Youngerman

who went here in 1935. When she was asked about the rules that were on campus when she was a student she gave a brief but semi detailed description. She talked about how there were no cars allowed on unless you had a job that required the use of a car, or unless you lived in the area and commuted to school everyday. She spoke about how most of the rules were influenced by parents. She talked about places that they weren't allowed to go to after dark such as the "South Campus" because a lot of students would go there to "neck", which is our version of making out or having sex. She also talked about the school dances and how she learned how to drink alcohol here at the university. She talked about how even though they were not supposed to drink they used to steal alcohol from the medicine cabinets and use them to take shots. She says the medicine cabinet because back then alcohol was used in cold remedies and things like that. She was asked about the dean of women from back then or the housemother, Dean Maria Leonard. When asked about her she described her as a very strict lady. She talked about how one of her rules were that girls couldn't wear patent leather shoes because boys could see up their skirts. This rule in my opinion was just thinking to hard I mean if a boy went, as far to try and look through a reflection in your shoes to see up your dress then he clearly had no life.

The next interview I looked at was from a woman named Wanda Spencer Larson who went here in 1938. In her interview she talked about how curfews didn't exist for men and for women it was 10pm on weekdays and 1 am on weekends. She was in a sorority called the Theta's and she lived in a house with her sorority sisters. She talked about how even in the sorority houses there was a live in house mother who usually had an apartment on the ground floor of the house. Her housemother's name was Annie Laurie and she described how adamant she was about curfew times and company. She talked about how

she thought the school placed the housemothers on the ground floor on purpose so they could monitor whose going and coming and at what times. She talked about how they were allowed to have male company but just not upstairs in their bedroom areas. She said that if their housemother thought they were being too affectionate with a boy she would break things up. She talked about how most of the housemothers either were widowed, divorced, or single and had grown children as they were live in.

The next interview I read was from a woman named Kathryn G Hansen who went here in 1934. In her interview she talked briefly about the curfew hours. She didn't say specifically what hers were but she did state that the men had none. She talked about how the men visitors had to be out of the house by ten thirty and how her housemother Miss Carter would come through the hallway jingling her keys when it got close to ten thirty. When she got close enough she would say "Now boys, five minutes, five minutes", and the boys would scatter. She discussed how men were not allowed on the second floor of the house at all. Even if there was a man coming to fix something they had to be in their rooms with the doors shut if he had to come on the second floor. This seemed a little extreme to me. She also talked about how they could not have dark draperies; she never stated why she just said they couldn't have them. She said that they were not allowed to smoke and if caught smoking you would be sent home. I don't think smoking is something that students should be sent home for so in my opinion this was definitely a strict rule. She talked about how the Chancellors daughter would go out to the curb and smoke all the time with no punishment and how much chaos that caused.

The last interview I read was from a student named Anita Crites Crawford who went here in 1935. She also talked about how cars were not allowed on campus unless you

had special permission from the Dean of Men or Dean of Women. She said the only way you could drive a car was basically if you were handicapped or incapacitated. She said that with special permission, if your parents came up you could drive them around of campus. Now I found that rule to be very weird because I feel like if the student's parents were there then they were considered under the supervision of their parents. She also talked about how most people walked to campus because back then bikes were very expensive. Her and her friend used to shoot rifles and walk around campus at night for five miles as long as they were back by ten thirty. She spoke about how it was uncommon for them to drink or smoke back then and what they enjoyed the most was Coke. She talked about how they rarely visited frat houses and things like that because they were doing things that most of them weren't suppose to be doing like drinking beer or what they called 2 percent beer. She said even the library had a curfew of 10 pm. The interesting thing about this person was she lived in a co-ed house where the men lived upstairs and the women lived downstairs. This was unfamiliar back in those times and this is the first article I have come across with this type of housing rules.

In general even though I only found a few articles I think I got a very good concept of the women's perspectives on rules from this time. From reading brief summaries of some of the other interview I learned that one housemother had the women bring pillows with them every time they went out on a date. She had them do this because in case the bus was crowded on the way back home and they had to sit on their dates lap there would be a pillow separating her butt from directly touching his crouch. Also she didn't allow the women to wear red because she thought it was too flattering of a color. This first rule about the pillow was semi reasonable in my opinion but the second one about the color red was

absurd to me. I don't think a color makes you flattering or unflattering and if it does, what's the big deal.

Overall I decided to do my research project on this to bring about awareness that this was something women in previous generations had to go through as college students. When my class took a visit to the archives earlier in the semester and we came across these rules I became very intrigued by them because it was something that I had no idea ever existed. I chose to do my paper on this topic because not only do I find it interesting but also I think other students should be made aware that there were rules in place once upon a time and they were just for women. I wanted to find out through further research was this something that went on only at the University of Illinois or was this once a college wide phenomena. As I started to go through and research more and more I started to realize that this was a common thing among multiple universities. The thing that stood out the most to me was the fact that these rules at every university I researched were only in place for women. None of the universities I researched including U of I had rules in place for men, men were pretty much free to do whatever. There were a few incidents I read about where not only were the men free to do whatever they pleased but some of them had very violent behavior on campus. In some articles I read the men were physically hurting other students and even administrators with no punishment at all. I just felt like women were treated very unfairly in relation to men. Things that men could do freely women were getting kicked out of school for and I just feel like back then the university system was very sexist. The rules weren't in place for a very long time, they started out in the early 1900's and died off by the 1970's and I think this probably had a lot to do with the fact that they were very unfair. This was an interesting research project for me because it gave me insight on not only how

previous women students lived and were treated but it also gave me an appreciation of the freedom women students now have. I would find it very difficult to have to experience those rules in today's society and I am glad that it was recognized as something that needed to be changed.