



To: WWU Legacy Review Task Force
From: Elizabeth Joffrion, Director of Heritage Resources
Date: March 10, 2021
Subject: Origin and Naming of Huxley College

This memo responds to a request by the Legacy Review Task Force for information regarding the origin and naming of Huxley College. The documentation cited herein is drawn from the following archival and published sources:

1. The official administrative records held by the University Archives.
2. Oral and video interviews conducted with WWU faculty and administration.
3. Publications, including newspapers, books, brochures, and other historical sources.
4. Research documentation created by others, including Gene Myers' account of the naming of Huxley College, as provided by him to the Task Force.
5. Information about Sir Julian Huxley, grandson of T. H. Huxley.

The research sources referenced in this report are found primarily in the units of Western Libraries, Division of Heritage Resources: University Archives, Center for Pacific Northwest Studies (CPNWS), and Special Collections. All sources are cited and contextualized in this report along with links to scanned copies of the source. In support of this research, we have also corresponded or spoken with individuals who have conducted research on Huxley College, including Bill Dietrich, Gene Myers and Steve Hollenhorst. Dietrich's [*Green Fire, A History of Huxley College*](#) is surely known to the Task Force and appears to be the definitive history of the college.

To date we have been unable to locate David Clarke's "History of Huxley College" as cited by Dietrich in *Green Fire*. Bill indicated that he did not recall where he found the Clarke history, and confirmed that he has no extant paper files related to his *Green Fire* research.

Findings and Recommendations

Based on our research we can draw a few general conclusions. First, there are conflicting accounts about who initiated the idea to name the college after T. H. Huxley; however, the documentation indicates that it was likely former President Jerry Flora and/or Dean of Research, Herb Taylor. As you will see in the sources cited

below, there is ample evidence that the name was chosen because of T. H. Huxley's scholarship regarding the work of Charles Darwin. We have also uncovered a memo from (then) Academic Dean Flora to the Academic Council (December, 1966) referencing the Long-Range Planning Committees' recommendation to establish a College of Environmental Science. In this document, Flora parenthetically references the name Huxley College. This memo is perhaps the first use of the name in an administrative document and is included in the report below. Overall, we can only conclude that the name Huxley was introduced informally and gained momentum through intentional and repeated reference.

We have also included documentation about Sir Julian Huxley, T. H. Huxley's grandson and the brother of Aldous Huxley. In a letter included in this report, Jerry Flora informs Julian Huxley of the creation of Huxley College, to be named in honor of Thomas Henry Huxley. Flora invites Julian Huxley to attend the future dedication of the Northwest Environmental Studies Center building that would eventually house Huxley College. Based on this letter, and Huxley's letter in reply, it is evident that the Huxley family was not aware of Western's intent to name the college after a Huxley family member. It is important to note that Julian Huxley's work on race and eugenics were widely known, and even referenced in a campus newspaper article as early as the 1930s.

We sincerely hope that the scanned documents and associated contextual information in this report will assist the Task Force in completing its charge. I'd like to thank the staff of Western Libraries, Heritage Resources for their significant efforts in support of this research, in particular, Tony Kurtz, Michael Taylor, Ruth Steele and Roz Koester.

Administrative Records

Huxley College Dean's Office Records. File on "Huxley Historical Documents." 1966-1967 Academic Council minutes and Correspondence documenting Huxley College's inception and approval. 1966 December 5-1967 May 23. University Archives.

Key documents relating to the inception of Huxley College, consisting of the following:

- *1966 December 5* - Memo from Academic Dean Jerry Flora to Members of the Academic Council with "comments on tomorrow's meeting" of the AC. Item 2 is a reminder that the Long-Range Planning Committee will present their recommendation that the second satellite college be a College of Environmental Science--to which Flora adds "(Huxley College?)" - perhaps the first use of the name in an administrative document.
- *1966 December 6* - Minutes of the 12/6/1967 AC meeting in which the LRPC recommendation for the College is discussed.
- *1967 May 19* - Agenda for the May 23, 1967 AC meeting. The agenda includes the LRPC feasibility study and ultimate recommendation for establishment of the College.
- *1967 May 24* - Memo containing the minutes of the May 23, 1967 AC meeting at which the AC reached a tie vote (tie broken by Flora as Academic Dean) on the question of accepting the LRPC recommendation to establish the college--giving LRPC approval to continue their study for future AC action.

https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/5720_2001-0036-0001_huxley_historical_0.pdf

President's Office Records. Academic Council Long-Range Planning subcommittee ("Second Cluster College Committee") report on Huxley College: "An Affiliated College of Environmental Studies, Report and Recommendations." 1968 January 10. University Archives.

This report is the earliest formal expression of Huxley College in administrative documents found to date—including recommendations on college structure, governance, curriculum, and philosophy. It is also perhaps the earliest formal administrative document to use the name "Huxley College," which its authors acknowledge was already in use "on campus" as short-hand for the proposed college. The report also includes a brief history of administrative actions relating to the creation of Huxley College (to date), revealing that the report was the culmination of more than a year of planning by the Academic Council.

https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/1050_0078-0024-0001_AC-LRPC_report_huxley_196801.pdf

Board of Trustees Records. Meeting Packets. Copy of 1968 January 23 Academic Council Minutes. 1968 January 23. University Archives.

AC meeting minutes as compiled by President Flora into the Board of Trustees meeting packets (ultimately for Board approval at its July 11, 1968 meeting). At its January 23, 1968, meeting, the Academic Council formally approved the recommendations made in the report of the "Second Cluster College Committee" (see preceding item). The Second Cluster College Committee was a subcommittee of the AC's Long-Range Planning Committee tasked with studying the establishment of a college of environmental studies. The subcommittee had presented its report to the AC on January 10 (see previous document).

https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/1000_0085-0033-0002_bot_packet_acminutes_19680123.pdf

President/Provost's Office Records. Interaction with Faculty series. File on "College of Environmental Science." 1968 June 11 memo from President Jerry Flora to Dr. Thaddeus Spratlen, Chairman of the Faculty Council and Mr. George Witter, Vice Chairman of Faculty Council. 1968 June 11. University Archives.

Flora informs the Faculty Council that he will seek Board of Trustees approval to establish the College of Environmental Science (the name "Huxley" is not used in the memo). He notes that Faculty Council's sister body, the Academic Council, had "unanimously endorsed the recommendations of the committee charged with planning a College of Environmental Science" on January 23, 1968. Since the Faculty Council had apparently been silent on the matter for several months, Flora informs the Faculty Council of his "intention to bring the matter before the Board of Trustees."

https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/3000_0078-0020-0004_Flora_to_FC_19680611.pdf

Board of Trustees Records. Minutes, 1968 July 11. 1968 July 11. University Archives.

At this meeting the Board approved the establishment of the College of Environmental Studies by accepting report of the Long-Range Planning Committee's subcommittee on Huxley (see previously identified report). There is no reference to "Huxley College" in the Board's approval.

<https://mabel.wvu.edu/islandora/object/wvu:21042>

Executive Assistant to the President Records. File on "President/Speeches." Charles J. Flora Inauguration Speech, 1968 November 21. 1968 November 21. University Archives.

In Flora's inaugural address, he references the creation of "Fairhaven College, and now Huxley" in reflecting on the dynamic growth of the institution. The Board of Trustees had approved the establishment of the college in July although with no mention of the name "Huxley College."

https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/1060_0077-0002-0008_flora_inaugural_1968.pdf

President's Office Records. File on "Cluster Colleges—Huxley." Letter from WWSC President Charles J. Flora to Sir Julian Huxley, 1969 August 12 and Reply from Huxley to Flora, 1969 August 16. 1969 August 12. University Archives.

In his letter, Flora informs Sir Julian Huxley of the creation of Huxley College, to be named in honor of Thomas Henry Huxley (Julian Huxley's grandfather). Flora invites Julian Huxley to attend the future dedication of the Northwest Environmental Studies Center building that would eventually house Huxley College. Based on this letter, and Huxley's letter in reply, it is evident that the Huxley family had not been aware of Western's intent to name the college after a Huxley family member.

See also Julian Huxley's reply to Flora (following Flora's letter in the linked document), which affirms the notion that the Huxley family was not aware of the prospective college name.

https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/1050_0078-0024-0001_Flora_corresp_Julian_Huxley_1969.pdf

Public Information Office Records. File on Huxley College. Thomas Huxley biographical information excerpt (source not credited). (circa) 1969 August. University Archives.

Photocopies of Thomas Huxley biographical information excerpt (source not credited) as compiled by the WWSC Public Information Office (precursor to today's Office of University Communications). The photocopy is in a file next to a photocopy of Flora's correspondence with Julian Huxley (see previous entry above).

https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/1650_0086-0036-0025_huxley_bio.pdf

President's Office Records. File on "Cluster Colleges—Huxley." Memo from President Flora to Huxley College Dean Gene W. Miller regarding Miller's Academic Plan for Huxley College, 1970 March 2. 1970 March 2. University Archives.

Flora's memo is an approval of Miller's "Academic Plan" and philosophy of Huxley College (which follows the memo). Miller was the first dean of Huxley College and this appears to be his initial step in formulating the college curriculum and philosophy.

https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/1050_0078-0024-0001_Huxley_Philosophy_Dein_Miller_19700302_0.pdf

Public Information Office Records. File on Huxley College. Circa 1970 Huxley College Promotional Pamphlet. (circa 1970. University Archives.

An early brochure for Huxley College with reference to the Huxley name origin on page 2. The pamphlet references 1971 in future tense.

https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/1650_0086-0036-0025_huxley_brochure.pdf

Audio-Visual Materials (oral histories and video recordings)

Carter Broad Interview (Professor Emeritus, Biology), p. 9-13. 1993 February 26. WWU Centennial Oral History Project. CPNWS.

According to the interview, Professor Broad chaired the Huxley College planning committee. He discusses the idea behind Huxley College, initial hiring, etc.

"It was at a time when environmental colleges were the thing to do. It was Jerry Flora's idea, and I don't know whether Jerry thought of the name first and then the function, or in the other sequence, but he named it, and he said it would be an environmental college."

Jim Scott (interviewer): "We called it from the start, the Huxley College of Environmental Studies. Over the years that has caused a considerable degree of tension and discussion. Is it environmental science, is it environmental studies?"

https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/wwucentennial_broad_01_11.pdf

Robert Monahan Interview (Professor, Geology), p. 17-18. 1993 July 16. WWU Centennial Oral History Project. CPNWS.

"Part of the problem that I saw with Huxley was their desire to be completely autonomous. They prided themselves on their autonomy and wanted no linkages or association with the rest of the faculty. That was the way it started, but it has changed over time." ... "There was an unwillingness to cooperate, to work with, to even engage in dialogue with people who were not part of Huxley faculty."

"...Huxley attracted some students who were, I guess one would call them 'radical environmentalists'." ... "Huxley was tarred with that brush."

https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/wwucentennial_monahan_03_13.pdf

Alan Ross Interview (Dean of Graduate School), p. 16-17. 1993 May 6. WWU Centennial Oral History Project. CPNWS.

“Well [Huxley] had a solid academic basis.” ... “I think that the people that were in it, and the reason that it has continued, is that it has a solid... they have been able to things in conservation.” ... “They have recognized... they have been people that were recognized in the circle.”

“The whole thing [Huxley] has worked its way out. The public at large are accepting the scientific approach.” ... “It seems to me the people who were sound in their disciplines, were sound in their approached have been taken in by other members of the community.”

https://president.wwu.edu/files/2021-04/wwucentennial_ross_04_06.pdf

Jerry Flora Interview (WWU President), p. 9-10; 28-29. 1999 August 18. WWU Centennial Oral History Project. CPNWS.

“Herb Taylor recommended that we call it Huxley College, after T. H. Huxley. I thought that was a great idea. He was Darwin's bulldog, and all this stuff. So, from the beginning, we called it Huxley College. From the first inception of it. When I was sitting in the committee - Paul Woodring' s committee - instead of talking about the college of environmental studies, I kept calling it Huxley College as a proposal. By the time it became a reality, its name was automatically Huxley College. Everybody was just calling it Huxley College.” ... The interview goes on to discuss correspondence with members of the Huxley family regarding the plan to name the college for T. H. Huxley. Also states that he invited Julian Huxley to attend the dedication.

https://president.wwu.edu/files/2021-04/wwucentennial_flora_02_04a.pdf

Harold A. “Barney” Goltz Interview (Campus Planning), p. 10-11. 1999 April 1 and April 13. WWU Centennial Oral History Project. CPNWS.

General discussion of campus development and the Master Plan. Discusses funding for what Goltz called the Environmental Bldg. “There was a time when the Environmental Building was a priority for Western, but a marine laboratory at Shannon Point was a priority, also... President Flora wanted very badly to have those two projects offered to the legislature and approved by the legislature in a single session... we put the two projects together as one project.”

https://president.wwu.edu/files/2021-04/wwucentennial_goltz_02_10.pdf

Past Presidents Interview (Jarrett, Flora, Bunke, Olscamp). 1993 February 24.

This interview provides a good general history of Western through the lens of four presidents. Although there is little specifically on Huxley, we have included the transcript in support of the broader work of the task force.

https://president.wwu.edu/files/2021-04/wwucentennial_pastpresidents_03_20.pdf

“Western Washington State College: A Close Look” Video, time code 00:09:45-00:11:00. 1972.

Jerry Flora, Herb Taylor and others discuss the origins and philosophy of Huxley in the context of the cluster colleges.

<https://mabel.wwu.edu/islandora/object/wwu%3A34812>

Publications (newspapers, books, campus history files)

“Believers In Superiority of White Race May Suffer Shock: Negro’s Religion Sincere” article in the *Northwest Viking* (Washington State Normal School student newspaper). 1935 July 19. Special Collections.

Article by Wilson Waylett that refers to Julian Huxley’s work.

<https://president.wwu.edu/files/2021-04/Northwest%20Viking%207-19-35.jpg>

Full issue accessible in MABEL: <https://mabel.wwu.edu/islandora/object/wwu%3A12407>

Letter to the Editor in the *Collegian* (Western Washington State College student newspaper), p. 2. 1962 April 13. Special Collections.

Julian Huxley will be visiting the University of Washington later in the month. Norm Olsen and Brian Coates suggest that he be invited to speak at Western.

<https://president.wwu.edu/files/2021-04/Collegian%204-13-62.jpg>

Full issue accessible in MABEL: <https://mabel.wwu.edu/islandora/object/wwu%3A13886>

“Huxley College: another satellite in Western orbit?” article in the *Collegian* (Western Washington State College student newspaper), p. 3. 1967 January 20. Special Collections.

Brief article on page 3 announcing new “plans for Huxley College” – which was essentially a reference to the (Academic Council) Long-Range Planning Committee’s initiative to study establishing the college. This article is notable for being possibly the first use of the name “Huxley College” in a publication. The article quotes Jerry Flora (then Academic Dean) regarding proposed curriculum for Huxley. It also states that the name Huxley “is a tentative one,” indicating that the idea for the name was relatively new.

<https://president.wwu.edu/files/2021-04/Collegian%201-20-67.jpg>

Also accessible in MABEL: <https://mabel.wwu.edu/islandora/object/wwu%3A14048>

“Trustees approve Huxley Center” article in the *Western Front*, p. 1. 1968 July 16. Special Collections.

Article on the Board of Trustees’ approval of Huxley College.

<https://president.wwu.edu/files/2021-04/Western%20Front%207-16-68.jpg>

Full issue accessible in MABEL: <https://mabel.wwu.edu/islandora/object/wwu%3A14105>

“New Cluster College Named Huxley,” article in the *Western Front*, p. 5. 1968 August 6. Special Collections.

Article announcing Huxley College as a new cluster college at Western after the recent approval by the Board of Trustees. The article states that the college was named after Thomas H. Huxley, “the chief exponent of Darwinism,” but it does not specify the context for that proposal. There is a mention of pending approval (of the college) by the state legislature that would make Huxley College a reality, but this could be a conflation of the college (which is an intellectual/administrative construct) with its future ‘home’ facility, the Northwest Environmental Studies Center, the funding for which was pending approval in the legislature.

<https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/Western%20Front%208-6-68.jpg>

Full issue accessible in MABEL: <https://mabel.wvu.edu/islandora/object/wwu%3A14108>

“Western plans new satellite college” article in the *Western Front*, p. 1. 1969 July 15. Special Collections.

Article on establishment of Huxley College.

<https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/Western%20Front%207-15-69.jpg>

Full issue accessible in MABEL: <https://mabel.wvu.edu/islandora/object/wwu%3A14139>

“It’s Happening” article in the *Western Front*, p. 4. 1969 September 30. Special Collections.

Article by John Miles on human population. Quotes Sir Julian Huxley.

<https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/Western%20Front%209-30-69.jpg>

Full issue also accessible in MABEL: <https://mabel.wvu.edu/islandora/object/wwu%3A14143>

“Huxley College to start classes” article in the *Western Front*, p. 14. 1970 September 29. Special Collections.

Article announcing that Huxley College will start classes.

<https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/Western%20Front%209-29-70.jpg>

Full issue accessible in MABEL: <https://mabel.wvu.edu/islandora/object/wwu%3A14726>

“Symposium on learning, festival of arts set for Western’s diamond anniversary” article in the *Western Front*, p. 7. 1973 September 25. Special Collections.

Article on a symposium to be held for Western’s diamond anniversary. Mentions that President Flora has invited Sir Julian Huxley, grandson of T. H. Huxley, to appear at the symposium, but confirmation has not been received.

<https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/Western%20Front%209-25-73.jpg>

Full issue accessible in MABEL: <https://mabel.wvu.edu/islandora/object/wwu%3A14896>

***Klipsun*, p. 12, 14. 1969. Special Collections.**

Interview with President Flora, who mentions that the college is being named after T. H. Huxley. “It’s a tentative name incidentally.”

<https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/Klipsun%201969.pdf>

Full yearbook accessible in MABEL: <https://mabel.wvu.edu/islandora/object/wwu%3A16500>

***Résumé* (WVU Alumni newsletter). 1991 Spring. Special Collections.**

Timeline written for Huxley College 20-year anniversary. States that the college was named after Thomas H. Huxley, "father of the eminent British family of scientists and writers, and grandfather of *Brave New World* author Aldous."

<https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/Huxley%20College%20timeline.pdf>

Full issue accessible in CEDAR: https://cedar.wvu.edu/alumni_reports/219/

Long Range Plan. 1966. Campus History Vertical Files. Special Collections.

Brief information on the creation of cluster colleges, including Huxley College. No information on naming.

<https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/Long%20Range%20Plan%201966.pdf>

News Release. 1968 July 24. Campus History Vertical Files. Special Collections.

News release (July 24, 1968) announcing establishment of Huxley College and other cluster colleges. No information on naming.

<https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/News%20Release%201968.pdf>

Informational brochure for Huxley College. Undated (circa 1970). Special Collections.

States that the college was named for Thomas H. Huxley. This is followed by a quote from Sir Julian Huxley's book, *The Humanist Frame*.

<https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/Huxley%20College%20brochure.jpg>

***The Science of Life*, H. G. Wells, Julian Huxley, and G. P. Wells, 1934. Western Libraries.**

Popular biology textbook co-authored by Julian Huxley, science fiction writer H. G. Wells, and his son G. P. Wells. Contains a statement about "unrestrained breeding" of humans and other animals. The statement could be construed as racist and anti-Catholic.

<https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/Science%20of%20Life.pdf>

Full publication available through Western Libraries:

<https://onsearch.library.wvu.edu/permalink/f/1jlsIm9/CP71143465030001451>

***WVU! As It Was*, ed. "the Lunch Bunch," p. 441-445. 2004. Western Libraries.**

"The Beginning of the Institute for Freshwater Studies" includes a few comments about Huxley College, by Jerry Flora.

https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/wvu_as_it_was_huxley.pdf

Full publication available through Western Libraries:

<https://onsearch.library.wvu.edu/permalink/f/1jlsIm9/CP71111721550001451>

Information from Other Sources

Selected online resources about Julian Huxley and eugenics:

- <http://julianhuxleyeugenics.blogspot.com/p/huxley-and-eugenics.html>
- https://alina_stefanescu.typepad.com/files/the-vital-importance-of-eugenics-julian-huxley.pdf
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2985562/?page=1>

Historical documentation compiled by Gene Myers with Jerry Flora and Bill Dietrich. Undated.

Includes discussion of history of Huxley name.

https://president.wvu.edu/files/2021-04/Historical%20Documentation_Myers_Dietrich.pdf