

A Calendar of WKU History

1 June 1963

The Bowling Green College of Commerce officially merged with Western Kentucky State College. Formerly the Bowling Green Business University, the College of Commerce educated students in accounting, business administration, and commercial teaching.

2 June 1932

Western awarded its first master's degrees at commencement ceremonies held in the Physical Education and Health Building (now Margie Helm Library).

3 April 1943

Four hundred members of the 321st College Training Detachment arrived at Western for preflight training under a contract with the Army Air Force. They lived in J. Whit Potter Hall, attended classes, and took flying lessons at the Bowling Green airport.

4 February 1911

Western moved to the Hill from its location on College Street between 11th and 12th Streets. Students helped to carry books, furniture, and equipment to their new campus, the centerpiece of which was the newly completed Administration Building (now Van Meter Hall).

5 June 1924

The first bachelor's degrees were awarded at commencement. Western had previously conferred teaching certificates only, but had been authorized to grant degrees in 1922.

6 May 2002

The Guthrie Bell Tower was dedicated. A family tribute to Robert Guthrie, a casualty of the Korean War, the Tower is the focal point for ceremonies honoring all veterans.

7 February 1988

Western's Glasgow Campus, housed in the former Liberty Street Elementary School, was officially opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

8 November 1980

Western's public radio station, WKYU-FM, first signed on the air at 11 a.m. CST.

9 March 1876

The Kentucky General Assembly granted a charter to the Glasgow Normal School. In 1884, the school moved from Glasgow to Bowling Green and changed its name to the Southern Normal School, the ancestor of Western.

10 May 2003

The first students to complete their degrees online graduated from Western.

11 January 1915

Henry Hardin Cherry submitted his resignation as Western's first president in order to run for Governor of Kentucky. He was reappointed president on June 9 after withdrawing from the race.

12 February 1956

In the early morning hours, vandals smeared the Henry Hardin Cherry statue with green and white paint following Murray State College's basketball win over the Hilltoppers. Officials of both schools condemned the "wanton desecration."

13 September 1991

Western's first Athletic Hall of Fame induction ceremony was held in the Garrett Conference Center ballroom. The honorees were E. A. Diddle (coach), Dee Gibson (basketball/tennis), Adele Gleaves Haswell (gymnastics), John Oldham (basketball), Max Reed (basketball/football), Jimmy Feix (football), Clem Haskins (basketball), Jim McDaniels (basketball), Bobby Rascoe (basketball), and Nick Rose (track/cross country).

14 December 1996

Western held its first December commencement.

15 September 1956

Margaret Munday and John Edward Jones were the first African-American students to enter Western.

16 November 1937

The statue of Henry Hardin Cherry in front of Cherry Hall was dedicated. Born on November 16, 1864, President Cherry had died the previous August.

17 January 1989

Western's public television station, WKYU-PBS, signed on the air at 3 p.m. CST.

18 March 1971

Western's basketball team defeated the University of Kentucky 107-83 in the first round of the NCAA Mideast Regional Final at Athens, Ga. "It was my most humiliating defeat in basketball," said UK coach Adolph Rupp.

19 November 1927

Western's Board of Regents and the Trustees of Ogden College signed an agreement to merge the two schools. Opened in 1877, Ogden College was located on the site of the Kelly Thompson Science Complex.

20 September 1920

Western's first campus bookstore opened on the second floor of Recitation Hall (now the site of Cherry Hall).

21 March 1906

Governor J. C. W. Beckham signed legislation chartering the Western Kentucky State Normal School, giving Western its official founding date.

22 July 1965

Assembling at the Bowling Green Country Club, a group of alumni and friends formed the Hilltopper Hundred Club (now the Hilltopper Athletic Foundation).

23 August 1992

The Preston Health and Activities Center, made possible by a gift from alumnus Raymond B. Preston, was dedicated.

24 May 1932

Western opened its new outdoor swimming pool. The pool was removed in 1969 to make way for the Cravens Graduate Center.

25 May 1952

The Hilltoppers, a quartet consisting of current and former students Jimmy Sacca, Don McGuire, Seymour Spiegelman and Billy Vaughn, released their single "Trying." The record remained on the *Billboard* charts for 19 weeks and sold close to one million copies.

26 February 1966

Governor Ned Breathitt signed legislation authorizing Western Kentucky State College's name change to Western Kentucky University.

27 February 1909

Western's Board of Regents authorized the purchase of the land and buildings of the Pleasant J. Potter College, a young ladies' school that was ceasing operations. Located on the crest of "Vinegar Hill," this property became the nucleus of Western's hilltop campus.

28 December 1963

The Hilltopper football team defeated the U. S. Coast Guard Academy 27-0 in the Tangerine Bowl at Orlando, Florida, capping off their first ever undefeated (10-0-1) season.

29 January 1925

The *College Heights Herald*, Western's campus newspaper, published its first issue.

30 May 1957

Located in front of Gordon Wilson Hall, the Memorial Entranceway, marked by a pylon reading "Western Kentucky State College—The Spirit Makes the Master" was dedicated.

31 December 1959

Western's famed basketball coach, E. A. Diddle, notched his 700th win with a victory over Tulane in the Sugar Bowl championship game in New Orleans.