Indiana University Historical Markers
UA-11

About This Policy

Effective Dates:
11-15-2016

Last Updated:
01-25-2019

Responsible University Administrator:
President, Indiana University

Policy Contact:
James Capshew
University Historian

Scope

All Indiana University campuses.

Policy Statement

1. Indiana University historical markers are used by the institution to note historically significant:
   a. People
   b. Places
   c. Events
   d. Organizations in Indiana University history

2. The University Historian and the Historical Marker Committee will review all nominations for historical markers.

3. The University Historian and Historical Marker Committee will utilize the following criteria to determine if a topic warrants the installation of a historical marker on one of IU’s campuses or related sites.
   a. The topic notes extraordinary:
      i. University achievements
      ii. Intellectual and scientific development
      iii. Cultural shifts
      iv. Contributions and service to society
   b. The topic has a demonstrable university-wide impact and/or has regional, national, and/or international impact.
   c. A topic must have inherent significance beyond popular appeal. The existence of an entity is insufficient to meet the level of significance set forth in this policy.
   d. Other avenues of recognition should be pursued before nominating a topic for a historical marker. This includes university alumni awards, faculty recognition awards, honorary degrees for living individuals, internal and external facility names, and other university recognition programs.

4. Marker Review
   In order to evaluate a topic’s impact on Indiana University, the region, nation, and world. The University Historian and Historical Marker Committee will observe the following waiting periods before a marker can be approved:
a. Individuals: Five years must pass between a person’s death and consideration by the University Historian and Historical Marker Committee for a historical marker. Except as provided below, living individuals, including faculty, staff, students, or donors will not be considered for recognition with a historical marker.
b. Organizations: Twenty years must pass from the organization’s founding before it can be considered for a historical marker.
c. Events: Twenty years must pass from the time of the event before it can be considered for a historical marker.
d. Places: Twenty years must pass from the association of a place before it can be considered for a historical marker.

5. Latitude with Approved Topics
The University Historian and Historical Marker Committee will have the latitude to adjust the focus of nominated topics to ensure that important elements are highlighted. This may be done to emphasize that topics are not necessarily being honored with a historical marker but rather are being noted for their historical significance. This latitude is granted to ensure that challenging topics are addressed in a responsible manner.

6. Physical Marker
All Indiana University Historical Markers will be designed, sited, and installed by the Office of the Vice President for Capital Planning and Facilities.

Reason For Policy
This policy is established to provide for an orderly, coordinated, well researched, and informed practice of selecting topics for Indiana University historical markers and installing said markers university-wide. This policy is designed to establish a level of historical significance and a procedure to ensure proper vetting, research, and consultation is made before historical markers are installed.

Procedure

A. Administration
The University Historian, supported by the Office of the Bicentennial and the Office of the President, shall handle administrative duties for this program. The University Historian shall coordinate committee and research activity. Upon the conclusion of the Indiana University Bicentennial at the end of 2020, the University Historian shall assume administrative duties in addition to committee and research duties.

B. Nomination Process
1. Any member of the university community or the public may nominate a topic for consideration by the University Historian and the Historical Marker Committee.

2. A nomination must be in writing, and the nominator must provide the following documentation:
   a. A statement of significance.
      • The statement must focus on the campus, university, state, national, and/or international significance of the nominated topic. Explain the impact, effect, or contribution of the topic to a campus, the university, Indiana, to the United States, and/or to the world.
      • The statement must be supported with citations to primary sources. Citations should be provided in Chicago style.
      • The following questions should be addressed:
         • How is the topic especially noteworthy?
         • Does the subject have a lasting impact on a campus or Indiana University as a whole?
         • How is the topic representative of major themes in campus, IU, Indiana, or American history?
      • Program-designated priorities should be addressed, including:
• Historically underrepresented gender, minority, ethnic, or immigrant individuals or groups.

b. Photocopied or scanned primary sources or links to digitized primary sources.

• At least one primary source must be cited for each point of significance articulated in the statement and the location(s) where one can find the source must be listed. Examples of primary sources may include vital records, wills, letters, diaries, land records, city directories, Sanborn maps, speeches, company newsletters, and contemporary newspapers. The nominator must provide photocopies or scans of primary sources along with the submission of the nomination. Digitized primary sources, such as electronic newspaper articles, scanned letters, or reports, must be submitted using the nomination form found on the program’s website: https://200.iu.edu/signature-projects/historical-markers/form.html. The nominator is advised keep copies of initial research and retain additional research to share with the University Historian if the nomination is approved and further documentation is needed.

c. A preliminary draft of the proposed marker’s text with footnotes.

• An approved marker is subject to 1,000 characters maximum.

C. Review Process

1. Nominations for topics shall be accepted beginning in Fall 2016.
2. Nominators must submit their nomination for an Indiana University Historical Marker through the program’s website: https://200.iu.edu/signature-projects/historical-markers/form.html.
3. Nominations shall be reviewed by staff to ensure that minimum requirements for documentation are met.
4. All nominations that meet minimum requirements shall be sent to the University Historian for an initial review of historical significance.
5. The University Historian shall consult with Indiana University General Counsel to identify topics that may pertain to any pending lawsuits or settlements that may preclude a topic from being considered.
6. The University Historian shall assign nominations to members of the Historical Marker Committee to research topics that may warrant commemoration with an Indiana University Historical Marker.
7. Committee members, along with assistance from Bicentennial staff, Archives liaisons, and the University Historian, shall research topics to verify their significance with primary resources and draft possible marker text.
8. The Office of the Vice President for Capital Planning and Facilities and the Indiana University Landscape Architect shall determine locations where potential markers will be installed.
9. Committee members shall present their research and text to the Historical Marker Committee for review and comment once per semester (Fall, Spring, Summer). Potential marker locations will be presented to the Historical Marker Committee by the Office of the Vice President for Capital Planning and Facilities and the Indiana University Landscape Architect.
10. The full Historical Marker Committee shall vote to either proceed with marker installation recommendations or reject the topic for presented topics.
11. The University Historian, with assistance from assigned committee members, and Bicentennial staff, shall finalize research and text based on Historical Marker Committee comments.
12. The Bicentennial Office will recommend topics and marker text to the campus provost or chancellor for campus approval.
13. Upon campus approval, the Bicentennial Office will recommend topics and marker text to the President of Indiana University for final approval.

D. Installation and Dedication

1. Upon approval by the President of Indiana University, the University Historian and the Office of the Bicentennial will work with Indiana University Events, the Office of the Vice President of Capital Planning and Facilities, and the Landscape Architect to order, install, and dedicate historical markers.
2. Installed markers will be recorded by the Office of the Bicentennial, University Historian, and relevant archives and records will be made publicly available through University Archives.

E. Editing and/or Removal of Historical Markers

The University Historian may consider the removal or editing of historical markers if new information reveals factual inaccuracy or revised interpretive significance. Should this occur, the University Historian, in consultation with the Historical Marker Committee, shall determine if the marker should be edited or removed.

D. Existing Historical Markers

1. The University Historian, Office of the Bicentennial, and Office of the Vice President of Capital Planning and Facilities will survey all IU campuses for existing historical markers and create a comprehensive list.

2. The University Historian, Office of the Bicentennial, and Historical Marker Committee shall review the text of existing historical markers for accuracy.
   a. Should no factual errors be identified, Office of the Vice President of Capital Planning and Facilities, in collaboration with the University Historian, may create a new historical marker in the Indiana University Historical Marker format and reinstall said marker to ensure markers on all campuses have a uniform historical value of the existing marker will be considered by the University Historian when determining if a new marker should be created in the Indiana University Historical Marker format.
   b. Should factual errors be identified, the University Historian shall work with the Office of the Vice President of Capital Planning and Facilities to edit the historical marker.

Definitions

University Historian

Appointed by the President of Indiana University, the University Historian guides policy development and best practices related to IU’s historical identity. This includes the coordination of research and public outreach for the bicentennial, the development of curricula to enable students to participate in IU history, the creation of historical markers, and the coordination of publications. The University Historian convenes a Council of Historians to assist with this position’s assigned tasks.

Historical Marker Committee

A committee appointed by the University Historian which is comprised of no more than 15 voting faculty members of merit and five ex officio members who will assist the University Historian with evaluating nominations, conducting research, determining historical marker locations, and writing historical marker text. Member terms should be staggered and are for two-years; members may be reappointed for a second term at the discretion of the University Historian.

Sanctions

Any historical markers that are installed on campuses without following the procedures outlined by this policy may be removed by the Office of the Vice President for Capital Planning and Facilities at the behest of the University Historian.

Additional Contacts

| Historical significance, research, and interpretation | Dr. James Capshew (University Historian) | (812) 855-3655 |
History

This policy was established in 2016 and updated in January 2019 to identify information and documentation that is required for a nomination.

Related Information

Honorary Degrees (ACA-62)
Institutional Naming (UA-06)