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In 1961, Gardner-Webb was Ready for Transition to Senior College Status

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ALUMNI

In 1961, Gardner-Webb was Ready for Transition to Senior College Status

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON JANUARY 26, 2021



University’s Eighth President, Dr. E. Eugene Poston, Led the Effort

The push for Gardner-Webb College to achieve accreditation as a senior college began in 1961, shortly after Dr. E. Eugene Poston was named the college’s eighth president. Poston introduced his 10-year plan for growth that included transitioning to four-year status by 1971.

Here’s a look at the timeline of events leading up to accreditation on Dec. 1, 1971.

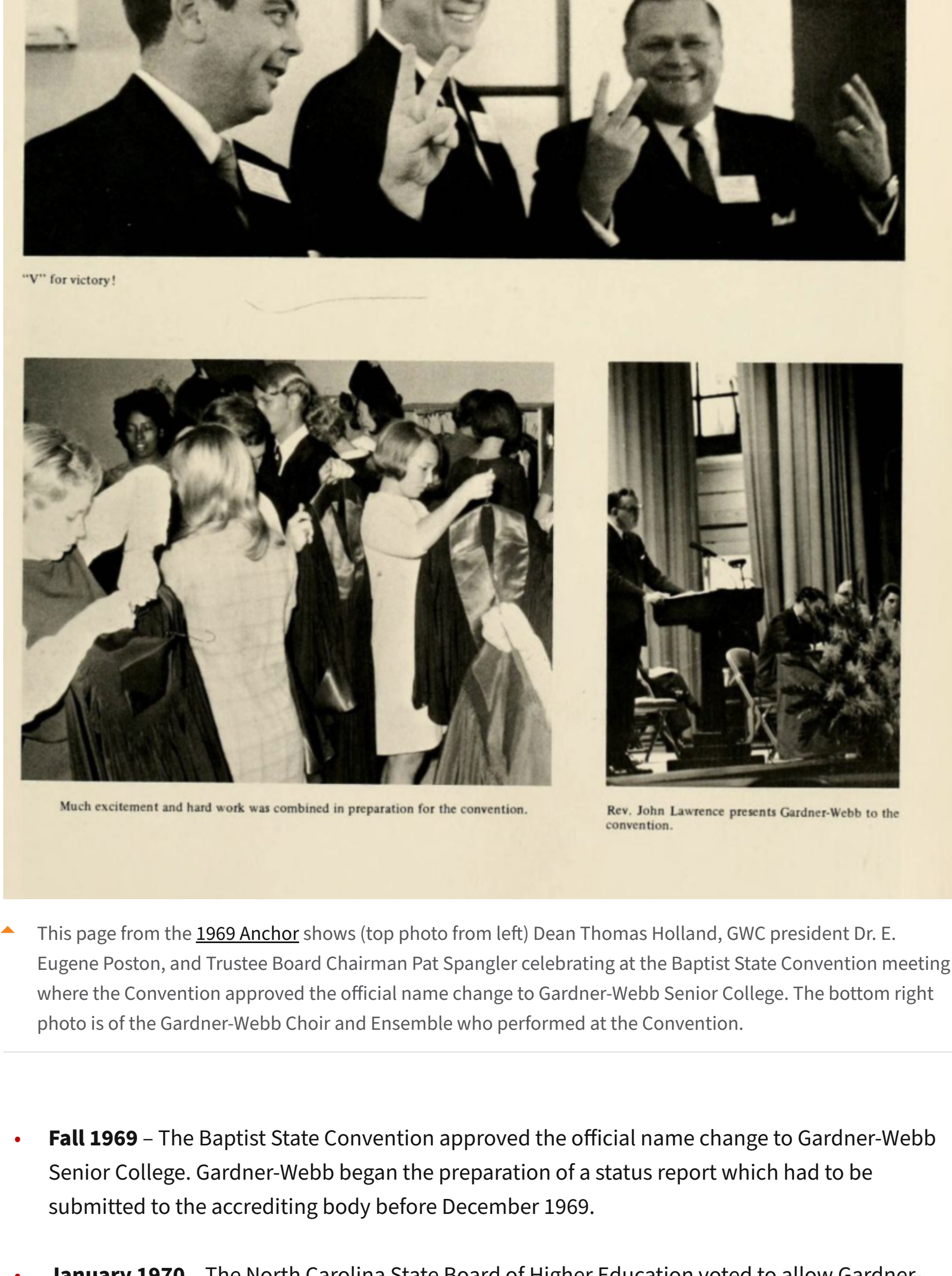
- 1961 to 1967** – A building program adds: the Spangler Stadium, Charles I. Dover Campus Center, the A.T. Withrow Science building, the Bost Physical Education Plant and swimming pool, the Lutz-Yelton Residence Hall for Men, and the Myers, Nanney and Mauney residence halls. A capital fund drive reached \$2.6 million.



⬆ This page is from the Gardner-Webb Yearbook, The Anchor, in 1969, showing construction around campus.

- November 1968** – The Baptist State Convention voted to grant the request of the president and the board of trustees to allow the Gardner-Webb to seek senior college status. [Read more here.](#)

- Nov. 12, 1969** – Gardner-Webb prepared for the arrival of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) Accreditation Advisory Committee in Spring of 1970. The committee would study many aspects of the college: the number of students able to sit in the library; the money spent on each student’s education; the amount of residence space, faculty qualifications, facilities and administration. [Read more here.](#)



⬆ This page from the 1969 [Anchor](#) shows (top photo from left) Dean Thomas Holland, GWC president Dr. E. Eugene Poston, and Trustee Board Chairman Pat Spangler celebrating at the Baptist State Convention meeting where the Convention approved the official name change to Gardner-Webb Senior College. The bottom right photo is of the Gardner-Webb Choir and Ensemble who performed at the Convention.

- Fall 1969** – The Baptist State Convention approved the official name change to Gardner-Webb Senior College. Gardner-Webb began the preparation of a status report which had to be submitted to the accrediting body before December 1969.
- January 1970** – The North Carolina State Board of Higher Education voted to allow Gardner-Webb to grant the four-year baccalaureate degree. This meant that the state board would recognize Gardner-Webb graduates as coming from an accredited institution.
- Spring 1970** – An advisory committee of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) visited the college and later filed a report of its finding to the college.
- October 1970** – The SACS Committee on Admissions to Membership reviewed the status of the college and suggested further steps toward accreditation that should be taken by the college.
- Dec. 1, 1971** – SACS grants senior college accreditation, retroactive to May 16, 1971, when the first four-year students graduated.



Sources: “Dreaming, Daring, Doing...The Story of Gardner-Webb University,” “The Pilot Student Newspaper,” and University Communications and Media Relations archives

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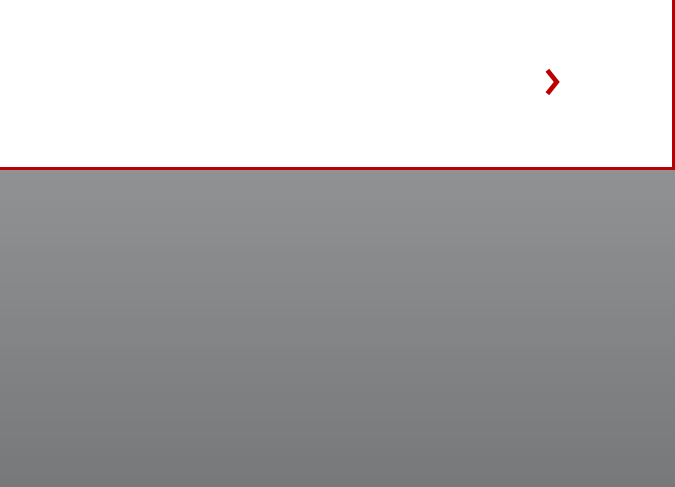


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