

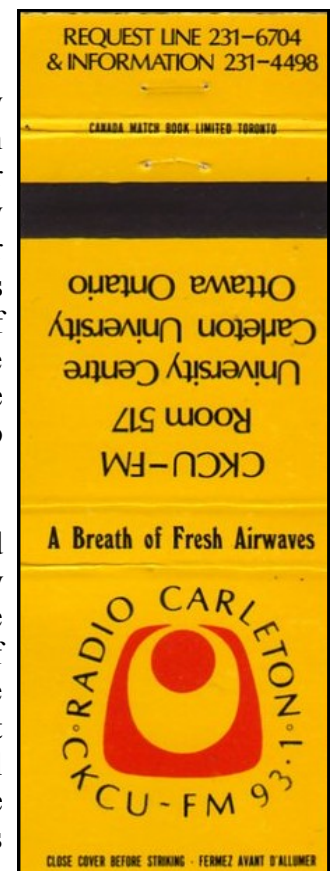
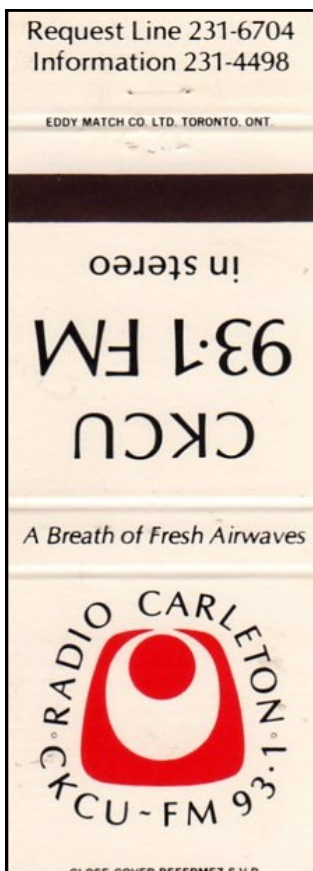
# Collegiate Radio!

by  
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There are a number of collectors who collect the Radio/TV category, including myself, but how many of you have really taken notice of *college* radio stations? They're certainly there!

Campus radio (also known as college radio, university radio, or student radio) is a type of radio station that is run by the students of a college, university, or other educational institution. Programming may be exclusively by students, or may include programmers from the wider community in which the radio station is based. Sometimes campus radio stations are operated for the purpose of training professional radio personnel, sometimes with the aim of broadcasting educational programming, while other radio stations exist to provide an alternative to commercial broadcasting or government broadcasters.

Campus radio stations are generally licensed and regulated by national governments, and have very different characteristics from one country to the next. One commonality between many radio stations regardless of their physical location is a willingness — or, in some countries, even a licensing requirement — to broadcast musical selections that are not categorized as commercial hits. Because of this, campus radio has come to be associated with emerging musical trends, including genres



such as punk and new wave, alternative rock, indie rock and hip hop, long before those genres become part of the musical mainstream. Campus radio stations also often provide airplay and promotional exposure to new and emerging local artists.

Many campus radio stations carry a variety of programming including news (often local), sports (often relating to the campus), and spoken word programming as well as general music. Often the radio format is best described as a freeform, with a lot of creativity and individualism among the disc jockeys and show hosts. A number of these radio stations have gained critical acclaim for their programming and are considered by the community in which they are embedded to be an essential media outlet.

Although the term campus radio implies full-power AM or FM transmission over the air, many radio stations experiment with low-power broadcasting, closed circuit or carrier current systems, often to on-campus listeners only. Some radio stations are distributed through the cable television system on cable FM or the second audio program of a TV radio station. Some universities and colleges broadcast one or more Internet radio feeds — either instead of, or in addition to a campus radio station — which may differ in radio formats significantly from licensed traditional campus radio.

College radio in the United States) became commonplace in the 1960s when the FCC began issuing class D licenses for ten-watt radio stations to further the development of the then new FM band. Some colleges had already been broadcasting for decades on the AM band, often originating in physics experiments in the early 20th century.

One of the first college radio stations in the country is WRUC from Union College in Schenectady, NY. Its first experimental broadcasts were in 1920. WHUS, the radio station of the University of Connecticut went on the air as WABL, a 100-watt AM station, in 1922, with two 103-foot steel towers serving as the radio station's antennae. In 1925, power increased to 500-watts and the call letters changed to WCAC (Connecticut Agricultural College, at that time the name of the university). Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida started WDBO (Way Down By Orlando) in 1924.

Most of the FM radio stations received higher-class licenses than ten watts, typically a few hundred watts. WRAS 88.5 FM in Atlanta is the most powerful college radio station, operating at 100,000 watts. Still, due to strict class D regulations, some radio stations were prohibited from a wattage upgrade for possible signal interference with adjacent radio stations, such as KWUR 90.3 FM interfering with KWMU 90.7 FM in St. Louis, MO. KTUH 90.3 FM in Honolulu, HI has had many increases in its wattage since they started broadcasting in 1969.

The earliest college radio stations carried news, intercollegiate sports, and music along with educational shows and sometimes distance learning courses. In the late 20th century, many U.S. radio stations played what came to be known as "college rock" (later known as alternative rock), a type of rock music that had not yet hit the mainstream. Most radio stations have now diversified, with many following a very commercial-like music rotation during the weekdays, and having specialty shows on evenings and weekends. A few radio stations still employ a Freeform programming.

College radio stations are typically considered to be public radio radio stations in the way that they are funded by donation and grants, but a more accurate term is "community radio", as most staff are volunteers, although many radio stations limit staff to current or recent students instead of anyone from the local community.

By the late 1970s, FM had taken off, and competition for channels for new radio stations was intensifying. The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) and the newly founded National Public Radio (NPR) convinced the FCC that local low-power radio stations were somehow detrimental to broadcasting, and class D licenses were no longer normally issued for applications made after 1979. Making matters worse for the college stations, they were demoted to secondary status, meaning that they could be forced to downgrade or go silent if a full-power station chose to upgrade or to relocate closer to the college station.

Many radio stations were forced to upgrade their facilities at considerable expense. Many others were eventually forced off the air, because they couldn't afford the upgrades, or not in time to avoid being locked in by other expanding radio stations. There have also been situations where some college radio stations have been forced off the air either temporarily or permanently by the school's administration.

Many college radio stations in the U.S. also carry syndicated programming, such as that of National Public Radio and affiliated regional networks. Some radio stations have had student programming taken off the air by the administration in favor of other uses, such as WWGC and KTXT. The original WGST was the subject of an involuntary takeover which saw the state's board of regents sell the radio station as "surplus" property.

A few radio stations have been added to the airwaves as the result of LPFM licensing in the U.S. One example of a Campus Radio station licensed as an LPFM is WIUX-LP of Indiana University, which is able to cover the entire city with its LPFM signal and is competitive in listenership numbers to nearby higher-powered commercial radio stations.

A number of campus radio stations in the US are available using alternate means such as streaming audio over the Internet. One such example is DePaul University. Some radio stations use a variety of methods, such as Lewis University's WLRA (The Start) and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's WIKD-LP which use terrestrial FM, streaming, and mobile media apps. Michigan State University's WDBM ("The Impact"), University of Minnesota's KUOM ("Radio K"), Northern Kentucky University's WNKU, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison's WSUM. All three radio stations broadcast traditionally and via online streaming internet radio.

In Canada, the first licensed community-based campus radio station was CKCU-FM, based at Carleton University in Ottawa, which first broadcast on November 14, 1975. Prior to this date, some developmental university radio projects had previously produced and aired programs on commercial radio stations, and CJRT-FM, a campus radio station of the instructional type, had been on air since 1949.. CFRC at Queen's University in Kingston has been on the air since 1923; however, until the 1940s it was a commercial radio station and even a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation affiliate. Unlike most campus radio stations, however, CFRC was owned for much of its history by the university itself, rather than by the student government. [[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Campus\\_radio](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Campus_radio)]

There's even a College Radio Day, started in 2010, by Dr. Rob Quicke (General Manager, WPSC FM, William Paterson University, NYC market).

So, if you happen to be looking at your (or someone else's) Radio/TV covers, keep an eye out for those collegiate radio covers. They'd make a nice sub-category, or perhaps even a specialty category. I actually stumbled across the two featured on p. 1 in my College collection, which, for me, has a higher priority than my Radio/TV collection.