

# The College of William and Mary

## Campus Heritage Preservation Guidelines: The Sunken Garden Precinct

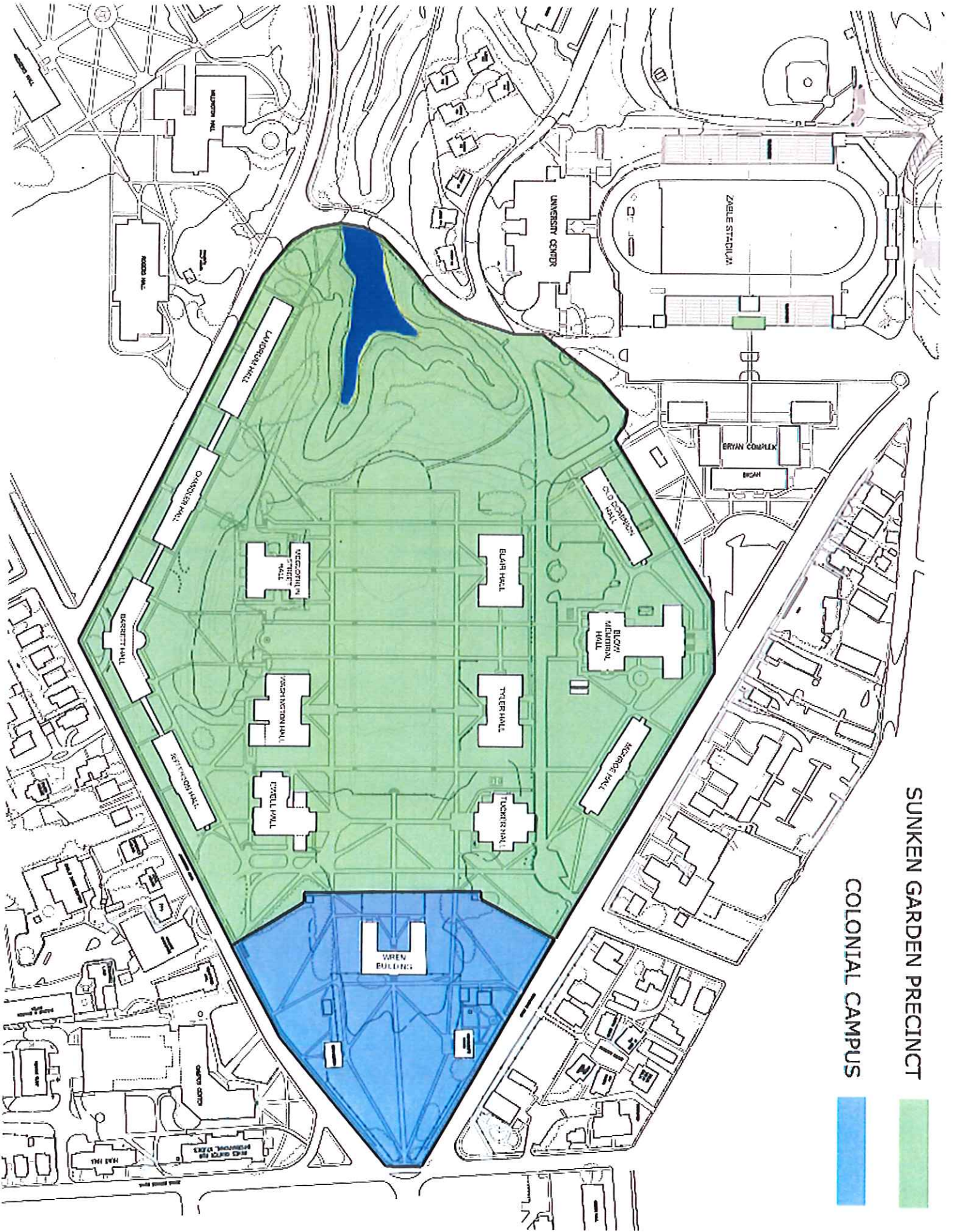
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Prepared for the College of William and Mary  
by  
Mesick Cohen Wilson Baker Architects

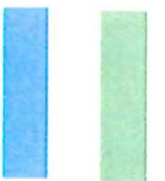
Albany, New York

Williamsburg, Virginia



SUNKEN GARDEN PRECINCT

COLONIAL CAMPUS



### Architectural Significance

In the early 1920s, several significant events converged in the mutual history of Williamsburg and the College of William and Mary. College President J.A.C. Chandler announced a fundraising campaign for endowment and campus expansion, hired the Reverend W.A.R. Goodwin as director of the campaign, and engaged Richmond architects Charles M. Robinson and Charles F. Gillette to design the campus expansion located immediately to the west of the College's colonial campus. At about the same time, Goodwin persuaded John D. Rockefeller, Jr., to undertake the restoration of the colonial town. The simultaneous restoration of the colonial town and the College, the design and construction of a new campus for William and Mary, and the development of nearby residential neighborhoods all bear witness to an important period in the history of the preservation movement in the United States, and each illustrates a unique local expression of the Colonial Revival movement.

Robinson's and Gillette's vigorously ordered Beaux-Arts campus plan is arranged around a terraced green space known as the Sunken Garden. The campus was completed to an unusual degree: 11 of the 12 buildings included in the original plan were constructed between 1921 and 1935, all but one of them under the supervision of Robinson and his associate and successor, J. Binford Walford. The campus is the epitome of the University Beautiful, employing continental classical design principles expressed through a distinctly American Colonial Revival vocabulary. While the site has changed through the decades, it still retains its essential character and remains an exceptionally rich and intact testament to the original designers and their time.

The Robinson/Gillette campus plan reinterpreted the enclosed courtyards of English colleges and extended west the axis established by the Sir Christopher Wren Building, its two flankers, and the Duke of Gloucester Street. The plan capitalized on the fact that

the Wren Building, originally designed as a closed quadrangle with a center courtyard, had been left a three-sided quadrangle, open to the west. Located on 35 acres immediately behind the Wren Building, the new campus was visually connected to the 18<sup>th</sup>-century one and to the town by the Sunken Garden.

Designed at a time when Sir Christopher Wren was being celebrated as the architect of the College's first building, the Sunken Garden was inspired by the Thames-side lawn at Wren's Chelsea Hospital in London. Beaux-Arts symmetry is incorporated throughout the landscape and architecture at all levels, from the layout of the original plantings and paths to the placement of the buildings. Spatially the campus is organized into a hierarchy of areas with the most formal, the Sunken Garden and academic buildings, at the center of the landscape, and those of lesser importance such as dormitories and private gardens relegated to the outer perimeter of the plan.

The resulting campus plan illustrates the critical American transition from court to campus, and has considerable historic significance when viewed in the context of the College's history, the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg in the 1920s and '30s, the evolution of the Colonial Revival in the United States, and the development of American university campus design in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Robinson's buildings are the result of the artful merging of Beaux-Arts design with American architectural traditions. While traditional Beaux-Arts design preferred the Neo-Classical, the context of the campus (locally, regionally and nationally) favored an overtly American form. Robinson's designs rested on "due consideration for the principles [of] color, texture, proportion and balance" found in the College's colonial architecture. The architecture of the new campus thus combined a more regionally familiar Georgian Revival vocabulary with Neo-Classical elements.

The buildings take a strong cue from the local colonial architecture, employing a range of red brick set in Flemish bond, jack and round arches at window openings,

symmetrical facades and bold architrave cornices along the gable and roof lines. While subtly varying in details, the buildings share many common characteristics including massing, height, uniform cornice lines and water tables which visually tie them together and contribute to the harmony of the site.

The significance of the Robinson/Gillette campus lies not in any one single piece of the plan, but rather in the sum of the parts. The architecture, landscape and spaces in-between combine to form a unique setting—a setting distinctive to the College of William and Mary and one representative of the College during the first half of the twentieth century.

*Note: The guidelines which follow have been developed to guide the maintenance and preservation of the exteriors of the buildings in the Sunken Garden Precinct. While treatment of interior features does not fall within the scope of this document, stewards of the Sunken Garden Precinct are encouraged to continue their current sensitive approach to the preservation of significant interior features.*

### Guidelines for the Preservation of the Robinson/Gillette Campus

The purpose of the Campus Heritage Preservation Plan is to guide the decision-making process in the management of the physical assets of the Robinson/Gillette campus. The essence of these guidelines is rooted in modern preservation practices which advocate a disciplined approach to work on historic resources. As stewards of the campus, the administration, faculty, and staff of the College of William and Mary have a responsibility to protect the Robinson/Gillette campus so this and future generations may continue to experience the unique architectural qualities of the site.

Stewardship of the Robinson/Gillette campus comes with a number of considerable challenges, foremost being the need to preserve the unique architectural qualities of the site while also responding to changing programmatic, access, and sustainability demands. Unlike museums, where buildings often exist as static objects, a college campus is a dynamic site, serving as both a learning institution and "community" for students and faculty. Improvements above and beyond routine maintenance are therefore necessary to maintain a modern learning and living environment. While change is inevitable, it does not necessarily follow that change must adversely impact its surroundings. Change within historic contexts can be successful; however, achieving this requires careful planning and consideration.

The guidelines in the Campus Heritage Preservation Plan are based on the fundamental philosophies of conservation, restoration and rehabilitation. The goal of the guidelines is to preserve and protect the character-defining features of the historic buildings and campus plan. It is those features which give the Robinson/Gillette campus a distinct sense of place and time. The guidelines are designed to protect those essential qualities and the historical integrity of the campus and to promote the goal of historic preservation while accommodating the needs of a modern college.

*The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* (by Kay D. Weeks and Anne E. Grimmer, published by the U.S. Department of the Interior in 1995) and *the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* (edited by Charles A. Birnbaum with Christine Capella Peters published by the U.S. Department of the Interior in 1996) have been consulted and modified to relate specifically to the Robinson/Gillette campus landscape and buildings.

The guidelines presented by the Department of the Interior recognize that historic materials and architectural details have proven records for durability and compatibility, and that routine maintenance avoids costly repairs. The careful consideration of materials, finishes, proportions, and design elements consistent with the style of a structure will maintain or add value to the property and enhance its character. Inappropriate replacement materials detract from the character of the buildings and landscapes. If new materials are incorporated, care must be taken to assure that their physical properties do not conflict with the surrounding historic materials. If materials are improperly applied, the installation may cause or accelerate physical deterioration of the historic fabric.

Prior to the onset of any work that will affect the exterior of a building or the campus plan, proposed projects should be clearly defined and evaluated to ensure the appropriateness of the work. Contemporary and archival information must guide the decision-making process and ensure that responsible decisions are made. In many instances, new information must be acquired to answer questions that arise as part of the planning process.

The process of conservation work often begins with research to gain an accurate understanding of the resource prior to any interventions. The research of buildings and landscapes includes both the traditional practice of gathering archival documents

(drawings, specifications, photographs, correspondence, etc.) and the more specialized process of building archaeology. The modern practice of building archaeology weaves together the careful analysis of a building's existing fabric with archival research in order to develop a chronology illustrating the phased development of a building's history.

The ultimate goal of the guidelines is to help ensure the long-term preservation of the Robinson/Gillette campus by establishing standards and practices which safeguard the essential character-defining features of the site. Conservation practices protect the essential qualities of the resource while at the same time repairing deterioration and/or failures. Unlike new construction which centers around an original idea and modern materials, conservation projects involve treating existing construction in a manner that respects the original design and construction and in some instances later additions and/or alterations which have gained significance through time.



### General Guidelines

- The College of William and Mary acknowledges the significance and importance of the Robinson/Gillette campus in relation to its greater goals.
- Proper stewardship of the campus cannot be accomplished without respect for the site. Efforts must be made to establish and foster a sense of pride and appreciation for the Robinson/Gillette campus at all levels of affiliation.
- The importance of the Robinson/Gillette campus lies not just in the physical appearance of the site but also in the parts of the whole. Just as the individual buildings and landscape together create the campus, there should be a respect for the individual materials that form the buildings and landscapes.
- Preservation is a continuing process, not a treatment. It is essential for the long-term protection of the Robinson/Gillette campus that it be sensitively maintained on a permanent basis. Considerations in accomplishing this goal include funding, planning and implementation of facilities projects in the Sunken Garden precinct.
- The impact of incremental change to building exteriors should be evaluated before any facilities project is undertaken. This evaluation should consider the impact on the greater whole of the removal of historic fabric from the exterior of a building, no matter how minor or insignificant.
- Coordination and communication between all parties involved in the design process should begin at the earliest stages of development in work impacting, directly or indirectly, the exteriors of the buildings of the Robinson/Gillette campus.
- Repair and renovation work affecting the Robinson/Gillette campus should be carefully planned and studied prior to execution.

- Future planning shall recognize the need to retain the visual qualities of the spaces created by the buildings and landscape so as to retain the atmosphere created by the sum of these parts.
- The reuse of buildings should not negatively impact their original design, nor should additions to the grounds negatively impact the original Robinson/Gillette campus plan. By the same token, previous alterations and changes unrelated to the historic significance of the site should be removed when the opportunity arises and assets allow.

### Administrative

This Campus Heritage Plan has been endorsed and adopted by the Board of Visitors of the College of William and Mary.

- The College of William and Mary Design Review Board shall be responsible for implementing and administering all preservation guidelines as they affect the Robinson/Gillette campus.
- The Associate Vice President for Facilities Management will be responsible for forwarding to the DRB appropriate maintenance issues that impact the exterior of the buildings of the Robinson/Gillette campus. All Capital and Maintenance Reserve projects that affect the exterior of these buildings will be referred to the Design Review Board by the Associate Vice President for Facilities Management.
- The extensive research and recording of the Robinson/Gillette campus begun with this project will be continued. Building assessment studies should be consulted prior to renovation or repair work, with additional assessment performed as required. Building assessment studies should incorporate destructive and non-destructive analysis of the building fabric when deemed necessary by the Associate Vice President for Facilities Management.
- A permanent collection of records and information chronicling the development and evolution of the Robinson/Gillette campus will be established and maintained by the Executive Director of the Historic Campus.

### Care and Maintenance

Proper maintenance of the exterior of the buildings is fundamental to the long-term care and conservation of the Robinson/Gillette campus. In the on-going process of maintenance, the most appropriate action is the one which achieves the desired goal with the least impact on the historic resource. The materials used in the repair of historic buildings and landscapes should, whenever possible, meet or exceed the quality of those used in the original construction.

- Conservation of historic buildings and landscape features shall become an active and integral part of repair, maintenance and planning.
- Original fabric and character-defining features should be retained to the greatest extent possible.
- The use of traditional construction practices and materials, those contemporary with the original period of construction, is the desired means of maintenance and should be carefully considered during the design phase of any maintenance or repair project.
- The least intrusive methods of stabilization and repair should be employed when dealing with historic fabric and assemblies.
- Photographic and written documentation of facilities projects should be incorporated into all phases of work conducted on historic buildings and landscapes.
- Specialists may be needed in certain circumstances when assessing, planning or executing repairs on historic resources.

- The repair and reintroduction of original elements and assemblies should be executed faithfully, without reproducing original failures or shortcomings.
- When necessary, the college should engage skilled tradespeople who are knowledgeable in period materials and construction practices and are capable of performing maintenance and repairs to a degree equal to that required in the original construction.
- New materials employed in the repair of historic buildings should meet or exceed the quality, performance and characteristics of those materials used in the original construction.
- Substitute materials should be utilized on building exteriors only when they do not sacrifice or damage original fabric.
- Completed work products should visually match work from the resource's period of significance.
- A primary goal of all work performed on the buildings and site within the historic precinct is the preservation of as much historic fabric as possible. Contractors, mechanics and consultants performing work on buildings within the historic precinct must make special efforts to accomplish this goal.
- Construction documents for all repair and renovation projects must include a specific protocol for protection of historic fabric during the project.
- Contractors must request and obtain approval from the University where work beyond that identified within a project scope will affect historic fabric. Where

damage to historic fabric occurs during construction, those materials and/or elements should meet or exceed the quality, performance and characteristics of those materials used in the original construction.

### Adaptive Use of Buildings

The College of William and Mary is constantly evolving, and change is inevitable. This change should be managed to guard against unnecessary damage to the Robinson/Gillette campus. Improvements and alterations to historic resources should produce minimal impact to the integrity of the building and/or campus plan while at the same time extending the life and use of the resource.

Improvements to existing buildings should respect the existing architecture while contributing in their own right. The quality of improvements to existing structures should be commensurate in regards to design, execution and quality to that of historic buildings. The design and execution of improvements should exhibit a degree of quality worthy of the next generation's historic resources.

- Proposed changes should be evaluated against the building or landscapes' significance to identify what impact alterations may have on the integrity of the resource, and modifications to project plans may be necessary to avoid altering or damaging the significance and character of the building or landscape.
- Respect for the original design intent, features and elements should be considered in the planning, design and implementation of the reuse of a building. Ideally the use of buildings should be compatible with their original function and/or plan.
- New programs introduced into historic structures should be sympathetic to the fabric of the buildings and their associated landscapes.
- Efforts should be made to ensure that the installation and/or replacement of systems will not adversely affect the integrity of buildings and landscape features.

- Alterations to buildings to accommodate temporary uses and occupancy should be reversible. Permanent improvements to accommodate changes in use should be executed to a degree of quality equal to or exceeding that of the original construction.
- During subsequent capital projects, past alterations that detract from the integrity of a historic resource should be reversed when circumstances and resources allow. Efforts should be made to reinstate conditions associated with the period of significance for the building.
- The design, materials, assemblies and execution of improvements should be commensurate to that used on historic buildings and landscape features. Improvements to existing buildings should adapt harmoniously to their surroundings; they should utilize comparable scale, massing, materials and details as established by the existing buildings.



## CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES

### Barrett Hall

- Tripartite plan with center frontispiece flanked by angled dormitory wings
- Horizontal massing
- Bilateral symmetry of elevations
- Molded brick watertable
- State roofing
- Brick string course between second and third floors
- North porch with projecting, center semi-circular, classical portico
- Gambrel roof and wood dormers with sash windows
- South Porte-Cochère
- Wood frame octagon cupola with copper ogee roof. The cupola terminates with a copper weather vane. Wood frame base in the classical style supports the cupola.
- East cloisters between Barrett and Jefferson Hall
- False chimneys
- West porch
- Wood frame 8/8 true divided-light windows; Wood window sills. Palladian window in south pavilion.
- Molded wood cornices
- Flat arch window openings
- Copper leaders
- Limestone bas relief in north and south pediment tympanums
- Flemish-bond brick with glazed headers
- Iron balustrades above north and south entries

### Blair Hall

- H – shaped footprint and massing of the building
- Horizontal massing
- Bilateral symmetry of elevations

- Slate roofing
- Paired brick chimneys
- Gable roof dormers. Windows in dormers have half round upper sash with pointed arch tracery. Cheeks are sided with slate.
- Wood architrave-cornice at eaves, raking eaves
- Limestone cartouches in tympanum of pediments
- Flat and round arches over window openings. Brick arches with limestone key stones and imposts
- Ox-eye windows in tympanums
- Masonry openings of windows (windows themselves have been replaced)
- Classical door surrounds at entries with granite steps
- Copper corrugated box gutters
- Flemish-bond brick with glazed headers. Grapevine joints.
- Molded brick watertable
- Brick belt course between first and second floor and second and third floor
- Wood frame, divided-light, paneled doors

### **Blow Memorial Hall**

- H – shaped footprint and massing of the building
- Bilateral symmetry of elevations
- Slate roofing
- Cupola
- Wood architrave-cornice at eaves, raking eaves
- Flat arches with keystones over window openings
- Brick water table
- Wood frame true divided-light windows
- Ox-eye windows in ends of gables
- Paired brick chimneys at gable ends
- Flemish-bond brick with glazed headers. Grapevine joints.
- Classical door surrounds at entries

- Wood frame, paneled doors with transom lights above
- Stone stairs to entries
- Brick and stone staircase to the south entry
- Wood frame, paneled doors with transom lights above

### **Chandler Hall**

- Rectangular form
- Horizontal massing
- Molded brick watertable
- Bilateral symmetry of elevations
- Gable roof and dormers
- Slate roof
- Paired brick chimneys at gable ends
- Wood architrave-cornice at eaves and pediments
- Cast stone cartouches in tympanum of pediments
- Ox-eye windows in tympanums
- Wood frame true divided-light windows
- Classical door surrounds at entries
- Flemish-bond brick with glazed headers. Grapevine joints.
- Brick belt course between second and third floor
- Wood frame, paneled doors with transom lights above

### **Ewell Hall**

- Horizontal massing
- T-shaped footprint of the early building
- North façade of early building including single story wings.
- Three part arcade on north façade
- Slate roof
- Brick chimneys
- Wood architrave-cornice at eaves and pediments

- Classical door surrounds at entries
- Wood frame true divided-light windows; Stone and wood window sills
- Paneled wood doors
- Flemish-bond brick with glazed headers. Grapevine joints.
- Wood frame, paneled doors with transom lights above

### Jefferson Hall

- Rectangular form
- Molded brick watertable
- Horizontal massing
- Brick string course between second and third floors
- Bilateral symmetry of elevations
- North and south door surrounds with leaded glass fan and transom lights
- Gambrel roof and wood dormers
- Granite steps
- False chimneys
- East porch and west arcade
- State roofing
- Wood frame true divided-light windows; Stone and wood window sills
- Molded wood cornices
- Round and flat arch window openings; Round arches have limestone springers and keystones.
- Copper leaders
- Limestone cartouches in north and south pediments
- Flemish-bond brick with glazed headers
- Iron balustrades above north and south entries

### Landrum Hall

- Rectangular form
- Horizontal massing

- Molded brick watertable
- Bilateral symmetry of elevations
- Gable roof and dormers
- Slate roof
- Paired brick chimneys at gable ends
- Wood architrave-cornice at eaves and pediments
- Cast stone cartouches in tympanum of pediments
- Ox-eye windows in tympanums
- Wood frame true divided-light windows
- Classical door surrounds at entries
- Flemish-bond brick with glazed headers. Grapevine joints.
- Brick belt course between second and third floor
- Wood frame, paneled doors with transom lights above

### **Monroe Hall**

- Rectangular form
- Molded brick watertable
- Horizontal massing
- Brick string course between second and third floors
- Bilateral symmetry of elevations
- North and south door surrounds with leaded glass fan and transom lights
- Gambrel roof and wood dormers
- Granite steps
- False chimneys
- East porch and west arcade
- Slate roofing
- Wood frame true divided-light windows; Stone and wood window sills
- Molded wood cornices
- Round and flat arch window openings; Round arches have limestone springers and keystones.

- Copper leaders
- Limestone cartouches in north and south pediments
- Flemish-bond brick with glazed headers

### **Old Dominion Hall**

- Rectangular form
- Molded brick watertable
- Horizontal massing
- Brick string course between second and third floors
- Bilateral symmetry of elevations
- North and south door surrounds with leaded glass fan and transom lights
- Gambrel roof and wood dormers
- Granite steps
- False chimneys
- East porch and west arcade
- State roofing
- Wood frame true divided-light windows; Stone and wood window sills
- Molded wood cornices
- Round and flat arch window openings; Round arches have limestone springers and keystones.
- Copper leaders
- Limestone cartouches in north and south pediments
- Flemish-bond brick with glazed headers

### **Tucker Library**

- Footprint and massing of the building
- Granite steps
- Symmetrical organization of elevations
- East porch and west arcade

- State roofs with copper dormers
- Wood frame true divided-light windows; Stone and wood window sills
- Wood cornices
- Round and flat arch window openings; Round arches have limestone springers and keystones.
- Copper leaders
- Limestone cartouches in north and south pediments
- Flemish-bond brick with glazed headers
- Iron balustrades above north and south entries
- Molded brick watertable
- Brick string course between second and third floors
- North and south door surrounds with leaded glass fan and transom lights

#### Tyler Hall

- H-shaped footprint and massing of the building
- Horizontal massing
- Bilateral symmetry of elevations
- Slate roofing
- Paired brick chimneys
- Gable roof dormers. Windows in dormers have half round upper sash with pointed arch tracery. Cheeks are sided with slate.
- Wood architrave-cornice at eaves and pediments
- Limestone cartouches in tympanum of pediments
- Flat and round arches over window openings. Brick arches with limestone key stones and imposts
- Ox-eye windows in tympanums
- Dimension and shape of masonry openings of windows (windows themselves have been replaced)
- Classical door surrounds at entries with granite steps
- Copper corrugated box gutters

- Flemish-bond brick with glazed headers. Grapevine joints.
- Molded brick watertable
- Brick belt course between first and second floor and second and third floor
- Wood frame, divided-light, paneled doors

### Washington Hall

- H – shaped footprint and massing of the building
- Horizontal massing
- Bilateral symmetry of elevations
- Slate roofing
- Paired brick chimneys
- Gable roof dormers. Windows in dormers have half round upper sash with pointed arch tracery.
- Ox-eye windows in tympanums
- Wood architrave-cornice at eaves and pediments
- Limestone cartouches in tympanum of pediments
- Dimension and shape of masonry openings of windows (windows themselves have been replaced)
- Copper corrugated box gutters
- Flemish-bond brick with glazed headers. Grapevine joints.
- Classical door surrounds at entries
- Wood frame, divided-light, paneled doors

### Zable Stadium

- Horizontal massing
- Slate roofing
- Wood architrave-cornice
- Brick parapet
- Pyramidal roofs on wings
- Brick chimneys



- Blind arcade with round arches constructed in brick with brick keystones
- Brick jack arches over windows
- Grand round arch openings at gates
- Wood architraves and entablatures in entry porticos
- Molded brick water table
- Flemish-bond brick with glazed headers. Grapevine joints.
- Wood frame true divided-light windows
- Wood ox-eye windows
- Steel frame windows
- Decorative iron grilles and gates
- Brick steps
- Herringbone brick paving at entry gates
- Bronze grills at ticket windows