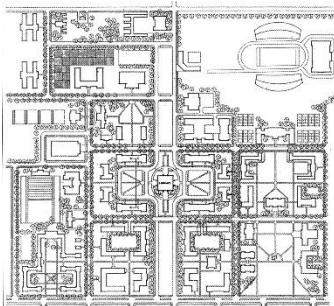




Edmon Low Library



Bennett Plan

Oklahoma State University

Design Guidelines

Overview

The Oklahoma State University Stillwater Campus has long been known for its elegance, atmosphere and architectural unity. Its buildings and outdoor spaces are an integral part of OSU’s historic heritage and its ongoing purpose and mission. Alumni, faculty, staff, students and visitors all appreciate this architectural cohesion that is such a feature of the campus. The goal of the Design Guidelines is to assist in the preservation of the character and integrity of the OSU-Stillwater campus.

The most significant influence on the campus has been and remains the Bennett Plan of the late 1920s. It established what is commonly known as “Modified Georgian” as OSU’s architectural style and organized the campus layout via a grid of major and minor axes and designated a series of open quadrangles around which buildings are located. The consistency in style and layout called for by the Bennett Plan are essential to the look and feel of the campus and are central to the Campus Master Plan and these design guidelines.

The OSU office of Long Range Facilities Planning (LRFP), which manages all academic construction projects with a cost of \$2million or more on the OSU Stillwater and Tulsa campuses, is charged with oversight of the Campus Master Plan and reviews the design of all buildings and any work not internal to a building such as a change to a building façade, hard and soft landscaping, above ground utilities, sidewalks, etc. These Design Guidelines are an appendix to the Campus Master Plan and will be administered by LRFP.

Design Guidelines

The following Guidelines begin with broader issues relating to the campus as a whole and continue to the more specific issues relating to the individual building.

Campus Plan Philosophy – Elegance, unity and restraint are hallmarks of the campus design philosophy as is adherence to the principles of the Bennett Plan. Any building design that attempts to stand apart from its campus environment is inappropriate. Even the most prominent buildings on campus exhibit a consistency and harmony with the campus as a whole. At OSU, we don’t do “Wow!”

Hierarchy – Buildings on campus can be classified as either foreground buildings or background buildings.

Foreground buildings serve the university as a whole and are the landmark structures of the campus. They tend to be larger and iconic with features, proportions, and details that allow them to act as focal points. Towers, cupolas or other highly prominent features are reserved for foreground buildings. The Edmon Low Library, the Student Union, and the Henry Bellmon Research Center are examples of foreground buildings.



Student Union



Edmon Low Library

Background buildings are designed to enhance the harmony of the campus landscape and blend in with the campus fabric. While they should be of high quality in their design, aesthetics, and construction, they do not draw undue attention to themselves and avoid showiness or ostentation. Background buildings should not be taller at their highest point (excluding chimneys) than the roof peak of the Edmon Low Library. Most buildings on campus, including those that house the colleges, are background buildings.

Inter-building Relationships – To preserve the sense of unity on campus, it is essential that designers carefully consider how their design will relate to existing and planned adjacent structures. Spaces that are defined between buildings should be designed with the same attention to form and function that interior spaces are.

Common service access area – Every attempt should be made to group service access points between adjacent buildings to minimize their impact in terms of circulation, area and aesthetics. Designing service areas so as to be aesthetically pleasing is preferable to hiding or disguising an eyesore.

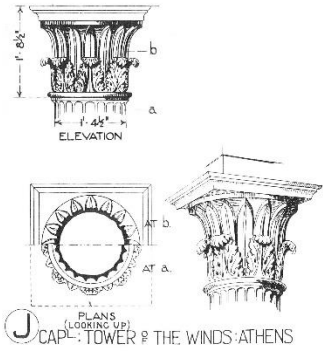
Setback Lines – While there are no specific requirements for setbacks from streets or sidewalks designers should observe typical and existing setbacks. In the event that no precedent exists, designers will consult with LRFP to establish acceptable conditions.

Sustainability – OSU’s architectural style has a green heritage; it is derived from styles that were the most sustainable of their times. The University is committed to build on the tradition of sustainability in every building project it undertakes. Using resources wisely is not only better for the environment; it also gets the most out of budget, research and contribution dollars and is an important part of educating a responsible student body. Every design process for projects on campus must include a careful and complete consideration of the best sustainable strategies and applications.

The OSU Architectural Style

As previously mentioned, OSU’s architectural style is typically referred to as “Modified-Georgian” which is based on the classical styles of the late 17th and 18th centuries in Britain and North America. Murray Hall and other buildings of the 1930s and 1940s exemplify this style. Later buildings, such as Engineering North, Physical Sciences or Agriculture Hall, attempted a Modernist interpretation of the OSU style that, while definitely not Modified Georgian, does not appear out of place. Buildings of the late 20th century however, were both radically different and inappropriate or attempted to use Georgian precedents but without sound knowledge of the style resulting in interpretations of the style that are banal and or illiterate. Some particular characteristics of the OSU architectural style are discussed below.

Proportions – Buildings tend to be horizontal in nature, wider than they are deep, and typically three to four stories in height. When a fourth floor is included, it is generally in the “attic”, under the slope of the roof and naturally lit via dormers. Horizontally, the façade is clearly divided into a base, middle and top.



OSU Corinthian (Illustration from Sir Bannister Fletcher's "A History of Architecture")

Symmetry – Symmetry, particularly in elevation, is ideal. Main entrances are located on the longer of the facades and are either one central entrance or dual, symmetric entrances, often embellished with stone detailing.

Architectural Elements – Hip or gable roofs, chimneys, dormers, quoins, OSU Corinthian columns and stone details such as entablatures, cornices, string courses, sills, lintels, and keystones are typical of OSU's architectural style.

Materials – The consistent use of exterior materials is critical to maintaining consistency and unity on campus. OSU-blend brick, stone and cast stone accents, white trim, and brown-green or gray-green roofing are preferred exterior materials. More flexibility is allowed when choosing materials for interiors or courtyards.

Windows – Windows are typically double-hung with muntins, and white or off-white in color. They are evenly and symmetrically spaced within the façade but may change height or width by floor or façade element. Curtain walls, corner-wrapping windows, and glass facades are generally not appropriate but may be allowed following appropriate consultation with LRFP.

Fakery – The application of architectural elements purely for appearance that are obviously fake, such as false dormers or chimneys, is to be avoided.

Subtlety – Classical architecture can appear to be dull, constrained by its use of symmetry, proportion and regularity but detailed study of good examples reveals design subtlety, variety, meaning, and even humor. This is why it has survived for many centuries and is as valid in the 21st century as it was for ancient civilizations and in the renaissance.

Conclusion

One of the many strengths of the OSU-Stillwater campus is the architecture, unified by the Modified-Georgian. To maintain this architectural unity it is important that potential consultants demonstrate an understanding and command of the Georgian style and Classical Architecture and its correct usage in new buildings that additionally meet the needs of the present day.

The purpose of these design guidelines is to assist the OSU Community as they consider a construction project and architectural consultants as they prepare designs.



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