

The Legacy of Lawrence

The architect and visionary Ellis F. Lawrence designed many of the core campus buildings and continued to guide University planning until his death

By Dennis Bolt
Oregon Daily Emerald

Ever wonder who is responsible for planning any possible parking garages? The people who would help design a campus garage are also the ones who are planning a new law school and a new indoor practice facility. They are the architects and the committees that make campus planning decisions.

The idea of a "campus" is embodied in the collection of historic buildings, quadrangles and open spaces that make up the University's 280-plus acres.

What began as a barren wheat field, blocks from downtown Eugene, grew from one lone building to dozens of classrooms, residence halls, offices and sports facilities.

- **TODAY:** CAMPUS PLANNING
- **TUESDAY:** DEADY HALL
- **WEDNESDAY:** THE EMU
- **THURSDAY:** KNIGHT LIBRARY
- **FRIDAY:** HAYWARD FIELD

The unifying feature is a formal grouping of older buildings originally developed by preeminent Oregon architect and planner Ellis F. Lawrence. The earliest formal plan for the University was drawn by Lawrence in 1914.

The quad between Deady and Johnson halls was already in place, and Lawrence took this as a precedent when he created the quad that runs from the library to Franklin Boulevard. Gates near the current law school were built to form a "proper and dignified" entrance, according to historian Michael Shellenbarger.

After becoming the campus planner and architect, Lawrence founded the second school of architecture on the West Coast in what is now fittingly called Lawrence Hall. He would go on to design 17 existing campus buildings and develop several plans that would guide University planning until his death in 1946.

Lawrence's most successful buildings are grouped around the library and Gerlinger Hall. His Museum of Art and Knight Library are two of the best examples of Depression-era integration of art and architecture and are listed as National Historic Places.

The Pioneer Mother statue graces his other complete quadrangle between Gerlinger and Johnson halls.

Campus experienced a large increase in its student population after World War II, and associates of Lawrence built the Erb Memorial Union in 1950, while huge-scale residential buildings were rising east of the EMU.

This unplanned growth after the war culminated in the Lawrence Lackey Plan of 1962, which included buildings on top of the Pioneer Cemetery. This was the era of buildings such as Prince Lucien Campbell Hall, Onyx Bridge and the ma-



DENNIS BOLT/Emerald

The "Pioneer" statue sits in the oldest quadrangle on campus. He is symbolic of the few rugged individuals who helped forge a university out of a barren Eugene wheat field in 1876.

majority of the older science complex, as well as Walton, Hamilton and Bean residence halls.

The 1970s brought a more restrained view of campus growth. Officials began to realize that the formal but stylish ideas of Lawrence were being ignored.

Because of a greater interest in a specific direction for growth, the Center for Environmental Structure was asked to prepare some guiding principles for growth in 1973.

The result was The Oregon Experiment, published by architect Christopher Alexander. To this day, this document is the background for expansion on campus. It does not specify a map for campus, but instead it quantifies what good campus growth should be like.

The policy encourages students, faculty and other users to be directly involved in the planning of any buildings.

Along with organic growth, transportation was considered important to any future plans for campus. The current Long Range Campus Development Plan calls for the creation of a "local transport area" around the University. This plan attempts to discourage the use of private vehicles by encouraging pedestrians, bikes and public transport.

During the 1980s, many parts of campus were changed. The

late 1990s has been another era of great changes. The law school will be moving to a new building near Hayward Field, while an indoor recreation center will be built next to Esslinger. An indoor practice facility broke ground earlier this month next to Autzen stadium. The EMU will be renovated, and Allen Hall is being altered as well. According to the Planning Office, the current renovation on campus will cost a total of roughly \$60 million.

The new science buildings, the 1994 Knight Library wing and the new law school are major structures built since Alexander was brought in to consult. All these buildings have something else in common — the "Percent for Art" program, which mandates that a portion of the budget be included for public art.

However, Chris Ramey, current director of University Planning, stresses that the modern viewpoint on campus is to "repair and enhance the older buildings" while "looking out for leftover space."

Each building on campus is supposed to work with the others, and they share the legacy of Ellis Lawrence's design. In his own words, Lawrence said he designed the campus to be "not monumental or institutional, but homelike, inviting, quiet."

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