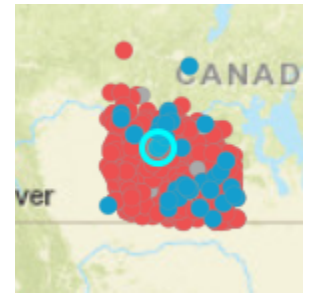


# Heritage Property - College Building, University of Saskatchewan

Street Address	Municipality	Designation Type	Designation Date
University of Saskatchewan campus	Provincial	Provincial Heritage Property	November 24, 1982



## Statement of Significance

The College Building, University of Saskatchewan is a Provincial Heritage Property situated prominently at the head of a landscaped, oval space known as "The Bowl" on the University of Saskatchewan campus in Saskatoon. Located on sixteen hectares of the campus grounds, the property features an impressive, 2 ½-storey, stone-clad, Collegiate Gothic-style building that was constructed between 1910 and 1912.

The heritage value of the College Building, University of Saskatchewan resides in its status as the first College of Agriculture at a Canadian university. While formal agricultural education had been introduced in eastern Canada in the late nineteenth century, these institutions had only nominal connections to universities. The University of Saskatchewan was the first in Canada to establish an agricultural college on its main campus and to accord it a profession status equal to the more traditional colleges, such as the Liberal Arts and Sciences, Medicine, and Law. Knowing the vital role that agriculture was to play in the development of the province, the university founders considered the College of Agriculture a priority over all other colleges and commissioned the College Building as the first academic building constructed on the campus. Constructed to house lecture halls, classrooms, and offices for the College of Agriculture, the building's importance was further emphasized in the 1909 master plan, which placed it in its prominent location at the head of what was designed to be an agricultural precinct.

Heritage value also lies in the building's Collegiate Gothic architecture, a style symbolic of older, well-established universities. This style was specifically chosen by the university's Board of Governors because of its use on prominent campuses such as McGill and Princeton. As such, they commissioned the prominent Montreal architectural firm of Brown and Vallance because of their expertise in the Collegiate Gothic style. The university architects until 1930, Brown and Vallance designed the layout of the campus and its original buildings, including five of the most prominent. This set of five buildings has been called "the finest grouping of Collegiate Gothic university buildings in Canada" and the College Building stands as its centrepiece. Its architectural style is evident in its vertical lines and strong symmetrical massing, Gothic fenestration, and decorative motifs. The three oriel windows fronted the library and, later, the President's office, as the building took on a university governance role. Though the original design called for rough-cut Tyndall Stone, local "greystone" was substituted when a plentiful supply was found nearby.

Heritage value also lies in the building's association with academic, cultural, and student life at the University of

Saskatchewan. The only building on campus in the early years, the College Building housed offices for the College of Agriculture and the College of Arts and Science, as well as classrooms, lecture halls, and laboratories for physics, chemistry, animal husbandry, and home economics courses. As the university expanded, the colleges and classes moved to other locations and the building adopted an administrative role, housing student registration, business offices, and the office of the university secretary. A key feature of the building is Convocation Hall, a large assembly hall with a stage and wrap-around balcony that forms the central wing of the E-shaped building. Added at the request of Dean of Agriculture W.J. Rutherford during the design phase, the room was designed to seat 500-600 people as a meeting place for farmers and as a facility for use in extension work. Convocation Hall became the cultural centre of the university campus, hosting convocation ceremonies, dances, concerts, drama productions, societies' meetings and conventions, and class reunions.

The heritage value of the College Building, University of Saskatchewan resides in the following character-defining elements:

- those features that speak to its setting, such its location at the head of the "Bowl," its relationship to the core group of Collegiate Gothic buildings, and the unimpeded view of the front façade;
- those features that reflect the Collegiate Gothic style of architecture, such as its vertical lines and strong symmetrical massing, Gothic fenestration and decorative motifs, three oriel windows, textured fieldstone walls and contrasting sandstone trim, windows with crossed stone mullions and metal casements, the notched parapet, and the gargoyles, which reflect the prairie fauna in the shapes of owls and prairie dogs;
- those features that illustrate the spatial design of the building, including the E-shaped massing and the main interior corridors and staircases;
- those features that reflect its role as the academic, ceremonial, and cultural centre of the campus, such as Convocation Hall and its decorative elements, including the chandeliers and wrap-around balcony, the Honor Roll frieze, and the commemorative plaques.

Sources:

Province of Saskatchewan, Notice of Intention to Designate as Provincial Heritage Property under The Heritage Property Act, July 30, 1982.

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