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## Introduction



### 1.1. Purpose of these Guidelines

These Guidelines act as an extension of the University of Alabama Campus Master Plan, which establishes the overarching principles and recommendations for the ongoing physical development and improvement of the University. This document includes general Design Guidelines for the campus as a whole, as well as specific standards for precincts with particular design needs. Each major project also requires project-specific guidelines, to ensure the unique features of the site and its context are respected, and the project scope includes the site and landscape improvements described herein.



The use of the word ‘shall’ is not meant to prohibit alternative design solutions. The best solution for a site should not be rejected because it was not conceived of within these Guidelines. When project designers prepare a design solution which departs from these Guidelines, they must also present a design solution which conforms to them. As a rule, the University shall not approve projects in conflict with these Guidelines except where the design solution is of truly exceptional quality and is generally in keeping with the spirit of these Guidelines.



These Guidelines also outline the process by which projects are to be designed, reviewed and approved in accordance with the Campus Master Plan and these Guidelines.

## 1.2. Campus Master Plan

It is not enough for a project design to simply satisfy the requirements of its own program or even to satisfy the needs of a particular site. Each project must also respect and positively contribute to the continuing evolution of the University Campus as intended by the Campus Master Plan. In this way, each project helps fulfill the vision for the future of the University represented in the Master Plan. These guidelines are intended to establish parameters or standards against which design solutions may be measured with respect to their achievement of the principles that together form the vision in the Master Plan. Each project must either be consistent with the Campus Master Plan or demonstrate how project decisions will improve upon it.



## 1.3. American Campus Planning Principles

One of the primary foundations of traditional campus planning and design in America lies in the relationship between landscape and building. The term “campus” is Latin for “field” or “open space”. Emphasis on green, open spaces within the built environment sets American campus design apart from its historical practice in Europe.

The quadrangle is the ultimate expression of this art form and illustrates the integral relationship between landscape and building intended in the traditional practice of American campus planning. The “quad” functions similarly to a room, providing space for activities and movement while also creating a sense of enclosure and protection. The buildings surrounding the quad act as the walls of the room and the spaces between buildings act as the doors and windows. This organization allows freedom of movement and experience vital to social and academic exchange, supporting that freedom with a balance of intimacy (at multiple scales) and protection. This is symbolic of the campus as a whole, in which it is the pursuit of the University to provide a secure yet open environment for its students and employees.

Maintaining this balance is of concern at the scale of the campus, but also each precinct, block, open space and building.

The Lawn at the University of Virginia's Academical Village, by Thomas Jefferson, is an early American example of the campus quad.

## 1.4. Urban Design Realms

For the purposes of reviewing projects with respect to the varied urban design conditions across the campus, the following precincts or districts are established, in which varying urban design concepts may be appropriate:

### 1. Traditional Campus

The Traditional Campus Realm (shown in orange in Figure 1 on page 1.5) is a traditional planning precinct heavily influenced by classical/beaux arts planning, architecture, and landscape design. Buildings and open space arrangements are based on axial relationships, symmetry, and formal vistas. It includes those historic building groups surrounding the original “Antebellum Campus”, centered around the main Quad, and the “Victorian Campus” and immediate surroundings.

### 2. Residential Communities

The campus features several residential communities (shown in yellow in Figure 1), each with a unique identity and take on traditional campus residential design. Each community features a careful proportion of buildings to open space, with modestly scaled buildings and courtyards that offer a comfortable setting and the comforts of home to on-campus residents. The Campus Master Plan recommends that new development in these areas maintain a limited scale, both vertically and horizontally, so that each cluster of buildings can be experienced as a small neighborhood.

## 3. Cultural Campus

The Cultural Campus Realm (shown in green in Figure 1) is organized around the campus open space network, where buildings are arranged in a picturesque pattern and overlook often large open spaces. Active recreation facilities are carefully blended with passive open spaces to create a unified, but informal, setting emphasizing the rolling, natural landscape. Buildings within this realm are often larger than other campus buildings, as they house large auditoriums and multi-purpose spaces. However, buildings are carefully designed to ensure compatibility with the traditional architecture of the campus.





Figure 1: Campus Design Realms

### 1.5. Supplemental Conditions

In addition to the guidelines for the urban design precincts, supplemental consideration shall be given to those areas of the campus along the river and along the community edge.

#### 1. Riverfront

As the campus grows northward toward the Black Warrior River, new development should respect the sensitive nature of the river, while utilizing it for the unique educational and recreational opportunities it affords. See §2.4 for applicable guidelines.

### 2. Community Edge

The University Campus does not exist in a vacuum and the community context in which it grows must be properly considered. Campus development must respect the scale, density, and types and levels of activity present in those areas where the campus meets the community. See §2.4 for guidelines at the community edge. Also, designers should review the University Area Neighborhoods Specific Plan for more information on how these adjacent areas are planned and what contextual issues may affect applicable projects.

## 1.6. Standard Specifications

The UA Facilities Department is responsible for developing and updating the University's Standard Specifications. Designers should consult with the Department for information on standard specifications that may apply to a project in addition to those referenced in this Design Guide.

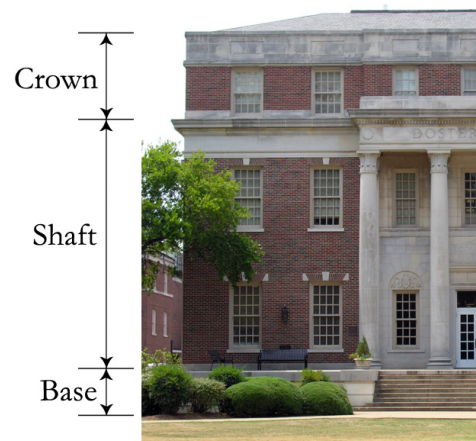
## 1.7. Glossary of Terms

The following definitions are provided to assist in the interpretation of the guidelines herein.

1. **Abutting.** Touching along a common edge, such as a property line or similar site boundary.
2. **Adjacent.** Abutting or separated only by a street, path, or open space.
3. **American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE).** An international technical organization authoring professional standards referenced in Chapter 5 of this document.
4. **Arcade.** A series of arches supported by a row of columns or piers creating a covered passageway typically at the edge of a building.

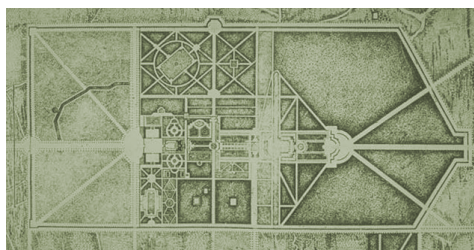


5. **Background building.** A building with a façade designed to frame a streetscape, open space or viewshed. The façade of a background building is intended to not visually compete with that of a foreground building.
6. **Base, Shaft, and Crown.** The three-part composition of the building envelope and façade based on classical architecture. The building's cornice forms the crown, sitting atop the primary wall area or shaft, which rests upon the building base, which may be a plinth/pedestal or that portion of the façade enclosing the ground floor.



7. **Bio-retention.** An engineered process to manage stormwater runoff, using the chemical, biological and physical properties afforded by plants, microbes and soil. Bio-retention is used to control stormwater and improve water quality through removal of pollutants and nutrients associated with runoff.

8. **Build-to line.** A requirement for a building to be set up to a street, path, or open space to ensure proper enclosure. Certain variations are permitted as described in these guidelines.
9. **Canopy tree.** A large tree with a ten foot or greater understory at maturity, used to create enclosure and provide shade.
10. **Classical / Beaux Arts.** A design style which focuses on formal and generally symmetric, axial relationships between buildings and open spaces.



11. **Colonnade.** A row of columns placed at regular intervals generally supporting an entablature, used either as an independent feature (a covered walkway) or as part of a building (portico).



12. **Community edge.** An area of interface between the Campus and the surrounding community.
13. **Crime Prevention through Environmental Design.** For the purposes of the guidelines, a multi-disciplinary approach intended to deter criminal behavior by the design of the built environment.
14. **Entablature.** Part of a building façade, often highly decorated, above the column or shaft; traditionally composed of an architrave, frieze, and cornice.

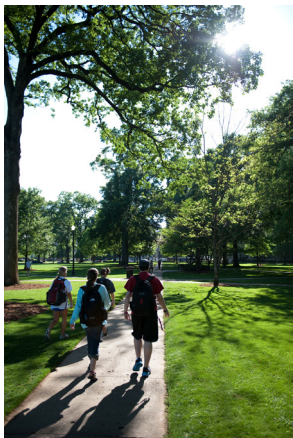


15. **Foreground building.** A building designed to reflect importance often located at the termination of a vista or other prominent site.
16. **Frontage.** That portion of a building or building site which borders a street, path or open space.
17. **Gray Water.** The wastewater produced from baths and showers, clothes washers, and lavatories.
18. **Green Roof.** A roof partially or completely covered with plants to mitigate stormwater runoff and control temperature variations within the building.

- 19. **HVAC.** Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning.
- 20. **Lawn.** A grassed area between the front of a building, or building group, and a street.



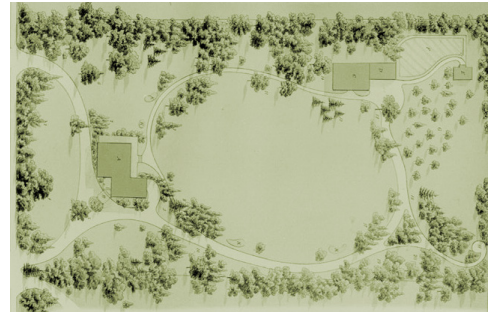
- 21. **Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED).** A program of the U.S. Green Building Council establishing a rating system to promote environmentally sustainable design and construction practices.
- 22. **Natural surveillance.** An urban design strategy intended to deter crime by the placement of physical features, activities, and people to maximize visibility and interaction among users of private and public spaces.



- 23. **Ornamental tree.** A tree, with a small understory at maturity, generally used to define edges or to articulate a space, but not necessarily to provide shade.
- 24. **Path.** A non-vehicular corridor accommodating one or more modes of circulation, including sidewalks and multi-use paths and trails.

25. **Pedestrian Table.** A pedestrian crossing area raised slightly above the surface of the vehicular way it crosses.

26. **Picturesque.** A landscape design style which focuses on informal and generally organic relationships between buildings and open spaces.



27. **Portico.** A colonnaded porch generally at the entrance to a building.



28. **Quadrangle.** An open space enclosed on four sides by buildings or, at a minimum, mostly enclosed by buildings and having four defined edges.

29. **R-Value.** The measure of resistance to conductive heat transfer of building materials.



- 30. Rain Garden.** A shallow depression, typically planted with native plants, strategically located to collect, infiltrate and filter stormwater draining from impervious surfaces to minimize negative impacts of excessive runoff.



Photo Credit: [www.uwsp.edu](http://www.uwsp.edu)

- 31. Renewable Materials.** Building materials derived from sources that can be replenished within a ten-year time frame.
- 32. South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD).** A governmental organization in Southern California, which established source specific standards to reduce air quality impacts.
- 33. Swale.** A depression in the landscape used to temporarily convey, store, or filter runoff. To prevent erosion, a swale is often lined with rip-rap, or native grasses.
- 34. Transition zones.** Portions of a site arranged to create appropriate relationships between public, semi-public and private spaces, whether within a building, open space, or both. A lawn is considered a semi-public space connecting a public path to the private spaces within a building.
- 35. U-value.** The measure of heat transmission through a part of building or through building materials.
- 36. Understory tree.** A tree, with a six to ten foot understory at maturity, used to define edges and provide shade.
- 37. US Green Building Council (USGBC).** A national coalition of building industry leaders promoting environmentally responsible design and construction practices. The USGBC is responsible for creation of the LEED rating system.
- 38. Viewshed.** A view created by any or a combination of landforms, landscaping, streets, paths, and buildings, often terminating in a panoramic view.
- 39. Vista.** A view, as seen through a grouping of objects or structures which frame the view, often terminating in a specific focal point.



- 40. Volatile Organic Compound (VOC).** Carbon compounds found in certain building materials that have negative impacts on indoor air quality and the Earth's atmosphere.