

HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY FORM
University of Oregon Cultural Resources Survey
Eugene, Lane County, Oregon
Summer 2006, Updated 2025

RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION

Current building name: McKenzie Hall
Historic building name: Law Center, Grayson Hall
Building address: 1101 Kincaid Street
Ranking: Primary

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Architectural style classification: Brutalist
Building plan (footprint shape): Irregular, rectilinear
Number of stories: 4
Foundation material(s): concrete
Primary exterior wall material: brick
Secondary exterior wall material: concrete
Roof configuration/type: flat
Primary roof material: elastic membrane
Primary window type: fixed pane plate glass
Primary window material: metal
Decorative features and materials: horizontal brick coursing at water table level and to emphasize floor divisions; strong geometric play of shapes and the contrast between building materials
Landscape features: extensive architect designed landscape, sunken courtyard
Associated resources: Dads' Gates located at northeast corner of building; University Hall Walk
Comments: McKenzie Hall is an exemplar of the Brutalist style of Modern architecture with its overscale geometric massing and use of rough cast concrete for textural effect. Board form shadows are evident in various locations. The yellow brick in the veneer is similar in color to Fenton Hall, which it is supposed to evoke.

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

Date of construction: 1970
Architect: Wilmsen, Endicott, Unthank, AIA; Lloyd Bond and Associates, landscape
Builder/Contractor: Todd Construction Co.
Moved? (yes/no): No Date of move(s): N/A
Description/dates of major additions/alterations: 1999-2000, general renovation and conversion to general university offices and classrooms, SRG Partnership, Architects; 2020 window and storefront entrance replacement and renovation project

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS & SIGNIFICANCE

Original use(s) or function(s): Law School

Current use(s) or function(s): Classrooms/Offices, History Department

Area(s) of significance: Education, 20th c. Architecture

Period of significance: 1970

Statement of Significance (use continuation sheet if necessary):

McKenzie Hall was completed in 1970 to house the Law School, which had outgrown its previous home, Fenton Hall. McKenzie has an interesting interplay of Modern architecture elements with strong references to Fenton Hall. This is accomplished through its massing, brick building material, and even the color of the brick veneer. With its exposed concrete construction, it is a Modern interpretation of Fenton, the campus' first law school and library and an important resource to the University. Designed by architects Wilmsen, Endicott and Unthank, McKenzie Hall is a fine example of the Brutalist style with its overscale geometric massing and use of rough cast concrete for textural effect. Decorative elements are limited to the strong geometric play of shapes and the contrast between building materials.

Wilmsen, Endicott, Unthank, all graduates of the UO School of Architecture, designed numerous Eugene buildings together and individually. DeNorval Unthank Jr. is credited with being the lead designer of McKenzie Hall. Unthank was the first African American to graduate from the University of Oregon School of Architecture and Allied Arts in 1952. Despite facing racial discrimination that was prevalent at the time, Unthank was a prolific and successful architect from 1952 to 1998. Unthank designed schools, public buildings and business facilities around the state of Oregon, including some in the Eugene area, such as Bean Hall, Lane County Courthouse, J.F. Kennedy Junior High School, and Springfield's Thurston High School, and the Crasemann House on Madrona Street. In addition, he served as an architecture professor at UO from 1965 to 1980. In 1980, following more than 30 professional awards, Unthank was named a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, "recognizing his design work on the Lane County Courthouse, the former UO Law School [McKenzie Hall], Central Oregon Community College campus buildings in Bend, the U.S. Consulate Quarters in Fukuoka, Japan, and numerous banks, professional offices, churches, and private residences around the state of Oregon". This was at a time when the number of black architects in the US was less than 2 percent (AIA).

(See Continuation Sheet 1)

NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENTHistoric Significance (check one): ☒ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low ☐ Very Low or NoneIntegrity (check one): ☒ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ PoorCondition (check one): ☐ Excellent ☒ Good ☐ Fair ☐ PoorBuilding designation: ☐ City Landmark ☐ National Register ☐ National Historic Landmark ☒ Not listedPreliminary National Register eligibility findingsBuilding is potentially eligible: ☒ Individually or ☐ As a contributing resource in a district only

If eligible individually, applicable criteria (check all that apply):

- ☐ A. Associated with significant events ☒ C. Distinctive architecturally
☐ B. Associated with significant persons ☐ D. Archaeologically important

If applicable, building qualifies under NR Criterion Considerations: ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, which apply:Building is NOT eligible: ☐ Intact but lacks distinction or ☐ Altered/loss of integrity or ☐ Not 50 years old

DOCUMENTATION

Indicate resources consulted when researching this building (check all that apply):

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> University archives | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UO Planning Office files | <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sanborn maps | <input type="checkbox"/> Building permits | <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO files |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State Archives | <input type="checkbox"/> State Library | <input type="checkbox"/> State Historic Society |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Historic Society | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal interviews | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic photographs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biographical encyclopedias | <input type="checkbox"/> Obituary indexes | Other : <u>See below</u> |

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Southwest Oregon Chapter, AIA. *Style and Vernacular: A Guide to the Architecture of Lane County Oregon*. Portland, OR: Western Imprints, 1983.

Teague, Edward H. "Condon Hall." *The Architecture of the University of Oregon*. 10 Oct. 2004. 15 Mar. 2005. Univ. of Oregon Library, Eugene, OR. <<http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/architecture/oregon/>>.

University of Oregon School of Law; Law Center Dedication, September 25, 1971. [Bound Scrapbook]. University of Oregon Special Collections.

University Planning Office & Facilities Services, Plans and Specifications for McKenzie Hall.

Twenty Northwest Architects and Associated Designers, Catalogue of an Invitational Exhibition Held in the Museum of Art of the University Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, November 6 - December 2, 1962

Magazines and Newspapers (from Teague)

"New Legal Center Opens." *UO School of Law Newsletter*. 4 no.1 (Nov. 1970): 1, ill.

"State Bar President 'Enfeoffs' Law School Officials." *UO School of Law Newsletter*. 2 no.1 (Jan. 1969): 1, ill. About groundbreaking ceremony.

"Law School to Go at 11th and Kincaid." *Oregon Daily Emerald* 21 Nov. 1966: 1.

"Sites Chosen for Law, AAA." *Oregon Daily Emerald* 11 Jan. 1967: 1.

"At State Board Meeting: Law Center Approved." *Oregon Daily Emerald* 24 Jan. 1967: 1.

"Caw, Science Complex Plans Gain Approval." *Oregon Daily Emerald* 31 Mar. 1967: 3.

"Ground Breaking Ceremony Starts New Law Center." *Oregon Daily Emerald* 21 Nov. 1968: 1.

"Douglas (US Supreme Court Justice) Speaks at Dedication." *Oregon Daily Emerald* 27 Aug. 1972: 1.

RECORDING INFORMATION

Researched: Shawn Lingo, Jeremy Mauro, Winter 2006

Recorded: Susan Johnson and University Planning Office, Summer 2006

Photo number or name: mckenzie1bw.jpg

PHOTOGRAPH



SITE PLAN



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Continuation Sheet 1**Section Historical Associations and Significance****Page 1**

Not only was Unthank known for his excellence in architecture, he was also known for his commitment to his guidance of aspiring architects and of the Black community in Eugene.

The extensive modern landscape planning by Lloyd Bond and Associates adds to the building's significance. In contrast with the building's oversized geometric mass, an intimate sunken courtyard is featured on the eastern side of the building. Lloyd Bond established the region's first Landscape Architecture firm in Eugene, Oregon in 1953. During the forty years that he managed Lloyd Bond & Associates his knowledge of resource analysis, environmental planning and design helped to create a variety of landscapes throughout Oregon as well as in Washington, Idaho, Montana, and Alaska.

One of the most important events to have occurred at McKenzie Hall was the address given at its grand opening as the Law Center by United States Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas. It is bounded on the south by the terminus of the historic University Hall Walk Axis and on the east by the Dads' Gates Axis.

The building is in good condition. The general renovation work in 1999-2000 by SRG Partnership, Architects to convert to general campus offices and classrooms, has left the building intact both inside and out. The 2020 window and storefront entrance project replaced damaged materials in a sensitive manner. As a result, McKenzie Hall possesses excellent integrity and architectural significance as a good example of modern architecture by DeNorval Unthank, one of the first black architects in the state, and a partner of the well known Eugene firm of Wilmsen, Endicott, and Unthank (Criterion C). It is likely individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. It is considered a primary resource for campus planning purposes given its high significance and excellent integrity.