

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **NOV 7 1984**  
date entered **DEC 6 1984**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic  Oshkosh State Normal School Historic District

and/or common  N.A.

**2. Location**

street & number Building at 800, 842, and 912 Algoma Boulevard, 845 Elmwood Avenue  not for publication

city, town Oshkosh  N/A vicinity of

state Wisconsin code 55 county Winnebago code 139

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name State of Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin System

street & number 1930 Monroe Street

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state Wisconsin 53701

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number Winnebago County Courthouse

city, town Oshkosh state Wisconsin

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1979  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Oshkosh Normal School Historic District is a compact, interrelated group of university-owned buildings associated with the former State Normal School at Oshkosh. The small district includes three early twentieth-century educational facilities and a visually prominent, late nineteenth-century residential structure. Encompassing a well landscaped site, the district is located at the physical and historic heart of the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh campus in eastern Winnebago county.

Bounded by Elmwood Street (formerly Elm Street) and Algoma Boulevard, the site is located on a relatively flat area of land about three blocks from the swiftly flowing Fox River. In general the neighborhood surrounding the university campus is better known for its distinctive residential building stock of fine, rather affluent late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century homes. The historic district itself features the 1917 Administration and Science Building, designed by architects Van Ryn and De Gelleke (Dempsey Hall); the 1912 Industrial Educational Building (Harrington Hall); the 1928, Arthur Peabody-designed Swart Training School (Swart Hall); and the 1884 Hooper-Oviatt residence (Chancellor's Home). The buildings within the district represented (until the late 1950s and 1960s) the entire educational complex of the State Normal School and the State Teachers College at Oshkosh, which had officially established itself in 1871 as the state's third normal school facility.

### Building Descriptions

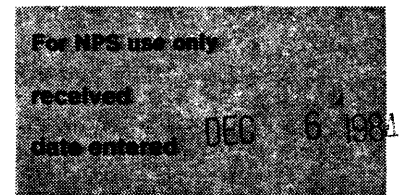
All of the structures in the district are owned and maintained by the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh and each contributes to the cohesiveness and historical context of the entire district.

The three academic buildings that form the points of this triangular district are all of similar design. Constructed of local red brick, each building is three stories high and features a prominent projecting entrance pavillion that clearly dominates its rather long, flat facade. The buildings are designed in a form of the collegiate Gothic style typical of educational facilities constructed in the early twentieth-century in Wisconsin. Functional, efficient, and expressive of high educational ideals, the style was utilized in grade schools, high schools and other normal schools across the state. Dempsey Hall, the university's main administrative building, retains perhaps the best expression of the traditional English-based academic design in its stylized, yet well intergrated, detailing and ornamentation.

The limestone Oviatt house, on the other hand, is representative of Oshkosh's fine, late nineteenth-century residential building. Much less imposing in scale, although significant in its own right, the former dormitory building adds a visually distinctive note to the more formal academic areas of the district. The Oviatt house was individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979.

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Administration and Science Building (Dempsey Hall)  
800 Algoma Boulevard (#1 On Site Plan)

Dempsey Hall was constructed in 1916-1917 as the new Main Building of the State Normal School at Oshkosh after fire destroyed the original Old Main in 1915. Named after former resident regent Edward J. Dempsey, the building was quickly recognized as one of the state's premiere college educational facilities. By far the largest academic building within the district, the structure is composed of three distinct units. The science and administration unit comprises the entire front section of the building, which faces Algoma Boulevard. A library unit, completed in 1918, is located to the rear and a modern, 1969 administrative addition has been added to the north in the "L" formed by the earlier units. The 1969 addition is not considered significant.

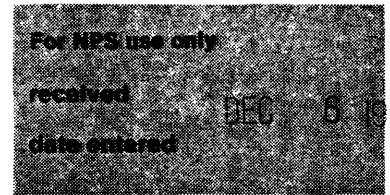
Designed in the collegiate Gothic style, the brick and concrete structure has extensive stone accents, particularly at the windows and entrances. A four-story entrance pavillion facing Algoma Boulevard extends above the main three-story block and terminates in a decorative stone balustrade accented by quatrefoil patterns. The narrow windows on the pavillion rise above spandrel panels and form round arches beneath the balustrade. The main entrance is framed by a Tudor arched opening detailed with floral carvings. A series of four carved stone characters, set in academic poses, survey the comings and goings of students from above the doorway. Subsequent entrances to the building, found on the northwest and southeast elevations, feature similar Tudor arched doorways and decoratively carved spandrel panels.

Set on a slightly elevated earth berm, the science and administration unit rests on a solid stone base. Exclusive of the central entrance pavillion the main facade of the 265' x 43' unit is divided into ten equal bays, each of which is separated by a simple brick pilaster detailed with a stylized stone crest at the top. Within the bays are grouped a series of three window units framed with rusticated stone surrounds and trim. The window units themselves have been altered with the introduction of modern, energy-efficient metal sash. Above the first and third floors are found continuous stone belt courses that help carry the dominant horizontal emphasis of the building. A simple stone coping caps the brick parapet wall at the roofline.

Set back about 150 feet from the roadway, behind a well landscaped lawn, the building presently features an abundant growth of climbing vines and shrubs, which obscure much of the building's details.

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Administration and Science Building (Con't)

The former library unit, which comprises the entire eastern portion of the building (136' x 142'), is detailed on the exterior in identical fashion to the front unit with handsome stone surrounds at the windows and arched entrys. On the rear (NE) elevation, while the detailing is the same, the windows are grouped into sets of four rather than three, as on the other elevations. The modern brick addition, housing additional administrative office space, was added to the northern corner of the building in 1968-69. Set within the "L" formed by the original building, the presence of the three story structure does not severely effect the visual integrity of the older units. Of contemporary design, the new portion is a well integrated and compatible addition to the building, maintaining a constant building height and continuing the use of brick and stone detailing.

The interior of the front administration unit of the building features classroom and office space set off of a narrow corridor that runs the entire length of the building. The unit's main stairway, located within the projecting pavillion area, features classically influenced columns and terrazzo floor tiles. Smaller stairs are located at either end of the corridor. Except for the main stairwell and several simple classroom spaces on the third floor, the majority of the interior spaces in the unit were renovated in the 1960's and the early 1970's. The former library unit, which originally contained locker rooms on the ground floor and a large library reading room above has also been considerably altered and is now utilized as office space. The large, open library reading room remains the most intact element. Retaining the original stuccoed ceiling beams and a large WPA sponsored mural depicting the early history of Wisconsin, the space now serves as the university's Career Counseling Center.

Industrial Education Building (Harrington Hall)  
845 Elmwood Avenue (#2 On Site Map)

A three-story structure of red brick and concrete construction with a one-story extension to the rear, Harrington Hall is the oldest of the academic buildings within the district and the oldest extant educational facility on the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh campus. Names after John Harrington, university regent at the time of the building's construction, the T-shaped building rests on a simple stone foundation and features a prominent entrance pavillion facing on Elmwood Avenue (NE elevation). A restrained example of the collegiate Gothic style, the building contains simple stone window sills and a crenellated roof profile. The projecting entrance

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Industrial Education Building (Con't)

Pavillion is dominated by a tripartite window grouping featuring a rusticated stone frame and delicately carved spandrel panels. Atop the window area, at the building's roofline, is a single carved medallion. The building's main entrance is finished entirely in stone on the ground floor, resting beneath a label molding is a recessed Tudor arched entry. A projecting stone water table is found above the ground floor windows and a smaller stone belt course is visible above the third-story area just beneath the roof's parapet wall. The building's large windows, which have been replaced by modern energy efficient sash, are grouped in sets of twos and threes, and provide abundant natural light to the building's interior spaces. At each end of the building new enclosed fire stairs have been added in a slightly darker brick than the original structure, but still maintain the use of simple stone trim. The utilitarian one-story wing to the rear has seen extensive remodeling with the infilling of several windows, the introduction of new sash, and the removal of former exhaust chimneys.

The interior of the flat-roofed building is oriented around a central entry vestibule and stairway area. Clustered around the stairwell are small offices and lounges, which are the only original features of the interior plan. Each wing of the building originally consisted of a large open shop or workroom space with interior support columns. Originally housed in the 53 x 166 foot main block were a machine shop, a woodworking shop, and arts and crafts room, a mechanical drawing studio, and additional shop space for pattern making, automobile mechanics, and applied electricity. The one story rear wing (58 x 71 feet) contained a forge and foundry area. With the change of use as a science building in 1936 the interior was substantially remodeled for use as laboratory space. Finally, in 1964, a second extensive remodeling left the building in its present configuration with small classrooms and labs replacing the large shop areas.

Unlike the other buildings within the district Harrington Hall was built facing northeast and features no large front lawn area. Despite this fact the building is still shaded by sizable trees to the front and a myriad of pathways connect it to the remaining buildings within the district.

Rose C. Swart Training School (Swart Educational  
School)-912 Algoma Blvd. (#3 On Site Plan)

The last of the educational buildings to be erected within the district (in 1928), the Swart Training School is clearly the most modern and stylized of the campus's collegiate Gothic designs. The three-story, red brick structure is T-shaped with various classroom and office spaces fronting on Algoma Boulevard and a 58 x 76 foot gymnasium and auditorium area to the

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Rose C. Swart Training School (Con't)

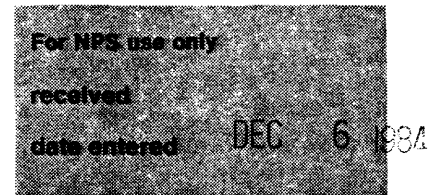
rear. The long, 208-foot Algoma Boulevard facade (southwest elevation) is marked by a projecting central pavillion flanked by two, three-story octagonal bays, which terminate in crenellated roofline patterns. The central entrance is elaborately framed in stone and features a segmental arch opening capped by highly decorative "gothicized" tracery patterns. A carved stone medallion marks the roof parapet. Stone belt courses can be seen above the first and third stories and the entire structure rests on a raised basement.

Originally designed in a much more stylized collegiate Gothic form, with rusticated window details similar to the Main Building and a more prominent raised basement, the final exterior design is more simple and dignified. As in the other buildings, original multi-pane window sash have been replaced by recent metal windows.

The northwest and southeast elevations contain simple projecting entryways detailed in the same stone trim as the facade. The rear wing area features large window areas lighting an upper floor auditorium space. The rear elevations are almost devoid of any trim except for a slender stone belt course dividing the lower gym area from the upper level auditorium.

The 40,000-square-foot main section of the flat-roofed building contains 50 rooms, including classroom areas, labs, offices and storage areas. Much of the original interior design remains intact, including a 144-seat demonstration room with sloped seating, distinctive iron stairway details, all major classroom spaces, built in lockers, and, in the rear wing, lower-level cafeteria and gym areas, and a 600-person theater, which served for many years as the school's only auditorium space. An especially distinctive detail is found in the front entry foyer which features three murals of children's activities painted by Agnes Wainwright under the Federal Art Project in 1936. The charming paintings represent children of all grades from kindergarten through junior high school, enjoying various activities in school life.

"The large mural which faces the main entrance is six by nineteen feet and has 19 children in the composition. At the left in the picture the children are shown against a background of a city school; at the right they are grouped before a small country school. Games such as football, baseball, marbles, tennis, and basketball are indicated by the objects the children play with or carry. Books and notebooks speak of classroom activities. The two side panels are smaller, four by five feet they depict boys constructing and painting boats, girls painting pictures and building pottery."<sup>2</sup>

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Rose C. Swart Training School (Con't)

The Swart Educational Center, which was named in honor of longtime faculty member Rose C. Swart (1871-1923), is set back -- like Dempsy Hall -- a substantial distance from the street, behind a broad, well landscaped lawn, which gives the structure a formal appearance. To the northwest of the building, at the edge of the site, is a playground area for the training school children.

Oviatt House (Chancellor's Residence)  
842 Algoma Boulevard (#4 On Site Plan)

The work of important Oshkosh architect William Waters, the Oviatt house is a two-story residential structure constructed of rock-faced blue limestone laid in regular courses. The main block of the building is rectangular and has a steeply pitched hipped roof with broad overhanging eaves. The main, southwest facade is dominated by a 2-1/2 story gabled pavillion which is balanced by a tall three-story tower projecting from the house's south corner. The square tower is capped with a steeply pitched roof and an ornate metal weather vane. Each side of the house contains two-story bay windows, and a porch area to the northwest was enclosed as a WPA project in 1935.

The windows and doors all have stilted segmental arches and are found paired in the front pavillion and in the side-facing windows of the bays. A stone water table surrounds the building at the level of the basement window lintels. Slimmer belt courses are found at the sill levels of the first and second floor windows, as well as at the upper portion of the corner tower. The ashlar that form the arches, water table and belt courses is dressed smooth along the edges as highlighting. To the northwest a modern garage was constructed in 1968 of stone salvaged from the property's original carriage house, which stood at the rear of the site.<sup>3</sup> Described as one of the finest Victorian residences of the Fox River Valley<sup>3</sup>, the Oviatt House became a dormitory for the expanding State Normal School at Oshkosh in 1913. In 1934 it was turned over for use as the residence of the college's president. The structure was listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places in 1979.

Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Oshkosh State Teachers College Bulletin, 1928, p. 20

<sup>2</sup>Oshkosh State Teachers College Alumni Bulletin, 1938, p. 11

<sup>3</sup>Howard Needles, Tammen & Bergendoff, Oshkosh-Intensive Resource Survey Report, Oshkosh 1981, p. 154-155.

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Inventory

Address	Historic Name	Current Name	Map Code
800 Algoma Blvd.	Administration and Science Building	Dempsey Hall	1
842 Algoma Blvd.	Oviatt House	Chancellor's Residence	4
912 Algoma Blvd.	Swart Training School	Swart Hall	3
845 Elmwood Ave.	Industrial Education Building	Harrington Hall	2



# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates \_\_\_\_\_

Builder/Architect \_\_\_\_\_

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)      Period of Significance: 1913–1934

The Oshkosh Normal School Historic District is significant locally as the oldest remaining portion of the present University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh campus. It dates from the school's original status as the State Normal School at Oshkosh. Constituting the very heart of the normal school's early campus, the early twentieth-century educational facilities and dormitory building of the proposed district represent a significant period of dramatic growth and change within the Oshkosh school and within the larger state normal school system as well. The school's only remaining tie to its original status as one of the state's largest and most innovative normal school facilities, the historic district is a significant representation of the development of higher education, particularly teacher training, in Wisconsin during the 1910s and 1920s. Representing the community's finest examples of early twentieth-century collegiate Gothic design, the district's academic buildings are also locally significant in the area of architecture.

## Education

The State Normal School at Oshkosh was officially established by the State Legislature in 1871 as the third such institution in the state, (after Platteville in 1866 and Whitewater in 1868). Dedicated to the training of teachers for positions in local elementary, rural, and state graded schools, the Oshkosh Normal quickly established itself as an important educational facility within the local area. Under the direction of the school's first president, George S. Albee, the Oshkosh campus developed a fine reputation, particularly as an innovative institution of higher learning, and by 1900 enrollment at the Normal had reached over 701 students. Throughout most of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century, the school remained housed in a single building which had grown slowly over the years with the completion of an assortment of various wings and additions.

The period from 1900 to 1930 gave a new direction to the school, and for normal education in general, one that would chart a new course for the small school. Because of the enormous growth of public education, the demand for qualified teachers became considerable by the early 1900s. In an attempt to meet those growing demands, the curricula of many state normal schools began to see significant changes. In particular, the schools became the focus for increasingly specialized training for teachers, both in terms of subject matter and the level of teaching (e.g. rural schools, primary education, high schools). No longer were the normals simple training schools designed to offer the same broadbased education to all of their students. The progressive schools began to diversify their curricula, offering electives and specialized programs in hopes of attracting larger numbers of new students, and in hopes of producing graduates better trained to handle the growing sophistication of public school education.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Nine

Quadrangle name Oshkosh

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	6	3	7	5	5	6	0	4	9	7	5	9	8	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B 

1	6	3	7	5	8	1	0	4	8	7	5	9	2	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

C 

1	6	3	7	5	7	2	0	4	8	7	5	7	1	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

D 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

### Verbal boundary description and justification

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul R. Lusignan/Acting Architectural Historian

organization State Historical Society of Wisconsin date September 1984

street & number 816 State Street telephone (608) 262-4772

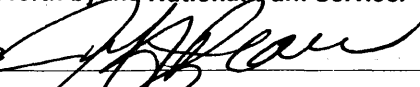
city or town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

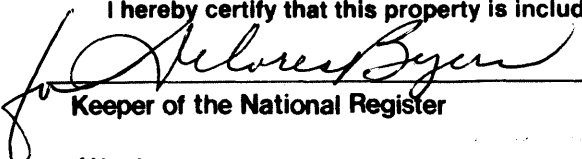
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title Director of Historic Preservation date October 25, 1984

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

  
Keeper of the National Register

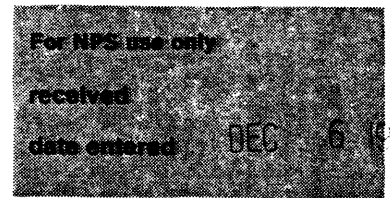
Entered in the National Register date 12/6/84

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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of architectural drawings for a new science and administration building to be built adjacent to the Old Main complex. Before the new plans could be implemented, however, a fire completely destroyed the 1871 Old Main building and its numerous additions. Quickly regrouping, the school's leaders formulated a new, more extensive set of plans, the result of which was the completion in 1917 of Dempsy Hall and, a year later, its library wing to the northeast.

A modern facility of imposing scale, the new Science and Administration Building and its library wing were among the most modern and extensive normal school facilities in the state, which added still more to Oshkosh's reputation as a leader among Wisconsin's teacher training facilities. Completed at a cost of \$112,000, from plans provided by the Milwaukee architectural firm of Van Ryn and De Gelleke, Dempsy Hall housed classroom and laboratory space for biology, chemistry, physics, and geography. It also contained a number of general recitation rooms, and offices for all of the school's various administrative departments. The \$157,000 library unit, completed in 1918, provided sixteen additional classrooms, sizable locker room facilities, and a large, open reading room and library. The building served the school with relatively little change until the late 1960s. Then, a major administration addition was added to the north corner of the L-shaped building. It was designed by the Milwaukee firm of Schweitzer-Slater Assoc., and included extensive remodeling of the interior spaces of the original sections of the building.

Featuring three of the newest normal school facilities in the state,-- the 1913 Industrial Arts building, a newly converted dormitory building, and a 1917-1918 Science, Administration and Library building, - the Oshkosh state school saw continued scholastic growth and development during the late 1910s and 1920s. A number of smaller, often temporary structures, were utilized for various purposes on the campus during the era, as well and included a 1910 coal-fired power plant, a 1909 men's gymnasium and auditorium space, and a former private residence that had been transformed into the home of the school's domestic science department in 1911 (see attached site plan c.1927). None of these buildings remain however, most of them being razed by the 1950s. In total floor area, the Oshkosh Normal School in 1918 was second only to Milwaukee with a total of 161,160 square feet of usable space at its disposal.

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A 1902 Board of Regents report voiced the opinion that special departments in manual training, kindergarten, and domestic science should be established at all of the state normal schools in the state.<sup>2</sup> Prior to 1910, however, only a few faltering steps had been taken in the direction of professional specialization in the state normal system. Among these first steps was the implementation of the state's first manual training department at the Oshkosh school in 1903.<sup>2</sup> (The Platteville normal school would implement a similar program in 1908, while one of the nation's earliest domestic science normal school departments was initiated at Stevens Point in 1903).

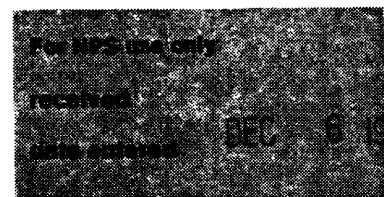
The new and innovative program at Oshkosh quickly proved itself popular and provided the nucleus for the school's sizable Industrial Arts Department, which was officially sanctioned by the Board of Regents of Normal Schools in 1912 and placed under the direction of Prof. Livingston L. Summers.<sup>3</sup> To handle the increasing number of students wishing to enroll in the department, the school began the erection of its first new academic facility - since the completion of Old Main - in 1912-1913. The Industrial Arts Building (Harrington Hall), designed by the Milwaukee firm of Van Ryn & Degelleke, was completed and ready for occupancy in the fall of 1913 and today exists as the oldest academic structure extant within the district. A sizable, three-story brick structure, the building was hailed as one of the most modern and well-equipped facilities for the training of teachers in the manual arts in the midwest.<sup>4</sup> It included space for woodworking and machine shops, drafting rooms, a forge area, and a fully outfitted foundry.<sup>4</sup> In 1913, the Oshkosh State Normal School, with its new industrial arts facility, ranked among the top institutions of higher learning in the state, drawing large numbers of new students to its pioneering programs.

In 1913 the Board of Regents also authorized the purchase of the former residence of Dr. C.W. Oviatt at 842 Algoma Boulevard, for use as a women's dormitory.<sup>5</sup> Designed by Oshkosh architect William Waters,<sup>6</sup> the 1884 home was among the community's finest examples of late-nineteenth-century residential design. As the first dormitory on the Oshkosh campus, it represented a new kind of social center on the growing campus. Serving up to 40 students and boarders at a time, the home remained a central feature of the Oshkosh campus for a number of years. In 1934, it became the residence of the university president, a function it still performs today.<sup>7</sup>

The establishment of the Industrial Arts Department, an expanding curriculum, and increasing "enrollment" together spurred further physical development at the school. In 1915, under the direction of Normal School president John Alexander Hull Keith, and Chief Engineer, John C.D. Mack of the newly-formed State Department of Engineering, the school administration created a master plan for the Oshkosh campus to bring the school fully into the modern educational world. The centerpiece of the plan was the commissioning

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Historic District

In the early 1920s mounting demands for a new facility for the training of teachers in live classroom situations led to the solicitation of funds from the Board of Regents for the construction of a modern training school building on the campus. Funding for the project became available in 1925, thanks to the constant pressure of school president Harry Brown, and local Regent Edward Dempsey. Plans for the new facility were quickly drawn up by State Architect Arthur Peabody, of the State Department of Engineering in Madison.<sup>12</sup> Construction began in 1926 and the new, three-story, collegiate-Gothic training school building was ready for occupancy by September 1928.

Designed to serve as a laboratory for teacher preparation, "as would a hospital to a medical school...",<sup>13</sup> the facility featured 50 classrooms and offices and 144-seat demonstration room, a 600 seat auditorium, and a large gymnasium with locker room facilities. The facility served as home to kindergarten, elementary, junior high, and high school classes, all of which were operated in conjunction with the normal school's training department. The modern and efficiently designed building, which was characterized as one of the most well-equipped in the midwest,<sup>14</sup> was officially dedicated in 1929 as the Rose C. Swart Training School, named after Oshkosh Normal School educator Rose Swart, who taught at the school from 1871 to 1923.<sup>15</sup> The building today still functions as a teacher training and classroom facility. It is the most unchanged of the historic district's academic buildings, retaining most of its original interior and exterior detailing.

In the interim between the planning-and final construction of the Swart School, the Normal School at Oshkosh officially became recognized as a State Teachers College (1925), and was given the authority to grant four-year undergraduate degrees. Through the remainder of the 1920s, into the 1930s, the buildings that constitute the Oshkosh Normal School Historic District were the core of the college campus at Oshkosh. In another phase of dramatic change during the 1950s and 1960s, the school embarked on a second large-scale construction effort as it became part of the University of Wisconsin system.

The buildings of the Oshkosh Normal School Historic District remain today at the heart of the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh campus. They mark a distinctive and significant period in the growth of higher education in the community, when the Oshkosh Normal emerged as a prominent facility within the expanding statewide normal school program in Wisconsin.

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Architecture

The classroom buildings of the Oshkosh State Normal School Historic District represent a significant concentration of early twentieth-century academic designs. Taken both collectively and individually, all of the buildings are fine examples of the widely popularized collegiate Gothic style typical of academic facilities built in communities across the state in the early decades of this century. Loosely based on traditional English academic styles, interpreted to meet the needs of changing American schools, the buildings of the Oshkosh district provide, within a relatively small area, a unique visual example of the range of stylistic interpretations possible within the style.

The Federal Art Project murals in the former Library wing of Dempsey Hall and in the Swart Training School are considered significant interior features.

Boundary Justification

The Oshkosh Normal School Historic district is a compact unit bounded on the northeast and southwest by the major thoroughfares of Elmwood Avenue and Algoma Boulevard respectively. Heavily traveled roadways, both streets form clearly distinct boundaries around the district, isolating the area from residential scale properties across Elmwood Avenue and modern academic facilities across Algoma Boulevard. To the northwest and southeast the district is bounded by modern university buildings, which date to 1956, 1963 and 1962-69. All of these facilities mark a distinctively different era of school growth from those within the bounds of the district.

Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Annual Catalogue of the State Normal School Oshkosh, No.29, 1889-1900, p.51.

<sup>2</sup>Herrmann, William, The Rise of the Public Normal School System in Wisconsin, (Madison, 1971), pp.440-442.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp.441-442

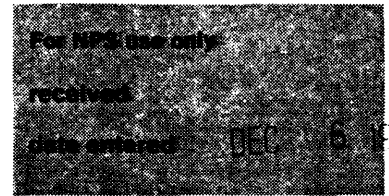
<sup>4</sup>Bulletin of the State Normal School, Oshkosh, vol.11, February 1915, pp.17-24.

<sup>5</sup>Wyman, W. (ed.), History of the Wisconsin State Universities, (River Falls, 1968), p.109.

<sup>6</sup>Howard, Needles, Tammen and Bergendoff, Final Report - Intensive Historic Resource Survey, (Oshkosh, 1981), p.154.

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Historic District

Footnotes (con't.)

- 7 "First Half Century of the Oshkosh Normal School," Bulletin of the State Normal School Oshkosh, vol.18, October 1921, p.44.
- 8 Architectural plans on file with the university's Facilities Management Office, UW-0.
- 9 Bulletin of the State Normal School Oshkosh, vol.24, September 1928, p.19.
- 10 Architectural plans...
- 11 State of Wisconsin, "Department of Engineering Facilities Study - 1918," (SHSW Archives, Madison).
- 12 Architectural plans...
- 13 Wyman, p.114.
- 14 Bulletin of the State Normal School Oshkosh, vol.24, September 1928, p.17.
- 15 Wyman, p.114, 118.

Archeological Potential

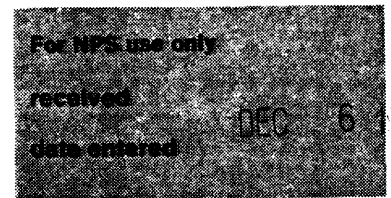
Before the arrival of white settlers, the area in and around the Oshkosh region was home to a sizable indian population. Since that time, however, extensive development has occurred throughout the area. While the specific location of the University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh campus has not been subjected to an intensive archeological survey, it is unlikely that significant pre-historic sites remain within the boundries of the district.

Preservation Activity

The buildings within the district are all owned by the University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh and have been consistantly maintained in much their original condition. Although most of the interiors have seen some changes, many of the buildings' exteriors are recognized as symbolic landmarks on the university campus and are considered of high preservation value to school administrators.

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Continuation sheet Oshkosh State Normal School Item number 9  
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Major Bibliographical References

Herrmann, William, The Rise of the Public Normal School System in Wisconsin,  
(Madison, 1971).

Howard Needle, Tammen and Bergendoff, Final Report - Intensive Historic  
Resource Survey for the City of Oshkosh Wisconsin, (Oshkosh, 1981).

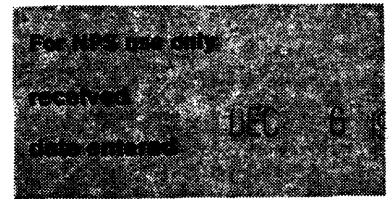
Wyman, Walker D. (ed.), History of the Wisconsin State Universities, (River  
Falls, 1968) pp.95-132.

University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh Archives, Area Research Center, UW-0.  
(Complete collection of State Normal School, State Teachers College,  
and University Bulletins in addition to architectural plans for campus  
buildings.)



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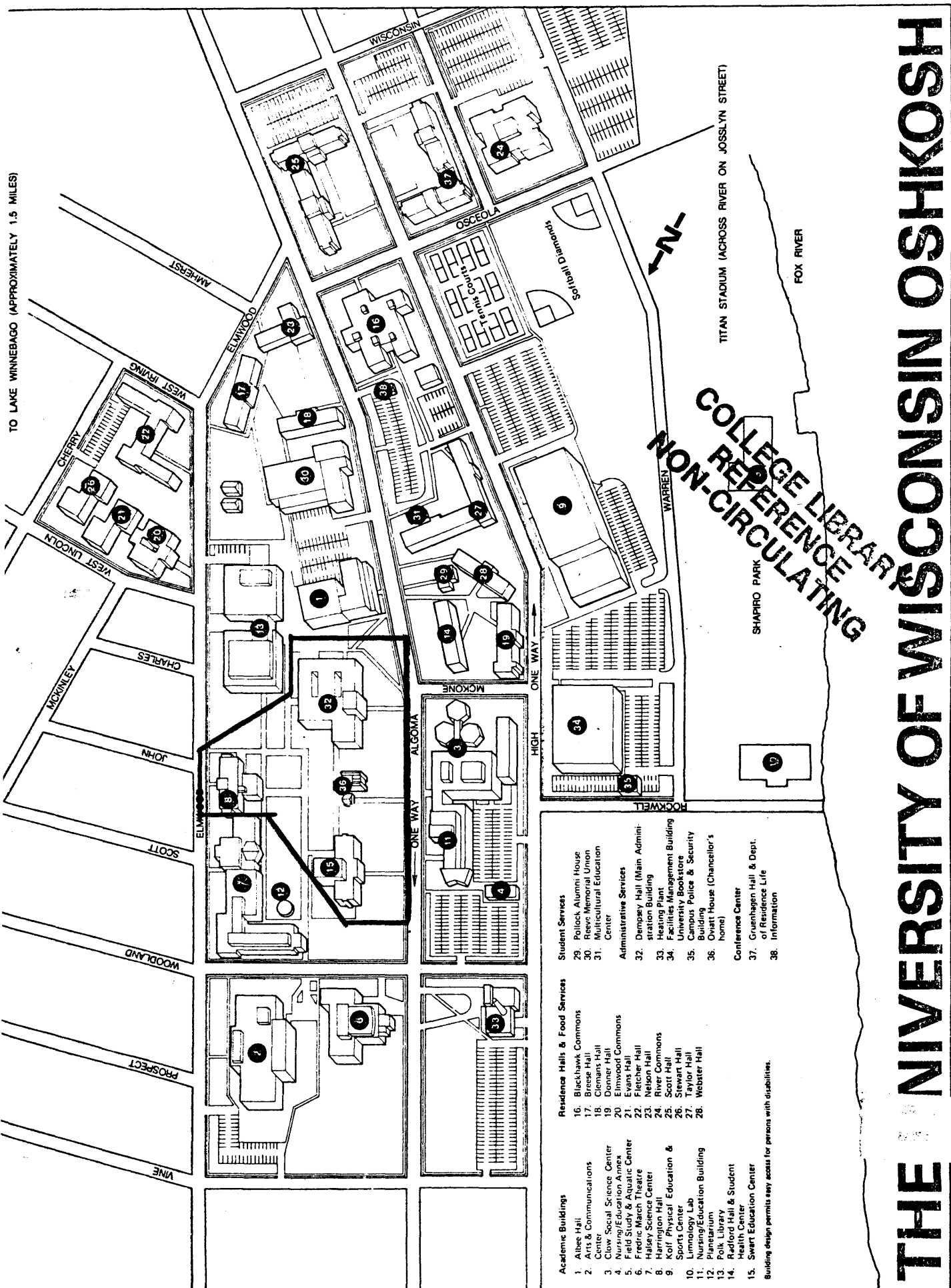
Historic District

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

The exact boundaries of the district are as follows: The northeastern boundary of the district is formed by the curblineline of Elmwood Avenue starting at a point 50' northeast of the north corner of Harrington Hall (#2) and running southeasterly for 200' the length of the entire facade of the building. From a point 50' northeast of the eastern corner of the building the boundary proceeds in a south-westerly direction 175'; thence in a southerly direction between Dempsey Hall (#1) and the 1962 Polk Library a distance of 325' to a point approximately 15' out from the eastern corner of Dempsey Hall; thence southwesterly between Dempsey Hall and the 1956 Albee Hall to the curblineline of Algoma Boulevard, a distance of 300'. Alboma Boulevard provides the district with its southwestern border for approximately 850', passing in front of Dempsey Hall, the Oviatt House, and Swart Hall (#3) the district boundary proceeds in a northeasterly direction for 300'; thence southeasterly between the 1969 Halsey Science Center and Swart Hall a distance of 375' to a point of 75' from the western corner of Harrington Hall. Passing between Harrington Hall and the Science Center, the boundary then proceeds in a northeasterly direction 175' to the curblineline of Elmwood Avenue, to the point of origin.

(see attached site maps)

TO LAKE WINNEBAGO (APPROXIMATELY 1.5 MILES)



COLLEGE LIBRARY  
 NON-CIRCULATING  
 REFERENCE

- Academic Buildings**
1. Albee Hall
  2. Arts & Communications Center
  3. Clow Social Science Center
  4. Nursing/Education Annex
  5. Field Study & Quince Center
  6. Halsey Science Center
  7. Harrington Hall
  8. Koff Physical Education & Sports Center
  9. Limnology Lab
  10. Planetarium
  11. Polk Library
  12. Radford Hall & Student Health Center
  13. Swart Education Center
- Residence Halls & Food Services**
16. Blackhawk Commons
  17. Breese Hall
  18. Clemens Hall
  19. Donner Hall
  20. Elnor Hall
  21. Elnor Commons
  22. Flatcher Hall
  23. Nelson Hall
  24. River Commons
  25. Scott Hall
  26. Stewart Hall
  27. Taylor Hall
  28. Webster Hall
- Student Services**
29. Pollock Alumni House
  30. Reeve Memorial Union Center
  31. Multicultural Education Center
- Administrative Services**
32. Dempsey Hall (Main Administration Building)
  33. Hearing Phone
  34. University Bookstore
  35. Campus Police & Security Building
  36. Oviatt House (Chancellor's home)
  37. Gruenhagen Hall & Dept. of Residence Life
  38. Information

Building design permits easy access for persons with disabilities.

# THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN OSHKOSH

DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

NORMAL AVE

ST.

ELM

ST.

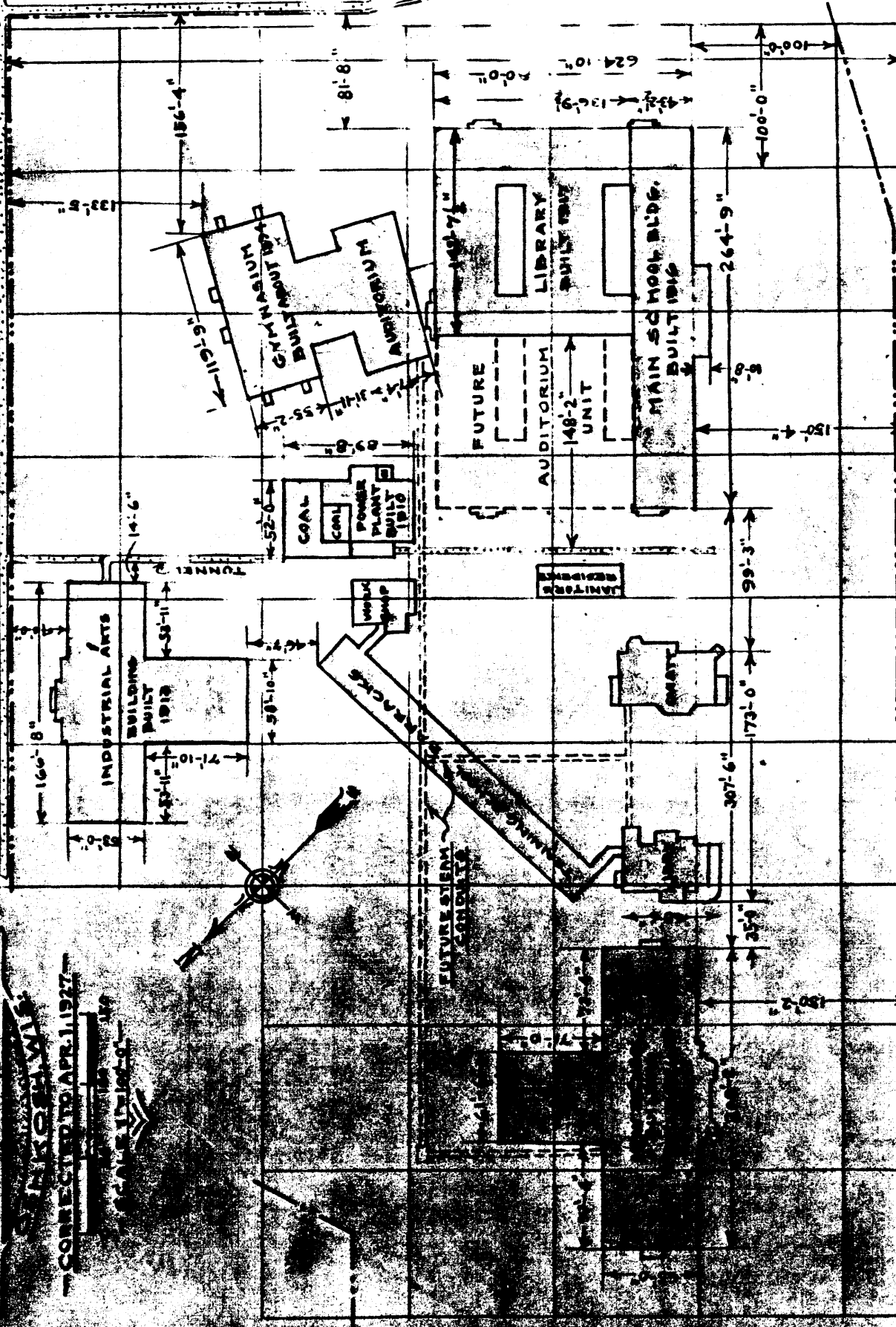
ALGOMA

STATE NORMAL SCHOOL

WISCONSIN

CORRECTED TO APR. 1, 1927

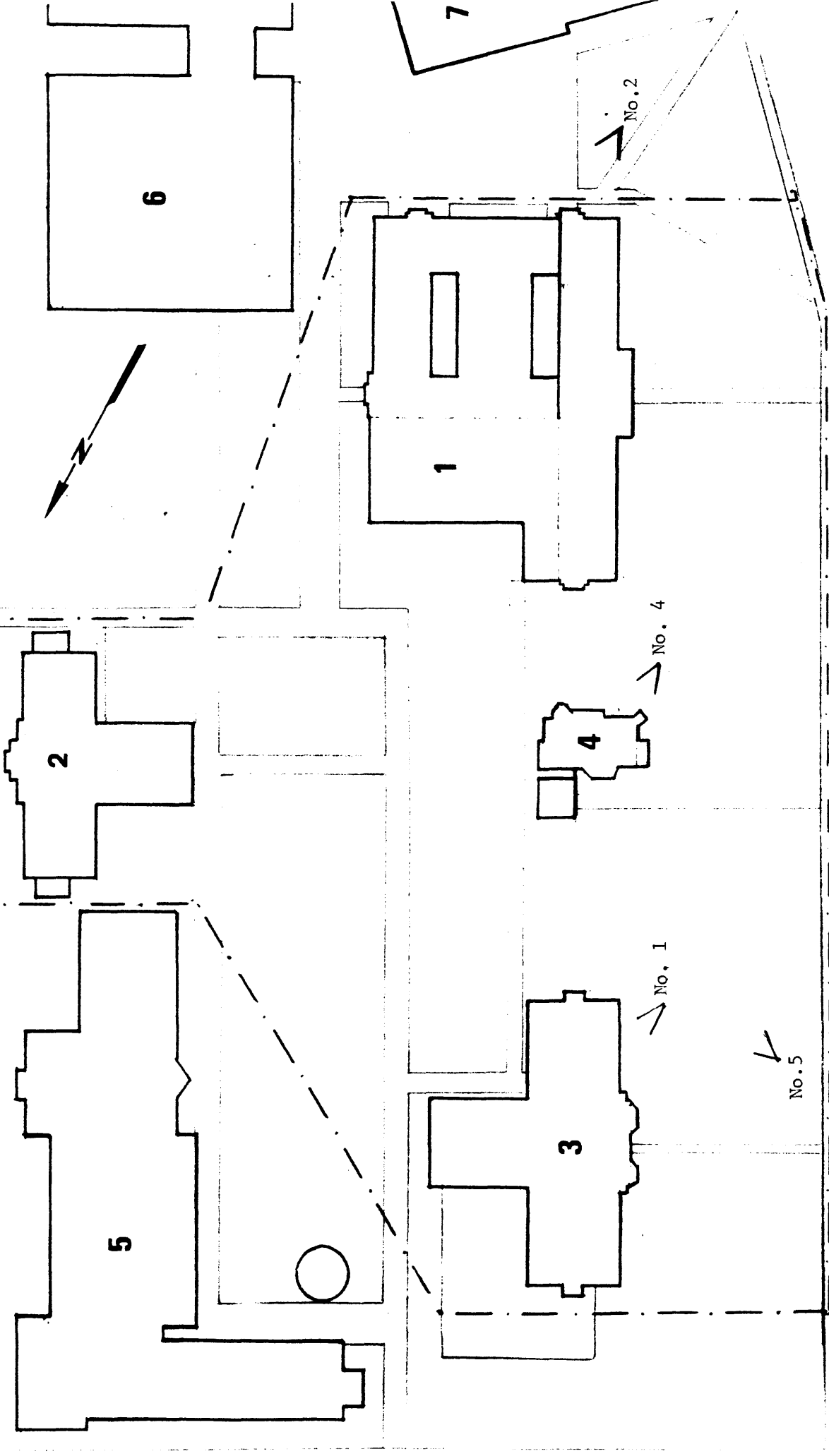
SCALE 1/16" = 1'-0"



- 1. Admin & Science Bldg
- 2. Industrial Education Bldg
- 3. Swart Training School
- 4. Oviatt House
- 5. Halsey Science Center
- 6. Polk Library
- 7. Albee Hall

Elmwood Ave.

No. 3



**OSHKOSH NORMAL SCHOOL  
HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Algoma Blvd.

Boundary

1. Admin & Science Bldg

2. Industrial Education Bldg

3. Swart Training School

4. Oviatt House

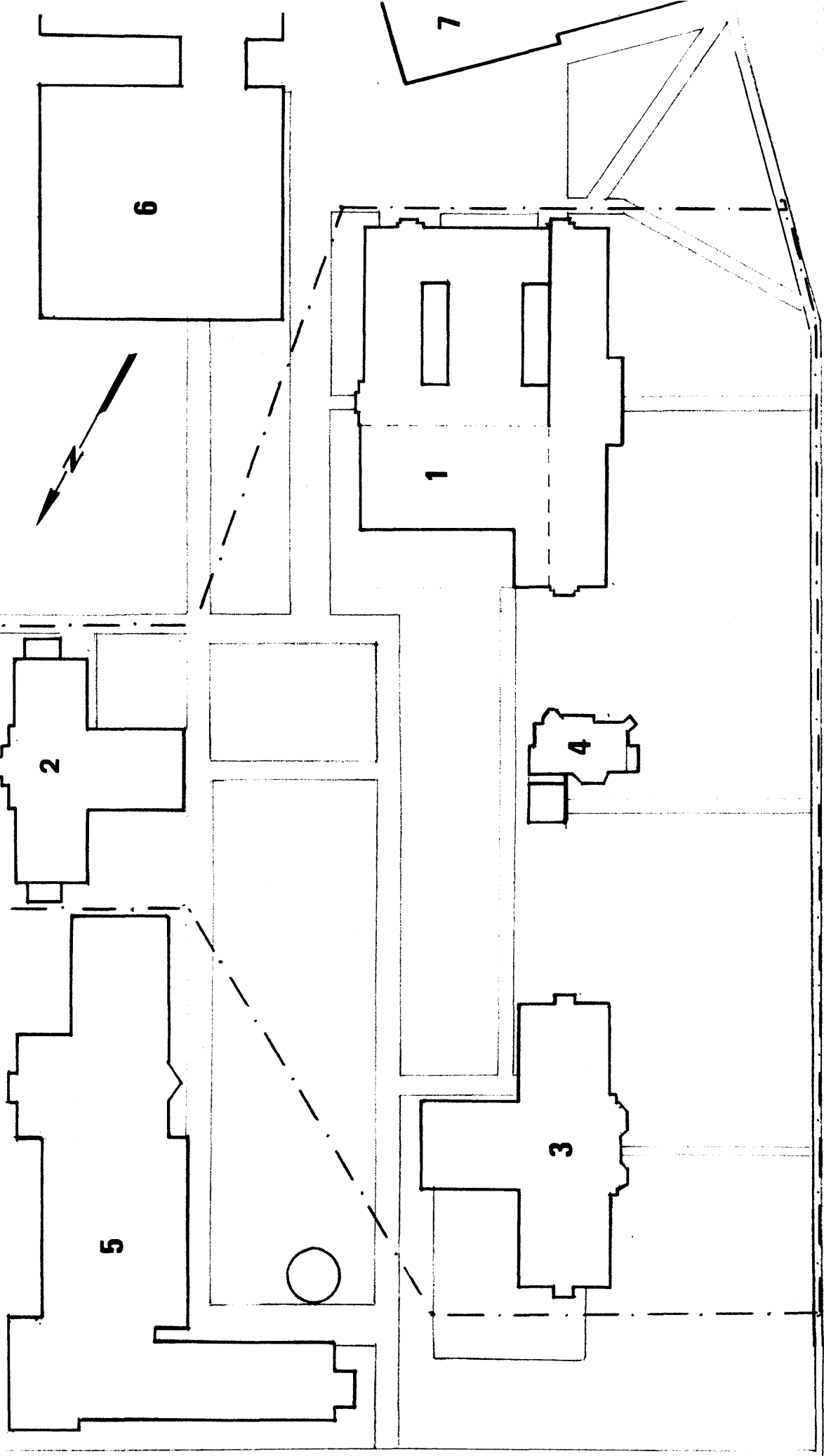
5. Halsey Science Center

6. Polk Library 7. Albee Hall

Elmwood Ave.

Algoma Blvd.

OSHKOSH NORMAL SCHOOL  
HISTORIC DISTRICT



Boundary Line