

North Central College
DCEO grant 19-203144
MOA Progress Report: March 2022 – August 2022

Progress to Date

Since our last report, we opened the “Mid-Century Modern at North Central College” Exhibit in Schoenherr Gallery in the Fine Arts Center on August 17 and hosted a gallery reception open to the public on August 22. Dr. Lindsay Shannon, Associate Professor of Art History, Art & Design at North Central College, was the lead curator and worked with partners Naper Settlement and Naperville Preservation to incorporate mid-century architecture from the community into the exhibit. The exhibit will be hung in the Schoenherr Gallery through December. The opening reception also featured two 90-minute trolley tours featuring mid-century buildings and residences in the surrounding community of Naperville. The content of the tours was curated and narrated by experts from the Naper Settlement. During the reception, we also invited patrons to take a self-guided walking tour of mid-century buildings on campus using the brochure we created (see attached).

To date, we have completed the first three projects of the mitigation plan:

Project 1: Inventory of mid-century buildings on campus (artifacts: attached walking tour brochure that highlights all mid-century buildings)

Project 2: Mid-century art exhibit of campus and community buildings (artifacts: attached flyer for the exhibit and tour, attached example exhibit panels, links to press below, photos featured below)

Project 3: Trolley tour of mid-century buildings on campus and in community (artifacts: attached flyer for the exhibit and tour, photos featured below)

We are also wrapping up Project 4: Preservation Resources for the Web in collaboration with the City of Naperville. We will publish that link to the public before the grant period end date on October 20. We will report on this in the final report due next month.

Below are links to featured press about the exhibit:

[Press release](#) about the exhibit and opening reception on the College’s website

[Naperville Community TV news spot](#) about the gallery exhibit featuring Dr. Shannon

WTTW Chicago list the gallery reception as #6 in its [10 Things to Do This Weekend](#)

Article in the [Daily Herald](#)

Below are photos from the gallery opening:



Dr. Lindsay Shannon, lead curator, in front of the exhibit



Patrons viewing film from the groundbreaking of the Oesterle Library



Community partners (from right to left): Jane Burke, Naperville Preservation; Donna Sack, Naper Settlement; Becky Simon, Naperville Preservation; Jeanne Schultz Angel, Naper Settlement; Dr. Lindsay Shannon, North Central College



Patrons getting off the first of the mid-century trolley tours around Naperville.

Scheduling Changes Proposed

As you know, we requested and were granted an extension from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) on the College’s mitigation plan for DCEO grant 19-203144, which supported the Oesterle Library Renovation Project. Reasons cited were due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced us to pause the execution of the mitigation plan. The amended end date of October 20, 2022 was approved by the State. We are grateful for the extra time to complete the project.

Problems Encountered

There have been no problems encountered since the submission of the previous report.

Disputes and Objections

There are no disputes and objections to our mitigation plan at this time. The scope of the project and deliverables remain as they are stated in the terms of the original agreement.



Mid-Century

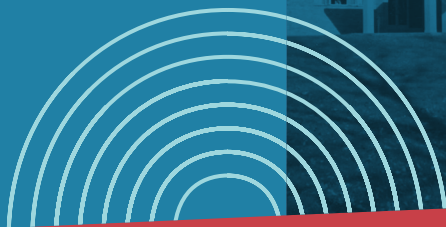


Modern



Architecture

at
NORTH
CENTRAL
COLLEGE



**NORTH CENTRAL
COLLEGE 1861**



North Central College's campus reflects the dynamic forces that were shaping campuses across the United States during the mid-twentieth century (1940s-1970s). Highlighted on this map are the buildings that respond to the modernist styles, expanding student populations, and diverse approaches to education that characterize this period of change and growth. We invite you to take a walk and see for yourself the College's rich history from this era.

BUILDING KEY

1. **Kimmel Residence Hall**
224 N. Loomis St.
 2. **Larrance Academic Center**
309 E. School St.
 3. **Oesterle Library**
320 E. School St.
 4. **School of Business & Entrepreneurship**
40 N. Brainard St.
 5. **Harold and Eva White Activities Center (WAC)**
325 E. Benton Ave.
 6. **Campus Store**
100 E. Jefferson Ave.
 7. **Geiger Residence Hall**
221 E. Chicago Ave.
 8. **Rall Residence Hall**
211 S. Brainard St.
 9. **Seager Residence Hall**
311 E. Chicago Ave.
- SG** **Schoenherr Gallery**
171 E. Chicago Ave.





STYLES

International Style Architecture: modernist architecture that features steel skeleton frames and large glass panels. Regular or symmetrical exteriors that express the vertical and horizontal grid of the frame beneath. See the Harold & Eva White Activity Center and Seager Hall.

Brutalism: modernist architecture that features exposed ferrous concrete, brick, and wood in their unfinished form (“raw” or “brut” in French). Often asymmetrical or with irregular exteriors that add sculptural drama, such as textile brick. See the Larrance Academic Center and the School of Business and Entrepreneurship.

MATERIALS & CONSTRUCTION METHODS



Vertical Scratch Brick: brick clay is extruded through wires in the mold to create a cable texture. Laid in a traditional stretcher bond (each row alternates) these soft gray bricks almost have the texture of a cable-knit sweater.

Image: vertical scratch bricks, Geiger Residence Hall.



Blond Brick: yellow to honey-toned bricks popular during the mid-twentieth century. Also typical of the period, bricks can be narrow or stacked vertically, rather than alternating in a stretcher bond.

Image: blond brick in a grid design, Kimmel Residence Hall.



Textile Brick: an arrangement of rough-textured bricks, applied in a multi-color randomized pattern creating an eye dazzling effect, like a hanging tapestry or quilt.

Image: multi-colored bricks, Rall Residence Hall.



Ribbon Windows: first popularized in Frank Lloyd Wright’s Prairie Style homes in the early twentieth century, these continuous bands of horizontal windows create clean lines and provide maximum sunlight to interiors.

Image: ribbon windows, Seager Residence Hall.



Ferrous Concrete: poured concrete supported by an interior metal frame or iron rebar.

Image: ferrous concrete detail, Larrance Academic Center.



Drawn Glass Panels: large, single panes of flat glass only became possible with advancements in technology in the early twentieth century.

Image: drawn glass panel windows, Harold & Eva White Activities Center.



Cantilever: a projecting eave or balcony supported from one side.

Image: cantilever, Harold & Eva White Activities Center.



**NORTH CENTRAL
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Mid-Century



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Grand Opening Reception

Saturday, August 27 from 1 - 5 p.m.
Schoenherr Gallery, 171 E. Chicago Avenue, Naperville, IL

Reception is free and open to members of the public.

Special program with remarks from the partnership organizations at 2:30 p.m.
The reception will include:

- ◇ Free trolley tours of Mid-Century Modern Architecture in Naperville, departing at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Space is limited. Tickets need to be reserved in advance and are available at [LINK GOES HERE](#)
- ◇ Self-guided walking tour of Mid-Century Modern Architecture buildings on campus

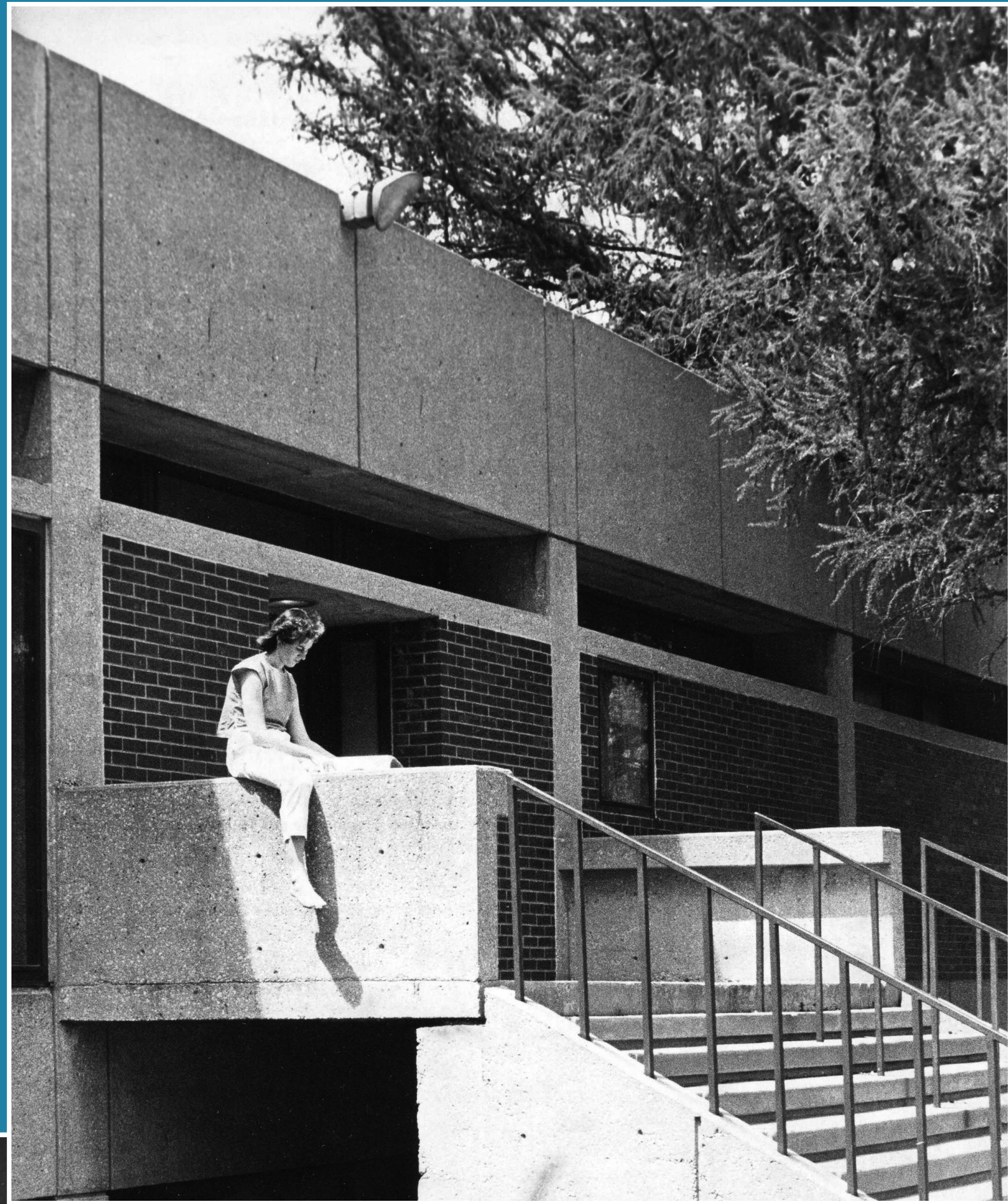
Exhibit runs August 22 - December 9 in Schoenherr Gallery.



To view gallery hours, scan the QR code.
For more information, visit our gallery website at
finearts.northcentralcollege.edu/galleries



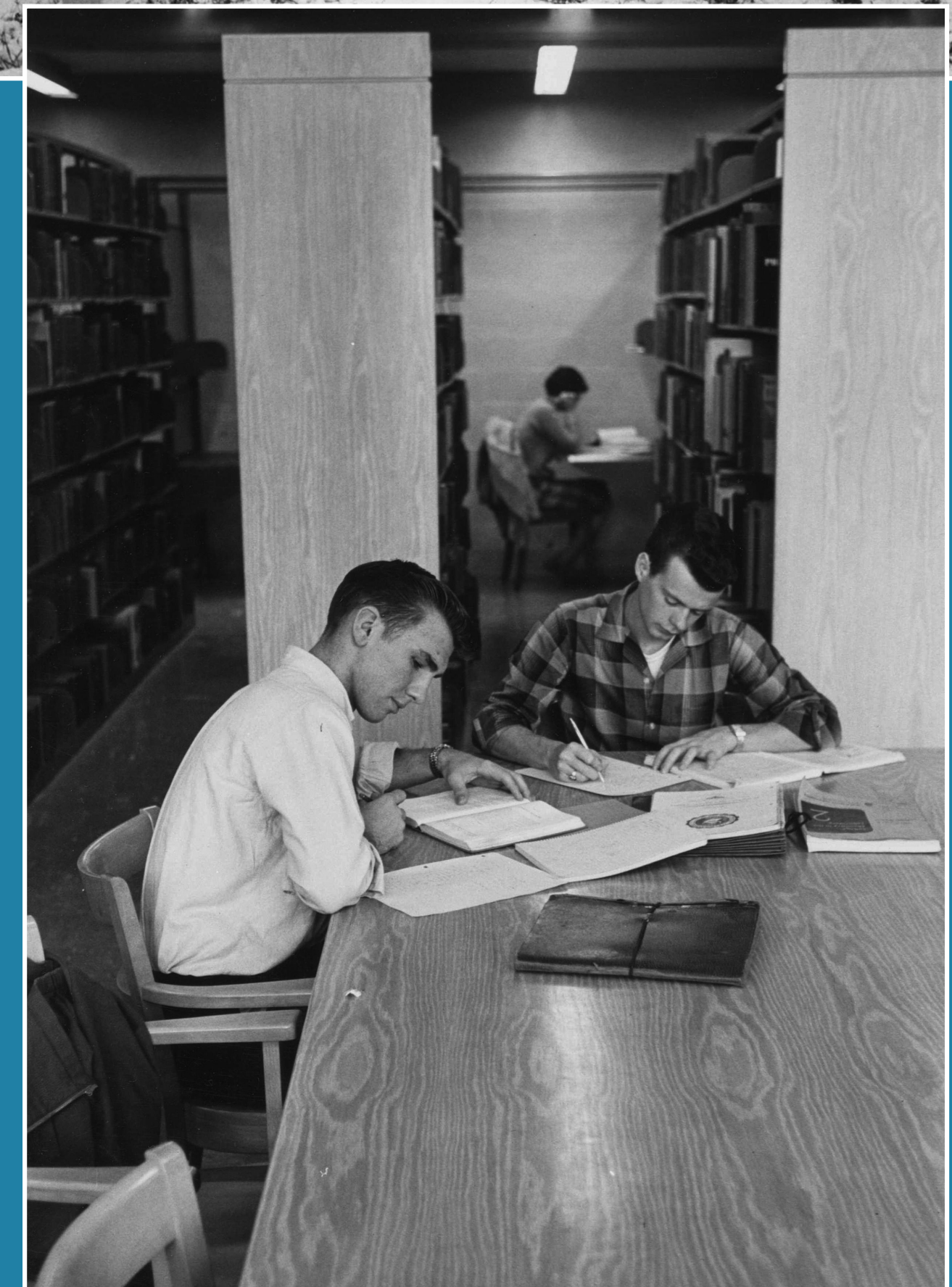
**NORTH CENTRAL
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*Snowball fight
in front of Rall
Residence Hall,
1972*



*Student in front of
Kroehler Science
Center, 1980*



Student Union (Harold & Eva White Activities Center) interior, 1960

Students studying in Oesterle Library, 1955

Mid-Century Modern at North Central College

Modernism bookends North Central College's campus: from Oesterle Library on the north end of campus to student dorms on the south, the building boom on college campuses between 1940 and 1970 created many of the structures that frame our experiences today.

As a new century defines functional needs and ideals differently for both cities and colleges, many are realizing the value of connecting with the past and making it part of our lived present.

North Central College's campus reflects the dynamic forces that were shaping campuses across the United States during the mid-twentieth century. Perhaps unique in comparison to other countries, the U.S. has long believed that the purpose of higher education was to combine the liberal arts and vocational training with the ideals of citizenship. Thomas Jefferson, one of the country's first campus planners, strongly believed in the need for educated and informed voters in a democracy.

After World War II, increased enrollments and changing patterns of education created complex planning challenges for campuses. The post-war decades saw an enrollment boom: the GI Bill and expanding access

to student loans brought more students to campus than ever and increased the diversity of the student population to include more women, commuter, part-time, married, and minoritized students on campus. In 1940, the census showed just under 1.5 million students attending college. By the end of the 1960s, the baby boom generation was coming of age and eight million students were attending college. Government legislation, the establishment of more diverse programs of study, and a building boom in higher education were all required to meet the needs of this growing student population.

Diverse Buildings for Diverse Campus Communities

Changing demographics required a growth and change-oriented planning philosophy on campuses that came to be viewed as living organisms that expanded and adapted over time.

Modernism's emphasis on functionality and flexible use of space was ideally suited to these new needs, but it had to be incorporated into a 200-year-old tradition of campus planning and the unique needs of the college community. Slowly, campus experiments with modernism proved successful and were adopted throughout the U.S. Urban in scale and complexity, mid twentieth-century campuses began to reflect the working world students would graduate into yet required a special kind of physical coherence and continuity with community values and ideals.

Across North Central College's campus, buildings reflect the periods when they were created, but no more variety exists than in the modern additions to campus between 1950 and 1970. First pioneered at Yale University, by the 1960s selecting a different architect for each building was considered desirable to represent the modern college's diversity, in sharp contrast to the previous century in which campus additions were planned as one cohesive building project. If you look

closely, the modernist buildings across campus quietly tell their stories in superstructures and subtle details.

Oesterle Library (1954), with blond brick stacked in horizontal rows and oversized windows, is distinct in comparison to Larrance Academic Center (1967), featuring massive vertical towers and mixed brickwork in a tapestry-like effect on mostly windowless walls. Perhaps no single building reflects the desire for diversity more than the design for Kroehler Science Center (1970, now known as the School of Business & Entrepreneurship). Most notably, the horizontal ribbon windows alternate with vertical and square windows in a grid system, becoming the architectural equivalent of a Mondrian painting. Each building uses space and form to define its function and its values. Solidity, intense concentration, and a focus on the interior characterize buildings housing academic classrooms, a connection to the outside world and plentiful light fuel enlightenment in the library, and creativity mixed with order and method for the sciences.

Pathways and Repurposing on Campus

By the 1970s, enrollments were stabilizing, and the architectural preservation movement was gaining support across the country—especially with alumni.

Professional organizations and publications dedicated to campus planning were established to advocate for planning around human and automotive traffic patterns and repurposing buildings. The emphasis moved toward circulating students, faculty, and staff outside of their departments and encouraging open, spontaneous conversations emblematic of the college experience. One major innovation was the pedestrian “spine” connecting student dormitories to academic buildings and punctuated with informal gathering spaces. Adopted early at Governor’s State University and the University of Illinois at Chicago’s “Circle Campus,” this influence is visible in North Central College’s Sesquicentennial Walkway.

Repurposing buildings became the primary subject of campus planning conferences and publications as new construction proved costly and many urban campuses had limited opportunities to expand. Compact campuses were essential to maintaining

a feeling of community and enabling experiences beyond the classroom that had come to define college life in the U.S. For many colleges, the campus chapel had been built at the turn of the twentieth century as the community gathering space. By mid-century, the emphasis on religious life as the focus of citizenship on campus was expanding to intimate, small group gatherings and service organizations. At the same time, an explosion of student clubs, cocurricular activities, and informal meeting spaces provided increasingly diverse ways for students to be engaged. Campus chapels became the focus of early repurposing campaigns by campus planners, taking on additional functions as performing arts centers and art galleries. Since the 1970s, North Central College has both repurposed and added new buildings as the campus expands physically and in diversity, including the acquisition of buildings north of School Street from the Evangelical Theological Seminary in 1976.

Historic Architecture Preservation Today

For many, historic preservation continues to make economic and environmental sense. It can also help to define values and identity.

Alumni across the country began lobbying to save historic architecture on their campuses starting in the 1960s. In 2019, this trend was still going strong as a survey by Simpson Scarborough found that the tower of Old Main was the most recognized image associated with North Central College by students, faculty, staff and alumni.

Historic preservation today has many definitions. Individual building owners voluntarily maintain the historic character of homes and businesses while living out twenty-first century lives in them. Similarly, local preservation districts or city codes ensure that period facades and human-scaled streetscapes remain part of the community mix while allowing for repurposing and development. The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 established the National Register of Historic Places under the National Parks Service. Through a nomination process that typically begins with the state historic preservation office, properties with stylistic integrity for their period or that have significant histories are put through rigorous review. Those that make

the National Register of Historic Places list are able to access resources to help with preservation. Some properties are held in trust for the public to enjoy, such as Farnsworth House in Plano, IL, while others continue to function in the private sector.

In addition to Illinois Historic Preservation Agency and National Register properties, Illinois also boasts three UNESCO World Heritage sites: Robie House and Unity Temple by Frank Lloyd Wright and Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site. The Chicago Architecture Center (formerly the Chicago Architecture Foundation) was founded in 1966 to promote preservation of historic buildings by educating the public as urban renewal programs threatened demolition across the country. Today, nearly 700,000 people attend its tours and programs each year and many more who visit Chicago for vacations and conferences are attracted by its world-class architecture. The associated economic impacts for businesses in towns and cities with historic architecture and cultural attractions have been documented by numerous organizations.

Mid-Century Modern Architecture

Mid-Century Modern is a period term used to describe an array of different styles in industrial design and architecture between 1940 and 1970.

Most commercial or institutional buildings during this period fall into two major categories: International Style and brutalism. Both of these styles were favored for their ability to capture the utopian spirit of higher education, the need to expand campus infrastructure quickly, and to represent the growing diversity of the student body.

While the elaborate ornamentation of earlier architectural styles like neoclassical (Carnegie Hall) and Gothic Revival (Kiekhofler Hall) were rejected, modernist architects were nonetheless driven to create buildings that reflected the cultural moment and inspired human action. Space and form, rather than ornamentation, were now the visual language used to define a college's values, represent future aspirations, and meet its functional needs.

International Style Architecture: Also referred to as the Second Chicago School of Architecture, modernist architects like Mies van der Rohe became famous for buildings constructed with steel skeleton support frames and large glass panels. Regular or symmetrical

exteriors that express the vertical and horizontal grid of the support frame beneath create a harmonious design. Sculpture and other decoration that referenced the historical past or specific cultures in earlier architectural styles gave way to an image of efficiency, transparency, and universality that appealed to corporations, universities, and government bodies. Harold & Eva White Activities Center (1960) is the best example of this style on campus.

Brutalism: Modernist architecture that features materials such as exposed ferrous concrete, steel, brick, and wood in their unfinished form ("raw" or "brut" in French). Asymmetrical or irregular exteriors add sculptural drama and visual weight to this style, which was favored for public housing and performing arts centers. The desire to use materials in their "raw" or true form also creates intricate details which bridge the space between nature and the built environment. The former Kroehler Science Center (now the School of Business & Entrepreneurship, 1970) and Larrance Academic Center (1967) are two of the best examples of brutalism on campus.