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Stewarding an Educational Legacy: Historic Preservation at Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Katlyn E. Cotton
University of Pennsylvania

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Stewarding an Educational Legacy: Historic Preservation at Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Abstract
The historic campuses of Historically Black Colleges and Universities inform a story that no other setting can tell. Since before the Civil War, through Reconstruction and the Civil Rights movement, and still today, these institutions have served as the backdrop for this country’s greatest social justice struggles. They have functioned as free spaces and safe havens—places of reprieve from discrimination and inequity—where young African Americans were given the confidence and support to become leaders, innovators, and history-makers. Throughout history, these incredible institutions have nurtured an environment of empowerment, cultural reinforcement, and acceptance that has had immeasurable impacts on the lives of the students who walked their historic halls. The HBCU story, in its breadth over 150 years and across 20 states, celebrates both struggle and achievement, while foregrounding the role of education in the pursuit of racial justice.

While it would be misleading to treat all HBCUs as a monolith—as they are large and small, public and private, well-funded and underfunded—it has been well documented than many HBCUs struggle with financial sustainability. This is in large part due to the double-bottom line of the HBCU mission—HBCUs seek to provide affordable access to higher education, principally to low-income and first generation students, students who were ill-served by their K-12 education, and communities that have been historically excluded from education. Despite making up less than 3% of all post-secondary institutions and enrolling only 8% of all African American students, HBCUs are responsible for 20% of all African American graduates. Their impact is undeniable. The economic and social realities that attend this noble mission demand a different frame of reference for understanding HBCU decision-making. HBCUs face the same challenges as any institution of higher education, but their mission calls them to a greater social purpose. On top of this charge, HBCUs also steward a heritage that is irreplaceable and vital to a true telling of this country’s history.

In the necessary balancing of often-competing priorities, such as institutional advancement, mission benefit, and preservation, too often the spaces that contribute meaning and depth to the campus landscape are neglected, altered, or demolished. At a moment when HBCU heritage is attracting national attention, this thesis presents the heritage work of HBCUs within its own context. This thesis makes the case for the internal integration of preservation planning into general campus planning, while laying the groundwork for further study and implementation. Preservation planning is a critical tool that can help these institutions navigate the difficult negotiations between growth and preservation by building internal capacity for responsible stewardship and creating appropriate processes for considering historic resources. As well, this process encourages a broader campus awareness and appreciation of historic campus resources. Campus heritage needs to be repositioned as an asset—an investment that strengthens the institution by reinforcing its noble historic mission.

Keywords
social justice, African American history, campus, facilities, planning

Disciplines
African American Studies | Historic Preservation and Conservation

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STEWARDING AN EDUCATIONAL LEGACY: HISTORIC PRESERVATION AT HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Katlyn Elizabeth Cotton

A THESIS

in

Historic Preservation

Presented to the Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of

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Advisor
David Hollenberg
University Architect
Adjunct Professor, Graduate Program in Historic Preservation

Program Chair
Randall F. Mason
Associate Professor
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Chapter 1: Introduction

The historic campuses of Historically Black Colleges and Universities inform a story that no other setting can tell. Yet to convey the full and true significance of the HBCU story, the account must begin with an appreciation of the value of education.

"Education is liberation" reads like a platitude in today's era of limitless access to information, but prior to the Civil War, the true weight of this statement was understood both by those who strove for freedom and those who would keep them enslaved. Even decades after the Civil War, state governments and white benefactors would impose control over black curricula to ensure that these schools offered primarily industrial or manual training—a limited education to reinforce a limited freedom. The HBCU story, in its breadth over 150 years and across 20 states, celebrates the struggle against this marginalization and foregrounds the role of education in the pursuit of racial justice.

The historic buildings on these campuses bear testament to these stories. They represent and affirm the lasting traditions and timeless missions of these great institutions. From the iconic Founders Library at Howard University, where Thurgood Marshall ran dry-runs before arguing Brown vs. Board of Education, to the John Boddie Mansion at Tougaloo College, the home of a slaveholder that became a dormitory for African American students—these campuses add life and texture to the history of African American access to equal education and equal rights. They have functioned as free spaces and safe havens—places of reprieve from discrimination and inequity—where young African Americans were given the confidence and support to become leaders, innovators, and history-makers. Throughout history, these incredible institutions have nurtured an environment of empowerment, cultural reinforcement,
and acceptance that has had immeasurable impacts on the lives of the students who walked their historic halls.

The contribution of these colleges and universities is no less significant today. Despite making up less than 3% of all post-secondary institutions and enrolling only 8% of all African American students, HBCUs are responsible for 20% of all African American graduates.¹ Their impact is unquestionable. Contemporary HBCUs continue to fulfill their historic missions of providing access to those least likely to receive a college education, and they do so with considerably fewer resources than historically white institutions. These schools are a necessary pipeline that diversifies graduate programs and the workforce, profoundly altering the life opportunities of those historically excluded.²

While it would be misleading to treat all HBCUs as a monolith—as they are large and small, public and private, well-funded and underfunded—it has been well documented than many HBCUs struggle with financial sustainability.³ This is in large part due to the double-bottom line of the HBCU mission—HBCUs seek to provide affordable access to education, principally to low-income and first generation students, students who were ill served by their K-12 education, and communities that have been historically excluded from education. The economic and social realities that attend this noble mission demand a different frame of reference for understanding HBCU decision-making.

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² Minor, 8.
In short, HBCUs shoulder a great responsibility. They must face the same challenges as any institution of higher learning, but their mission calls them to a greater social purpose. On top of this charge, HBCUs also steward a heritage that is irreplaceable and vital to a true telling of this country’s history.

In the necessary balancing of often-competing priorities, such as institutional advancement, mission benefit, and preservation, too often the spaces that contribute meaning and depth to the campus landscape are neglected, altered, or demolished. This is illustrated most compellingly in the case of Lincoln University, the oldest degree-granting HBCU in the country. The University’s 2013 Master Plan called for the demolition of Azikiwe-Nkrumah Hall (fig. 1), the oldest building on campus, to make room for a new visitor’s center. This is a dramatic example of an institution seeking to grow to increase its social impact—a justified and necessary desire—but doing so at the expense of its most powerful heritage resource.

Many HBCUs face similar circumstances. These difficult negotiations have prompted a renewed recognition of the imperative to preserve HBCU heritage. In 2015, Congressman James Clyburn (D-SC) introduced H.R. 295, a bill to reauthorize the HBCU Historic Preservation Program. Between 1996 and 2009, this program provided $60 million in federal funding to 59 HBCUs. While this federal investment generated a wealth of knowledge about historic HBCU campuses and enabled the stabilization of many significant structures, it still represented only a fraction of the documented need. The reauthorization of the program would allocate $10 million to HBCU preservation through 2023.

Also in 2015, the National Trust for Historic Preservation designated two HBCUs—Howard University and Morgan State University—as National Treasures, a campaign that identifies places of extraordinary national significance that face an impending threat. The National Trust partnered with these schools to organize the development of a campus preservation plan and raise awareness of the importance of HBCU heritage. Shortly thereafter, the National Trust placed Azikiwe-Nkrumah Hall on its 11 Most Endangered List of 2016.

Stephanie Meeks, President and CEO of the Trust, emphasized the necessity of safeguarding places like Azikiwe-Nkrumah Hall that contribute to our historical understanding of social justice movements:

The educational and cultural significance of Azikiwe-Nkrumah Hall is unparalleled. At a time when people across the country are publicly contributing to the ongoing conversation on racial justice, we must recognize that some stories can only be told through the places where they happened.\(^5\)

As the preservation field becomes ever more conscious of its potential to contribute to the creation of a more socially just world, the sites that illustrate historic struggles against injustice will be essential for the visioning of a fair and inclusive future. Historic HBCU campuses do more than embody a historical narrative of activism and empowerment—they house a living history and a mission that enriches the lives of society’s underprivileged. The preservation of HBCU structures, as they speak to the potency and time-depth of this honorable mission, is of supreme importance.

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At a moment when HBCU heritage is attracting national attention, this thesis makes the case for the internal integration of preservation planning into general campus planning, while laying the groundwork for further study and implementation. Preservation planning is a critical tool that can help these institutions navigate the difficult negotiations between growth and preservation by building internal capacity for responsible stewardship and creating appropriate processes for considering historic resources. As well, this process encourages a broader campus awareness and appreciation of historic campus resources. Campus heritage needs to be repositioned as an asset—an investment that strengthens the institution by reinforcing its noble historic mission.

Justification

The necessity of incorporating preservation planning into general campus planning is widely acknowledged, but little dedicated attention is given to this same issue within the unique HBCU context. This thesis synthesizes research at the macro-scale—i.e. across all HBCUs—and at three individual HBCUs to establish a foundation for further study of HBCU preservation.

Moreover, this effort is timely. In the broader higher education field, the conversation too frequently turns to the relevance of HBCUs in a post-segregation era. HBCUs today compete with Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs) for high-achieving students, and detractors have claimed that their mission is outdated. These circumstances, intensified by the economic realities of much of the student and donor base, have led to concerns over HBCU sustainability. In response, HBCUs are redefining their role in the contemporary academic system in new terms of diversity and accessibility. The task for these schools is to balance these new roles and

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aspirations with the spirit of the historic HBCU mission. Heritage planning is a critical tool that will help HBCUs navigate this period of change so that they retain the values and places that add meaning to their campus and its experience. Preservation is a process that can deeply contribute to strengthening the institution by reinforcing its identity for a new age.

Methodology

This investigation integrates research broadly across all 105 HBCUs and in-depth at three HBCUs to construct a framework for better understanding the practice of preservation at these institutions. Chapter 2 provides a history of HBCUs—a history that is necessary to understanding the contemporary culture, mission, and impact of HBCUs. The chapter concludes with a summary of HBCU campus preservation efforts to date.

Chapter 3 examines what is referred to in this thesis as the “HBCU Context”—the unique climate and role that HBCUs occupy within the American higher education system. This chapter gives shape and form to this context by outlining the contemporary political, social, and financial context in which they operate as it is informed by the history and mission of HBCUs.

Chapter 4 begins with a summary of the most relevant literature on the integration of preservation within overall campus planning. This review is appended by a descriptive list of campus preservation tools that are employed in different combinations at most schools. Following this inventory of general preservation tools is a description of practices more specific to HBCUs. The practices explored in this section are not necessarily unique to HBCUs, but they demonstrate that which distinguishes HBCUs from otherwise similar schools: the primacy of the mission.

Chapter 5 explores preservation in depth at three HBCUs: Tuskegee University, Tougaloo College, and Virginia State University. However, prior to identifying these three schools for
closer study, an understanding of which HBCUs successfully carry out preservation—and how they are doing—was necessary. The author participated in an internship in the summer of 2016 with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, where she conducted much of the preliminary research and data gathering for this effort.

To understand the spectrum of preservation planning across all 105 HBCUs, each school was examined to determine whether the school had any of the following: a preservation plan, a master plan with preservation principles, historic preservation faculty, an architecture program, a course in historic preservation, and/or designation as a National Historic District. Data for this research was gathered through a survey of HBCU presidents and facility directors conducted by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, interviews with HBCU facilities staff, and what could be found on the school’s website or campus planning documents. Therefore, the result is not a completely accurate representation of campus preservation at all HBCUs, but it nevertheless provides a useful starting point for identifying case studies for further research. This data was organized into a matrix where each component receives a weighted score and the scores totaled for every school. This created a ranking system that visually represents which schools—on paper—have the strongest preservation infrastructure, on a scale from 0-8 (see Appendix B).

By breaking the matrix down into tiers, several categories of preservation infrastructure arose: High Infrastructure (6-8), Good Infrastructure (4-5), Moderate Infrastructure (3-2), Potential (1), and No Infrastructure (0). The schools analyzed in this thesis were not chosen solely based on their rank within the matrix, but they do represent the top three tiers within the spectrum of HBCU preservation. Interestingly, this tiered system created a list of schools “with potential”—every school that received a score of “1” is listed as a National Historic District but has no preservation plans or policies in place to protect the resources. Thus, it should also be
noted that preservation is not practiced at many HBCUs, and the schools chosen as case studies for this thesis in many ways represent exceptional and exemplary practice.

Chapter 5 analyses preservation planning and application at three HBCUs that emerged from this matrix analysis: Tuskegee University, Tougaloo College, and Virginia State University. Conversations with facilities staff and detailed readings of campus preservation documents informed these case studies. These schools were chosen to represent a range of approaches to preservation within the HBCU context—not necessarily because they are the “best” at preservation.

Chapter 6 synthesizes the lessons learned through this investigation about the practice of preservation at HBCUs. This study brings to light certain practices that are valuable within the HBCU context, which may be useful as inspiration for other schools seeking to incorporate preservation into their facilities management. The thesis concludes with a plea for greater support of preservation at HBCUs.

Terms

Within this thesis, the terms “college,” “university,” “school,” and “institution” are used interchangeably unless in the context or study of a specific college or university.

An HBCU is a historically black college or university. The Higher Education Act of 1965 designated 105 HBCUs and officially defines an HBCU as:

any historically black college or university that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was, and is, the education of black Americans, and that is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association determined by the Secretary of Education or is, according to such an agency or association, making reasonable progress toward accreditation.7

There are 105 HBCUs located within 20 states and the District of Columbia. HBCUs are principally located in the American South and Mid-Atlantic regions.

The common definition of a Predominantly White Institution (PWI) is an institution of higher learning where white students make up 50% or more of the enrollment. However, in the context of this thesis, these institutions can be understood as historically white institutions, in recognition of the binarism in the American education system prior to 1964. It is the historical context of segregation that defines and contrasts predominantly white colleges from those that serve minority student populations (e.g., historically black college and universities.) Likewise, “historically white” is used within this thesis to refer to the same category of institutions.

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9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
Chapter 2: History of HBCUs and HBCU Preservation

Early History

Prior to the Civil War, only 28 African Americans had received a college education from American schools, and there existed only five schools for the education of African Americans.11 Three of those schools still operate as HBCUs today: Cheyney University of Pennsylvania founded in 1837, Lincoln University of Pennsylvania founded in 1854, and Wilberforce University of Ohio founded in 1856.12 Aside from Lincoln University, these early schools did not function as colleges in the formal sense, but instead provided basic primary and secondary education or teacher training.

Numerous private HBCUs trace their roots to the era just following the Civil War, having been founded by the Freedmen’s Bureau, Black churches, or northern philanthropies and missionary organizations following Emancipation. Many of these early colleges took the shape of one room school houses, church basements, and even personal homes. William Savery and Thomas Tarrant— two former slaves— with the support of both the Freedmen’s Bureau and the American Missionary Association (AMA) founded Talladega College in 1865.13 Talladega originally existed only in a single room of a personal home until Savery and Tarrant could build a one room school house with salvaged lumber.14 In 1867, General Swayne of the Freedmen’s Bureau encouraged the AMA to purchase a recently vacated school building that had been built by slave labor for white male’s education to house the new African American school. That

12 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
building, still standing and today known as Swayne Hall (fig. 2), remains a powerful symbol of the institution's early aspirations and ideals.

With the passage of the Second Morrill Land Grant Act of 1890, an entirely new type of HBCU was born. The first Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862 created the Agricultural and Mechanical (A&M) university system that exists today—a network of public institutions that focused on education, applied sciences, agriculture, and engineering. The Second Morrill Act of 1890 mandated that any states receiving land-grant funds must either integrate or allocate funds for a segregated black A&M school. From 1870 to 1910, seventeen black public colleges were formed, creating a separate system of public higher education for African Americans.

At the outset of the 20th century, private funding from Northern missionaries was declining just as a new source was materializing. It came in the form of newly-rich white industrial philanthropy, provided by such names as Rockefeller, Carnegie, and Rosenwald. Their interest in black education was not entirely altruistic; it arose as these industrial moguls began to invest in Southern production and manufacturing, creating a demand for skilled labor. To meet that demand, they invested in schools that produced graduates in the industrial arts, such as Hampton or Tuskegee. Alabama A&M University, Florida A&M University, and Virginia State University are all examples of early land grant HBCUs.

It was this environment that drove the debate over the content of black education, often dramatized by the Booker T. Washington–W.E.B. DuBois dispute. Booker T. Washington

17 Ibid.
argued heavily in favor of an industrial, agricultural, or mechanical—and for women, domestic—focus in black curricula, as a means to immediately uplift the masses of a newly freed, but impoverished and uneducated population.\(^1\) This approach came to be known as the Hampton Model, after the Hampton Institute—Virginia’s first black land grant school and the first to institutionalize the practice. However, Booker T. Washington, a graduate of Hampton, would inarguably perfect the model at Tuskegee, the school he would later found. W.E.B. DuBois, on the other hand, advocated for a classical education, as the industrial approach was viewed by many—and rightly so—to be just another means of relegating African Americans to manual labor. Privately funded colleges, such as Fisk or Spelman, largely operated outside of the state's control and could offer a classical education with an emphasis on literature, philosophy, and sociology. Public black colleges, funded and controlled by white states, tended to follow the industrial model. The difference is significant, because private black colleges were the only institutions providing to African Americans what one would recognize today as a college education.

Despite the larger power struggles at play, African Americans were celebrating remarkable achievements at HBCUs, both private and public. By the mid-twentieth century, black college campuses had become intellectual and communal centers for the African American community where thought, expression, and exploration were unrestricted by preconceived assumptions of ability or controlled courses of study. There is perhaps no building that better illustrates their achievement than Founders Library at Howard University (fig. 3). Designed by the famous African American architect Albert I. Cassell and landscaped by the nation’s first black

\(^{1}\) Grandison, “From Plantation to Campus,” 11.
landscape architect, David Williston, Founders Library stands as a physical testimony to African American achievement within a free space. This building played a significant role in the ultimate test of social and racial progress by serving as the law school that nurtured such brilliant legal minds as Charles Hamilton Houston and Thurgood Marshall—men who would help end legalized segregation in American education through a landmark victory in Brown v. Board of Education.

_HBCUs during the Civil Rights Movement_

During the turbulent 1960s and 1970s, HBCUs powered the Civil Rights Movement. Students, faculty, and administrators spiritedly embraced the great tide of social change, and their campuses became hotbeds of political activism and protest. These campuses, through their shelter, support, and empowerment, would produce minds that would forever change race relations in this country. Rosa Parks, Medgar Evers, Bayard Rustin, Stokely Carmichael, Martin Luther King, Jr—these heroic men and women that shaped a new future for America were shaped by HBCUs. The historic halls and landscapes of HBCUs contribute to the memory of this magnificent campaign.

While still enrolled, many students took up the cause of the movement and became pioneers and leaders in the nonviolent sit-in movement. The students and faculty at Fisk University and American Baptist College used the city of Nashville as a testing and training ground to explore nonviolent tactics.¹⁹ American Baptist produced an astoundingly large number of Civil Rights graduates—Julias Scruggs, Bernard Lafayette, Jim Bevels, William Barbee

and John Lewis—many of whom lived in Griggs Hall (fig. 4), a building that the college celebrates with a historical marker (fig. 4). In 1960, North Carolina A&T University, Fisk University, and Bennett College led the two most influential lunch counter sit-ins in the movement. Following the Greensboro and Nashville sit-ins, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was founded in 1960 on Shaw University's campus through the initiative of Shaw student, Ella Baker. Two of SNCC’s most influential leaders graduated from HBCUs, John Lewis from Fisk and Stokely Carmichael from Howard. SNCC would grow into a national organization that would significantly contribute to the March on Washington, Freedom Summer in Mississippi, and the Black Power movement.

In the most hostily segregated of states, Tougaloo College (fig. 5) acted as a safe haven for local and national activists and protesters in Mississippi. Throughout the 1950s, the school hosted social science forums that supported an open, interracial dialogue that challenged the supremacy of Jim Crow in Mississippi. Over the long Civil Rights Movement, the college hosted Freedom Riders, Freedom Summer volunteers, SNCC and CORE workers, NAACP speakers, and activists of all walks of life and color.

Activism on HBCU campuses did not end with the Civil Rights Movement, however. In the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, students would hold protests to demand curricula changes on their campuses, pushing for more afro-centric subject matter. In 1967, students at Cheyney University took over the administration building to demand that the school offer Black

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20 Ibid, 15.
21 Brooks and Starks, 172.
23 Brooks and Starks, 175.
Studies. These efforts contributed to a more progressive and humanistic approach to the study of Black culture, one that allowed a greater focus on contemporary social and economic issues in race relations.

Today, HBCUs are the carriers that safeguard these memories and legacies.

HBCU Campus Preservation

In a 2011 article entitled “The Danger of History Slipping Away: The Heritage Campus and HBCUs,” Clement and Lidsky summarize the work completed since the 1980s to advance HBCU preservation and advocate for the introduction of an institutional preservation ethic. In 1988, the National Park Service began a grant program for HBCU Preservation. For over 20 years the program provided over $40 million to over 60 HBCUs. In 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act allotted $15 million to the HBCU Preservation Program. An earlier requirement that the schools match the federal funds was lifted in the name of stimulus, and 20 schools were able to stabilize or preserve historic structures. This program concluded in 2012, and funds are no longer earmarked within the NPS budget for HBCU preservation.

Clement and Lidsky summarize the contributions of The Getty Foundation to HBCU campus preservation. In 2002, the Getty Foundation began its Campus Heritage Initiative, and by 2007 the Initiative awarded $13.5 million in grants to 86 campuses. These grants supported the documentation and survey of historic resources, development of condition assessments, and the preparation of campus preservation plans. In total, 10 HBCUs received these grants:

24 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
Bennett College, Clark Atlanta University, Dillard University, Morehouse College, Talladega College, Tougaloo College, Tuskegee University, Virginia Union University, Savannah State University and Fort Valley State University. The only HBCU preservation master plans to be completed to date were a result of the Campus Heritage Initiative.

Clement and Lidsky end their article with a cautionary warning:

Over the years, a number of HBCUs have closed their doors and no longer exist. Reasons cited for their closing range from loss of accreditation to inadequate financial resources, low student enrollment, and weak leadership. [...] An educational institution has many conflicting needs and priorities, and by postponing improvements to the physical plant, emphasis can shift to the academic program or to student life. It is a matter of survival. Unfortunately, buildings deteriorate overtime through constant use. The cost of deferring maintenance increases over the years. Many HBCUs, with only modest financial resources, have found themselves in this situation. Campuses with historic buildings are in a double bind. First, they have been entrusted with the stewardship of these culturally and architecturally significant buildings without the resources to care for them. Second, these buildings, many ranging from 70 to 100 years old, are often no longer suitable for current use and are in some cases vacant. They have become eyesores on the campus. Additionally, many buildings constructed during the 1960s and '70s with low-cost government loans are now aging and in desperate need of updating and repair. These buildings are actively used, but are woefully lacking in new instructional technology and do not comply with current building codes.

Their answer to these challenges is institutional planning and a strong preservation ethic at the administrative level—they avow that campus leadership must adopt a proactive, strategic, and continuously ongoing approach to campus preservation, ideally in the form of a separate campus heritage plan. The recommendations from this standalone plan should be integrated into the overall strategic vision and applied in future capital decision making. Clement and Lidsky assert that half of HBCUs fail to take advantage of federal and foundational funding for preservation planning for several reasons:

One answer is probably the lack of financial resources and technical assistance needed to do the preliminary planning and assessment required to document the significance of

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a historic property, to get it nominated to the National Register, and to propose treatment recommendations that comply with the Department of Interior standards. Another may be that the president has acknowledged that the task of restoring a historic building is too daunting and prefers to focus his or her energies on developing a new facility that will become a legacy for the current administration.29

This article highlights several key issues facing HBCU preservation: insufficient funding, deferred maintenance, and institutional priorities. Insufficient funding is covered in depth in the chapter on HBCU context, but deferred maintenance and institutional priorities deserve further exploration.

Deferred Maintenance

In 1998, in an effort to make the case for increased federal funding for HBCU preservation, the U.S. General Accounting Office issued the first (and only) comprehensive survey of preservation at HBCUs, entitled “Historic Preservation: Cost to Restore Historic Properties at Historically Black Colleges and Universities.” The goal of the survey was two-fold: determine the number of historic properties located on HBCUs and estimate the cost to restore and preserve these properties. The findings show that, in 1998, there were 712 historic properties owned by HBCUs and roughly half were already listed on the National Register of Historic Places.30 According to the self-recorded cost estimates provided by the schools, the cost to restore all of the properties would have been $755 million.31 Adjusting for inflation and without taking into account later preservation efforts, that figure would come to about $1.1 billion today. Among the other significant findings of this study were that the majority of historic

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29 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
properties are located at a small number of schools—about 66 percent of the total 712 properties were found at just 28 schools. Additionally, the study found that most of the $755 million necessary to restore properties at HBCUs is concentrated in less than half of the HBCUs total. $681.2 million of the total was reported from only 44 schools.\textsuperscript{32}

This study, though nearly 20 years old, represents the best estimate of the total amount of deferred maintenance affecting historic structures at HBCUs. However, preservation efforts since 1998 have undoubtedly affected these figures—as have, presumably, further deterioration over these past 20 years.

\textit{Institutional Priorities – Negotiating between Growth and Preservation}

Much like PWIs, the greatest challenge facing HBCUs is the need to adapt and grow to remain competitive in the 21st century. In “Sustainability and Preservation in an Age of Campus Innovation,” Theodore Landsmark outlines the struggle that colleges face to remain sustainable in a competitive age of campus modernization, while also being responsible stewards of their historic resources.\textsuperscript{33} He affirms that in the 21st century, the expense of state-of-the-art research centers or extensive recreational facilities is easily justified as essential for attracting students and providing the best educational experience.\textsuperscript{34} However, colleges with older and historic buildings often have to justify the repurposing of potentially obsolete buildings when new construction may align more closely with institutional ambitions.

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid, 7.

\textsuperscript{33} Theodore Landsmark, “Sustainability in an Age of Campus Innovation: historically preserved facilities exhibit a commitment to sustainability that is not always apparent in newer ‘green’ facilities,” \textit{Planning for Higher Education} 39, no. 3 (2011): 51.

\textsuperscript{34} Ibid, 51-52.
At HBCUs, there is a third dimension to this negotiation. Capital decisions must also be weighed against the potential impact on the school's ability to empower and uplift its student base. Facilities that support cutting-edge research, attract grants, or produce competitive graduates align closely with the HBCU mission. Again, this is a concern for many institutions, but at HBCUs, the need is more forceful.
Chapter 3: The HBCU Context

The 105 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) across the United States are a treasure trove of historically and architecturally significant structures, and like any other post-secondary institution, the process of caring for these historic resources is contingent on a variety of external factors. HBCUs are subject to the same challenges as all institutions of higher education—dwindling financial support, greater reliance on tuition revenue, decreasing enrollment, etc. However, it is important to recognize that at the same time, HBCUs operate in a vastly different context within the higher education system than otherwise similar institutions. A range of unique opportunities and challenges arise from this particular context—the most common being that HBCUs are well situated to generate great social impact, but the demands of this mission often affect financial sustainability.

This chapter gives shape to the HBCU context, in all its commonalities but particularly its peculiarities. This context provides a better understanding of the specific challenges facing these institutions as they care for their aging structures, but also the opportunities that preservation creates for increased impact.

HBCU Context

As stated previously, recognizing that HBCUs operate in a significantly different context than most other schools is a ground rule for any assessment of HBCUs. A wealth of literature has already helped to flesh out the unique position of HBCUs in the higher-education system.35 This context is tied intrinsically to the history of HBCUs as well as contemporary social and economic

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35 See Albrittion 2012; Arnett 2014; Brown & Burnette 2014; Cook & Cordova 2006; Gasman 2010; Gasman 2013; Kim and Conrad 2006; Minor 2008b; Perna et al 2006; Sav 2000.
circumstances. Thus, the implications of these factors need parsing out. This study will focus on three critical components of the HBCU context: the funding deficit, the value-added nature, and the unintended effects of desegregation.

*The Funding Deficit*

Undeniably, the greatest threat to preservation on HBCU campuses is a lack of funding. Private HBCUs tend to fare worse than public HBCUs because they must rely more heavily upon donations and fundraising rather than federal and state funding.\(^\text{36}\) Even among public universities however, HBCUs are not supported to the same degree as their white counterparts.\(^\text{37}\) Funds at the federal level are distributed more equitably, even if still inefficient to meet operational and capital budget needs, but at the state level, HBCU advocates and administrators must frequently pressure lawmakers for consistent and fair funding.

*Federal Funding*

In “Comprehensive Funding Approaches for Historically Black Colleges and Universities,” Gasman provided a policy brief on the state of HBCU funding and a set of recommendations for moving forward. She cites Title III, part B of the Higher Education Act of 1965, which mandates that the federal government provide grants to HBCUs to support programming, capital improvements and renovations, endowment building infrastructure, etc. The average amount given on average to each HBCU is $2 million, which unfortunately does very little in the way of creating parity with PWIs.\(^\text{38}\)


\(^{37}\) Ibid, 1-4.

\(^{38}\) Ibid, 1.
In 2013, HBCUs were awarded $4,758,941,493 in grants from federal departments and agencies, compared to $172,369,578,639 awarded to institutions of higher education overall. This represented 2.8 percent of all funds awarded, and this percentage allotted to HBCUs has been steadily decreasing since 2007, when the percentage was 3.1 percent. From 1993 to 2002, federal funding increased by 40 percent for all institutions and 24 percent for HBCUs. Over those nine years, the funding for HBCUs as a percentage of the total funding for all higher education institutions remained flat.

On the declining percentage of federal funds granted to HBCUs overall, Dr. William Harvey, president of Hampton University, reported “Federal support for HBCUs is showing an alarming downward trend [...] Pell Grants to our students are down. Direct loans to our students are down. In addition to student support, overall support to Black colleges is down. All of these changes had a significant impact in terms of availability of funding for students.” Many in the HBCU community have expressed dissatisfaction with the federal government’s support of HBCUs under the Obama administration, and this sentiment has been echoed by researchers who hold that the impact of the White House Initiative on HBCUs (WHI) has been less than hoped for. The President, though he has worked to empower the WHI, has placed a greater emphasis on HBCU accountability and performance as measures of institutional success. This approach is ill-suited to the mission of HBCUs, which focuses on providing access to low income

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39 Minor, Contemporary HBCUs, 24.
40 Ibid.
42 Minor, Contemporary HBCUs, 6.
43 Marybeth Gasman, Comprehensive Funding Approaches for Historically Black Colleges and Universities, 1.
and at-risk students. The WHI’s own advisory board has criticized the government’s support, claiming that frequent disregard for the board’s recommendations, poor cooperation between federal agencies, and decreased federal funding for HBCUs overall severely limit the WHI’s effectiveness. Dr. Earl Richardson, former president of Morgan State University said, “The failure of the president to address the issue of equity in funding for Black colleges and equal opportunity for the students they serve is an abomination and its impact will be multiplied many times over.”

**State Funding**

James T. Minor, in “Considering Contemporary HBCUs,” studied in-depth the funding disparities at the state level across four states: Louisiana, Alabama, North Carolina, and Mississippi. His study revealed

> “consistent patterns indicating the tendency of legislators and higher education leaders to invest significant portions of funding in flagship institutions. Base budget processes and traditional funding patterns limit the ability of states to narrow degree attainment disparities.”

He accordingly found that the majority of state funding goes to schools that already have large endowments and whose student body is already overrepresented in higher education. Minor found that funding formulas in the four states studied took into account such factors as enrollment number, program diversity, and cost to administer those programs. Such formulas inherently favor state and flagship schools that have larger enrollments, wider arrays of program offerings, and more research facilities. Another researcher claimed that “an overall

44 Ibid.
45 Earl Richardson, quoted in Arnett, “State of HBCUs,” par. 15.
46 Minor, Contemporary HBCUs, 23.
redistribution of state funding would be necessary to move historically black and predominately white colleges and universities toward funding equality.”47

While it is true that the state must provide more support for schools that enroll more students or require more resources for research, large disparities still exist in some states in terms of funding per student. Minor found that in North Carolina, PWIs receive over $15,000 in state funding per student, whereas the state’s HBCUs only receive $7,800.48 He found only few instances were state funding was intentionally used to narrow the gap in degree attainment by direct investments in HBCUs.

Many states must provide additional funding to HBCUs in fulfillment of desegregation settlements or due to mandates addressing historical funding disparities. However, researchers and HBCU legal advocates claim that the structures of these settlements will not be sufficient to address the effect of historical discrimination on present inequities.49 Many of these settlements have a benchmark or end point, and once it is reached, this line of support for HBCUs will end. For example, the desegregation agreement in Louisiana reached its end in 2006, and since then the funds previously allotted to HBCUs are now considered general funding.50 These settlements do not change the funding formulas that determine state funding distributions, and so they are only temporary accessions.

HBCU scholars affirm that increasing fundraising capacity is the surest path to institutional sustainability, because a large endowment and strong alumni giving programs are

48 Minor, Contemporary HBCUs, 23.
50 Minor, Contemporary HBCUs, 26.
the best defense against issues with accreditation, student retention, leadership, etc.\textsuperscript{51} Institutional sustainability would undoubtedly aid preservation planning efforts, taking the conversation away from survival and refocusing on long-term planning.

\textit{Value-Added Nature}

The value-added nature is simply the principle that HBCUs do more with less.\textsuperscript{52} James T. Minor, in “Contemporary HBCUs: Considering Institutional Capacity and State Priorities,” begins his analysis by outlining the impact that HBCUs affect, despite the limitations imposed by insufficient funding:

HBCUs, which represent less than 3 percent of all postsecondary institutions, produce 25 percent of African American graduates. Furthermore, HBCUs graduate 40 percent or more of all African Americans who receive degrees in physics, chemistry, astronomy, environmental sciences, mathematics, and biology. Approximately 40 percent of African Americans with PhDs earned bachelor’s degrees from HBCUs. Black doctors attended HBCUs. Additionally, several studies document increased developmental gains and increased satisfaction with the college experience among African American college students who attend HBCUs compared to their counterparts who attend historically white institutions. Collectively, HBCUs sustain the pipeline of educated African American college graduates who help diversify graduate programs and the U.S. workforce.\textsuperscript{53}

Indeed, the research of countless scholars has shown time and again that HBCUs over perform for the resources at their disposal. Minor affirms that as the country moves ever closer to becoming a majority-minority nation in the 21st century, the critical function that HBCUs serve as a pipeline for workforce diversity can no longer be ignored.\textsuperscript{54} If the United States is to remain

\textsuperscript{53} Minor, Contemporary HBCUs, 8.
\textsuperscript{54} Minor, Contemporary HBCUs, 8.
globally competitive, it must educate more of its population, and more of these graduates need to come from STEM and other high needs programs—fields in which HBCUs have a proven track record of producing competitive, diverse graduates.\textsuperscript{55} Moreover, Minor notes that HBCUs make these incredible contributions with far fewer resources than their predominantly white counterparts while making it their mission to accept at-risk and low-income students—students that realistically require more resources per head to succeed. As the nation’s population diversifies, global competition increases, and financial support for education declines, PWIs will have much to learn from HBCUs about access, retention, and using sparse resources to educate a diverse student body.\textsuperscript{56}

Other scholars have analyzed this particular aspect of the HBCU context—that they overperform for the limited resources at their disposal. In 2014, Gasman and Commodore produced “The State of Research on Historically Black Colleges and Universities” in which they examined the existing academic literature on the strengths and weaknesses of HBCUs. Their goal was to better understand the needs of HBCUs to chart a course for advancing these institutions in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century. They determined the strengths of HBCUs to be (1) their value-added nature (the willingness to accept “at-risk” students), (2) affordability, (3) community engagement, (4) leadership training for future generations, (5) Afrocentric curricula and a supportive environment, (6) a focus on teaching, and (7) faculty and student diversity.\textsuperscript{57} The weaknesses were determined to be (1) low retention and graduation rates, (2) lack of financial resources and competition from PWIs, (3) the need for sustainable leadership, (4) lack of

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{57} Marybeth Gasman and Felecia Commodore, “The state of research on historically Black colleges and universities,” 90.
marketing of HBCU success stories, (5) the pressures of desegregation and holding true to
mission, (6) the challenge of producing future scholars who care about the needs of HBCUs, (7)
small endowments, and (8) the persistent gender gap in enrollment. 58

Of particular interest here is the “value-added” nature of HBCUs. Gasman and
Commodore cite a number of studies that support Minor’s claim that HBCUs have always “done
more with less.”59 The authors note that because HBCUs are underfunded compared to PWIs
and are more likely to accept students ill-served by their K-12 schools, they therefore have a
larger positive impact on their students in terms of job-attainment and economic advancement
than otherwise similar institutions. The “value-added” nature of HBCUs has come to be a
baseline principle in thinking about HBCUs.

The Unintended Effects of Desegregation

Minor’s “Contemporary HBCUs: Considering Institutional Capacity and State Priorities”
provides data driven evidence about enrollment and degree program equity among HBCUs in
four states: Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and North Carolina. He paid particular attention to
the effect that desegregation policies—and their unenthusiastic or inconsistent enforcement—
have had on HBCUs in the last century.

Undeniably, many great strides were made in the last 62 years towards a more
equitable public education system. Higher education equity litigation, Supreme Court mandates,
and hard fought battles on college campuses have opened the doors for minority students to

58 Ibid, 90-91.
59 See Kim and Conrad 2006; Brown and Davis 2001; Allen 1992; DeSousa and Kuh, 1996; Fries-Britt and
turner, 2002.
attend predominantly white institutions (PWIs). Yet despite these laudable strides, student movement typically flows in one direction: today a greater percentage of African American students are enrolled at PWIs, while at most HBCUs the number of White students has remained consistently low. As all institutions become increasingly dependent on tuition revenue, this has had major consequences for institutional capacity at HBCUs—and this is an issue unique to HBCUs.

Desegregation is often pointed to as a reason why some HBCUs struggle, and this has led some to question their relevance in a post-segregation era. The issue at hand is not that there should be a certain mathematical racial quota at either HBCUs or PWIs, but that desegregation policies have not had the intended effect of creating parity in higher education. Minor affirms that they have not created an environment that supports HBCUs to the same level that state schools are supported, and they have not strengthened the schools that do the best job of educating those least likely to otherwise receive a college education. HBCUs have the same ambitions as all other modern academic institutions—to attract a diverse and highly competitive student body—but they are tasked with far greater responsibilities that they must carry out with significantly fewer resources.

Robert Palmer and Marybeth Gasman in “A Matter of Diversity, Equity and Necessity: The Tension between Maryland’s Higher Education System and its Historically Black Institutions over the OCR Agreement” explain the consequences that weakly enforced desegregation legislation have on the capacity of HBCUs. They explore unequal funding and program

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60 Minor, Contemporary HBCUs, 16.
duplication in Maryland, demonstrating that many HBCUs today still have to fight for fair
treatment under the law. This alone distinguishes HBCUs from otherwise similarly struggling
institutions.

Chapter 4: Campus Preservation Planning

To set the stage for an analysis of preservation planning at HBCUs, it is useful to understand the recognized practices in campus preservation. This chapter will provide a brief review of the most relevant literature on campus preservation practices and identify the tools commonly employed to care for historic structures on college and university campuses. The chapter then explores preservation practices at HBCUs that are deeply tied to the history of HBCUs and their special mission: interpretation, affiliations, and historical consciousness in promotional messaging.

Integrating Preservation into Campus Planning

The issue of preservation on college campuses has been the subject of conferences, theses, and journal issues. Several planning experts have analyzed preservation planning strategies and written how-to guides and rubrics for the task, and from their writing a best-practice model arises. Specifically, the 2011 special issue of Planning for Higher Education—titled “Integrated Planning to Ensure the Preservation of Campus Heritage”—represents the most current compendium of campus preservation strategies, with 22 articles covering a wide range of issues in campus heritage management.

In an article entitled “The Stewardship of Campus Heritage,” Calvert W. Audrain identifies various components to the stewardship of campus heritage, namely:

identifying and designating heritage buildings or sites; creating a campus plan that includes a section on heritage; setting up a systematic process for maintenance that addresses campus heritage issues; developing a process of budgeting for maintenance

and recapitalization; and recognizing the larger context of campus heritage, including its impact on local neighborhoods.  

Audrain emphasizes that identification, documentation, and protection of historic resources is a critical first step in campus stewardship. Of particular interest, given the specific issues facing HBCU preservation, are the “systematic process for maintenance” and the “budgeting and recapitalization process.” He emphasizes the necessity that buildings remain in use continuously, and that forward-looking systems be in place to plan for the financing of maintenance long into the future.

Also relevant from this issue of *Planning for Higher Education* is an article by Charles A. Craig, David N. Fixler, and Sarah D. Kelly, entitled “A Rubric for Campus Heritage Planning.” Their rubric is organized into a three part matrix: (1) Case Statement; (2) Planning Rubric; (3) Critical Issues to Anticipate. In the first component, the authors emphasize the importance of outlining goals for the planning process in order to determine objectives and priorities. It is also necessary to understand “existing baseline conditions.” This entails a thorough understanding of the campus’s historical evolution, current funding realities, institutional capacity, etc. This stage of the process is important both for affirming the significance of the resources and prioritizing future capital projects.

Part 2 of the rubric is essentially a task list, beginning with data collection as Audrain stated. Campus planners should first identify and inventory significant buildings and landscapes, then survey these resources for conditions, previous alterations or repairs, and code

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Before taking this collected information and diving into the planning process, planners should clearly understand the regulatory environment to better comprehend both local and national requirements as well as funding opportunities. With this information, the authors assert that the planning process can begin. The steps that they recommend for each identified resource are as follow:

1. Prioritize the component aspects contributing to historic character,
2. Identify potential funding sources for established priorities,
3. Establish a project schedule for long-term improvements,
4. Identify partnering organizations to assist with projects,
5. Clarify stakeholder groups to be informed as planning and projects advance,
6. Determine a long-term plan and budget required for ongoing maintenance,
7. Create a listing of potential construction projects in the immediate surroundings that may have an impact on historic campus resources.

The third and final component of the rubric anticipates issues that may arise at various phases of the planning process.

David Neuman contributed “Beyond an Initial Campus Heritage Survey: Creating an Infrastructure for Renewal” for the special issue, in which he discusses various permanent planning systems and structures at the University of Virginia that support continuous preservation. These include the appointments of a senior historic preservation planner and a staff conservator, as well as facilities staff members knowledgeable and experienced in historic preservation. Additionally, the university has a voluntary Historic Preservation Advisory Committee. Furthermore, Neuman emphasizes that preservation must be framed within the context of larger institutional goals, such as sustainability, mission, branding, and fundraising.
On the topic of economics and finance, an important issue especially within the HBCU context, Dale McGirr and Ron Kull wrote an article entitled “Campus Heritage Planning: Understanding the Economics and Managing the Financing.” Their article makes the financial argument for campus preservation based on their experience working on the University of Cincinnati campus plan. The authors claim that investments in campus heritage can result in monetary returns in the form of increased enrollment, faculty recruitment, alumni engagement, and fundraising—a happy prospect for schools with limited resources. The authors argue that there are elements of a campus heritage that can be valued, though their value may not be immediately recognizable in a monetary sense. These elements are tradition, brand, legacy, image, and sense of place—which together are important for creating an environment that is attractive both physically and spiritually. The authors claim that, “A great institution has to look good in order to sell its underlying quality and future to supporters.”

It is also important to plan for the far future, and to expect the results to be more long-term:

Economic value is built over several fiscal periods at the very least and typically with a lag time between investment and return, so any system that forecasts future value must be able to look at a period of 10 to 15 years to capture full value and compare projects fairly. We recommend a 15- year model since the completion of the capital investment often takes three or more years, followed by a lag time of three to five years before the “heritage” of the new asset resonates with the local culture and general public with a positive effect on their decision to attend or support an institution.

In 2013, Sarah VanLandingham wrote a thesis entitled “A Seat at the Table: Integrating Historic Preservation in Comprehensive Campus Planning.” VanLandingham analyzed various tools that can be better used by planners to integrate historic resources into campus planning:


72 Ibid, 195.
identification and inventory, building condition survey, landscape survey, local and national designation, preservation facilities staff, robust maintenance programs, partnerships, etc. She found that the specific tools used were not the critical component, but rather the way they are used—in isolation or as part of a holistic planning program.

General Campus Preservation Tools

Inventory

An important first step in the heritage planning process for any campus is the identification and evaluation of historic resources. At the most basic level, this inventory may provide only a cursory list of buildings with relevant information, such as the building’s age, materials, and use. Generally, an inventory would include construction date, architect/planner, current use and change through time, role in the institutions development, the resource’s historic role in its neighborhood, its contemporary impact on surroundings, and its contribution to the campus’s historical significance. A more extensive inventory may document the history, details, and values of each building. While it is important to know what the existing assets are in order to better plan for their futures, the limitations of a survey should be noted: “Despite this significance, a survey is not sufficient for planning purposes because it does not generally look at assets in relation to one another. Likewise, the focus on individual buildings overshadows the

experiential nature of a campus.” By focusing on individual buildings, these inventories also often omit landscapes altogether.

Various universities have arrived at different methods of organizing their surveys by significance or integrity to aid in decision-making processes. An example from the University of Mary Washington demonstrates several approaches that were considered before ultimately deciding on a tiered system of categorization:

Using National Register status as the basis for building analysis was almost immediately dismissed as ineffective in the context of UMW since none of the university buildings are listed. Furthermore, a single binary system seemed too inflexible considering the variety of buildings on campus. A tier classification system, based loosely on English Heritage’s model of grade levels I–III, was considered as a possibility in part because it addressed some of these concerns. Further, as was noted by committee member Julie Langan of the Department of Historic Resources, this classification had met with success elsewhere in Virginia. In particular, this system would allow priorities to be assigned to certain structures without the need for individual numerical rankings, which can often lead to problems. However, the tier system would not be as clear-cut as a traditional National Register listing, thus allowing for the inclusion of structures of moderate significance or integrity. Ultimately, the tier classification system was adopted with no opposition from either the Preservation Plan Committee or the Seacobeck Resolution Committee.

An inventory that categorizes resources into simply contributing and non-contributing is useful in that it allows for clear-cut decision-making. This approach may be particularly useful for a campus with few historically significant resources, or for a campus with structures already listed on the National Register, as this may also align with tax credit incentives. Alternatively, a more

77 Tax credit incentives aren’t available to entities that pay no income taxes in the first place, such as non-profit colleges.
nuanced system may be required for a campus that identifies multiple periods of significance throughout its history.

The implementation of the University of Virginia’s Historic Preservation Framework Plan in 2006 created a system for evaluating the university’s vast range of significant resources. In the process, conducting this survey helped to create a “heightened sense of awareness within the campus, the regional community, and the university’s network of supporter that there are other historic preservation resources that extend far beyond the traditional Jeffersonian appeal of the Academic Village to alumni, faculty, and students.”78 Their comprehensive system places every building and landscape on a spectrum of significance and integrity that allows for a thoughtful consideration of its treatment weighted against other priorities. It is important to note that inventories are not timeless, and therefore a corollary best practice is the re-inventory. An inventory should have a required or recommended duration built into it, identifying a point in the future when the inventory should be redone or updated.

Building and Landscape Survey

Following resource identification, a survey of condition, previous repairs or alterations, and code compliance is necessary. Craig et al., in creating a rubric for campus heritage planning, emphasize the need to detail condition in this inventory:

The survey of building and landscape conditions is a vital component that must be carried to a level of detail that not only clarifies which elements are historic, but also identifies challenging conditions such as deterioration and code violations.79

79 Craig, “Rubric,” 63.
Similarly, a landscape survey is important to help the university determine which historic open spaces contribute to the campus’s character, and which are flexible open spaces with development potential.

Cataloguing both the significance and condition of the campus’s historic resources is essential for facilities staff to determine which “projects to undertake first and to justify the expenditure.” A condition and code-compliance survey is especially beneficial for helping a university determine a capital budget and minimize if not prevent deferred maintenance.

Local and National Register Designation

There are many incentives for nationally or locally designating a campus’s historic properties—raising awareness of significant campus features, boosting the profile of the campus, ensuring some degree of campus continuity between various generations of decision makers. Depending on the public or private nature of the institution, National designation will entail different requirements:

For private institutions, listing on the National Register does not in and of itself place any restrictions on what can be done to a building. On the other hand, for public and state-related institutions, listed structures are subject to Section 106 review for any substantial changes using federal or state funding. [Though Section 106 review would still pertain to a private institution using federal dollars.] These considerations increase in states that have a review process at the state level that is like that of Section 106.

The usual incentive behind National Register designation—the rehabilitation tax credit—is not available for universities and colleges because of their tax-exempt status. There are

80 VanLandingham, “A Seat at the Table,” 51.
81 VanLandingham, “A Seat at the Table,” 36.
82 Ibid.
83 Ibid.
opportunities for these institutions to make use of this tool “through the use of creative public-private financing partnerships.”

Of 105 HBCUs, 70 have at least one historic structure listed on the National Register (see Appendix A). Local designation affords a site even greater protections, and may be a useful added layer of technical input for schools that seek to responsibly preserve their structures, but lack the in-house preservation knowledge. This is an appropriate preservation strategy for HBCUs, as it confers prestige to the campus, raises both internal and community awareness of the campus’s significance, and opens up certain financial incentives.

Public-Private Partnerships

There exists a range of partnerships that universities and colleges might engage in to make preservation projects feasible. Schools might collaborate with a local nonprofit preservation organization for technical assistance, or with a private developer to help finance a rehabilitation project. The Getty Foundation published a research report that describes Public-Private Partnerships as follows:

Public Private Partnerships bring together the skills and assets of all partners to deliver a public service or good for public consumption by providing incentives for both public and private sectors. These skills are often complementary, with the private sector usually providing capital or fund-raising, technical expertise, and efficient deliver. Their third sector will bring local knowledge, concerns, and interests. In exchange, the public sector usually, but not always, provides the asset, the regulatory framework, and financial incentives, such as a one-time subsidy or grant or other significant tax incentives that help attract private investment.

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84 Ibid, 37.
85 No data has been collected on the existence of local register designation or local historic districts among HBCUs.
The partnership model is particularly useful for schools committed to the care of their historic properties, but lacking the capacity, technical knowledge, or financial resources to carry out a large-scale preservation project. The effective use of partnerships can help to unite diverse institutional and community interests around the causes of heritage, economic development, and sustainability. Historic preservation tax credits incentivize collaboration with a private partner, making preservation feasible and achievable.

Preservation Staff, Faculty, or Committee

Most institutions with historic resources would benefit from having a preservation expert within their facilities staff. While many schools cannot afford the luxury of a dedicated preservation staff member, most schools would benefit from educating their facilities staff on the significance of historic structures on campus. Richard P. Dober, of the campus planning firm Dober, Lidsky, & Mathey, advocates that each campus have “a tenured academic position responsible for promoting campus heritage.” At the University of Virginia, in addition to University Architect, the campus employs a Senior Historic Preservation Planner and a University Conservator. The school has also instituted an advisory group of preservation professionals and affiliates to counsel the campus’s facilities team:

87 VanLandingham, “A Seat at the Table,” 37.
Forest, Colonial Williamsburg, and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. The group meets quarterly to advise the Office of the Architect on preservation issues and specific projects and to exchange mutually beneficial knowledge related to preservation.90

These measures might not be appropriate for every institution. “This tool is best used at institutions for which the historic fabric is an integral part of the identity of the school and at which the institutions places an exceptionally high value on the quality of all changes to the fabric.”91

Deferred Maintenance Program

Deferred maintenance is especially vexing for schools with limited resources, because backlogged maintenance is often as much a financial concern as it is a conditions monitoring and planning issue. Sara VanLandingham attests that maintenance issues are often exacerbated by the capital funding structure of universities:

One of the issues associated with [deferred maintenance] is the multiple budget areas through which new construction and the maintenance of existing buildings are funded. Typically, new construction and major restoration/renovation projects are funded through capital outlays. By contrast, funding for the maintenance, operation, and small repair work required is usually part of an annual operating budget. When there is more work needed than financial resources available, such tasks are postponed until the next fiscal year.92

Preventative care is clearly the preferable—not to mention least costly—approach to maintaining historic buildings. It is essential that universities understand the long-term cost

90 Ibid.
91 VanLandingham, “A Seat at the Table,” 57.
92 VanLandingham, “A Seat at the Table,” 38.
saving benefits of regular maintenance and early action.\textsuperscript{93} A system of “monitoring and prioritization [should be established] so that developing pathologies can be arrested.”\textsuperscript{94}

Preservation Practices at HBCUs

A goal of this thesis is to better understand how HBCUs practice preservation. Ostensibly, the tools and processes employed at HBCUs are highly similar to that of any other institution, and the case studies in Chapter 4 demonstrate that HBCUs use many combinations of the tools outlined in the previous section. Yet while the technical procedures may be comparable, this thesis argues that an interpretative and mission-driven emphasis distinguishes HBCU preservation. To this end, there are three loose categories of practices that differentiate HBCU preservation from that of other institutions of higher learning: interpretation, affiliations, and historical consciousness in promotional material. These practices are certainly not exclusive to HBCUs, nor are they practiced at every HBCU. They are, however, practices that arise from the unique HBCU context.

Interpretation

Of 105 HBCUs, 66 interpret the history of their campus through historic markers or plaques. While this statistic is compelling in itself, the content and form of this interpretation are truly remarkable. This section will briefly explore different forms of interpretation at HBCUs in an attempt to differentiate these practices from that at historically white institutions.

\textsuperscript{93} Ibid, 61.\textsuperscript{94} Ibid.
Several HBCUs offer historical walking tours or curate a historic structure on their campus as a museum. Bethune-Cookman University is one such school. Mary McLeod Bethune, an activist, educator, and stateswoman, founded the school in 1904. She was an impressive figure—several times referred to as a “very determined young black woman”—who founded the school as the “Daytona Educational and Industrial School for Negro Girls,” with only $1.50 and five young girls.95 Bethune was appointed the Administrative Assistant for Negro Affairs in 1936—a title that was later changed to Director of the Division of Negro Affairs in 1939—making her the first African American woman to head a federal agency.96

Today, Bethune-Cookman University interprets her powerful presence by various means. Bethune’s campus home, a simple frame structure referred to as “The Retreat,” is operated as a historic house museum that receives thousands of visitors a year. The museum houses the Mary McLeod Bethune Foundation, which offers guided tours of the home and curates a collection of artifacts and furniture that are original to the home or were the personal belongings of Bethune.97 Additionally, Bethune’s campus home is listed as a National Historic Landmark, and it is a site on the National Park Service’s Mary McLeod Bethune Trail. This interpretive trail connects the sites related to Bethune’s life, including her birthplace in South Carolina and the first headquarters of the National Council of Negro Women in Washington D.C., an organization she founded shortly after accepting a position in the Roosevelt Administration.98

96 Ibid.
Thus, even on Bethune-Cookman’s campus, visitors can learn about Bethune’s lifelong achievements.

In contrast to the sweeping scale of such interpretation, Bethune-Cookman also interprets this history within its own campus. The school’s website offers an interactive campus map that features customizable tours. One of these tours relates to the historic sites on campus—it allows the user to click on a site, see a picture of the structure, and read about its history and significance. It is an elegant tool that allows the University to share its history with a wide audience, while giving students, faculty, and staff a deeper sense of their shared history.

Several other HBCUs similarly offer historic tours or interpret historic structures as museums. Tuskegee University, in addition to the tours offered by the National Park Service as part of the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site, offers its own in-house historic campus tours. Tougaloo College curates the home of Medgar Evers as a museum, interpreting his work, assassination, and the Civil Rights struggle in Mississippi. The case studies in Chapter 4 will examine these examples more closely.

The majority of HBCUs interpret their history more passively using historic markers and plaques. This is an effective and low-maintenance method of interpretation, and it is well suited to the means of many HBCUs. That is not to say that this method is lesser. On the contrary, the messages relayed through the signage at HBCUs are historically rich and compelling.

Oakwood University is an HBCU located in Huntsville, Alabama that tells its colorful and intriguing history through a comprehensive system of historic markers. The school was founded in 1896 as the “Oakwood Industrial School.” It is located on the site of a former slave plantation,

and it receives its name from the towering oak trees that once dotted the plantation.\textsuperscript{100} Thus, the interpretive markers take visitors through the site’s long history—from slavery through the progression of farm school to University. The interpretation is compelling in that it emphasizes absent heritage—structures that were removed or no longer exist. This raises a noteworthy theme within HBCU preservation—that of landscape and its importance. Within African American heritage sites, landscape takes on increased significance because, historically, African Americans had little control over their own narrative or power to determine what features of the landscape would be preserved. What does remain on the landscape allows for a fascinating account of how these men and women navigated a hostile environment with limited resources.\textsuperscript{101} By highlighting sites that existed on the landscape in the past, this interpretive scheme paints a powerful narrative of change over time. This is illustrated most movingly by a historical marker designating the site where a slave block once stood on the former plantation (fig. 6). Below a picture of the old slave block, the inscription reads

\begin{quote}
This spot on the former slave plantation that preceded Oakwood College was designated a “slave block,” where slaves were bought, sold, and traded. This practice lasted until the end of the Civil War. The Oakwood legacy is the transformation from selling slaves to the preparation of people of color for “Education, Excellence, Eternity.”\textsuperscript{102}
\end{quote}

The interpretation ties this bygone landscape feature back to the heart of the school’s mission. Other plaques commemorate the slave cabins that housed early students, the earliest building constructed for academic purposes, and the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century farm silos that serve as a link to

\textsuperscript{101} Grandison, “From Plantation to Campus”, 9.
the school’s agrarian past (fig. 7). Markers also memorialize the lives of significant persons within the school’s history, including the exact spot where Martin Luther King Jr. gave a speech on campus during a 1962 civil rights rally.103 Another marker recalls the life of Dred Scott—the famed enslaved man who sued unsuccessfully for his freedom in 1857—who lived on the plantation that became Oakwood University. The interpretative scheme displays the many facets of the school’s layered history, and it gives primacy to the school’s mission and its impact over time.

Oakwood is not the only school to utilize this mode of interpretation. Other colleges have employed informal or temporary historical markers. In 2013, Paul Quinn College (founded 1872 in Dallas, Texas) hosted an art exhibit that that commemorated Bishop College, the HBCU that existed before it (fig. 8). Bishop College was an HBCU founded in Marshall, Texas in 1881 that moved to Dallas in 1961 before closing in 1988.104 Paul Quinn occupies its Dallas campus today. The exhibit placed historical markers around campus to remember the significant role that Bishop College played in the “development of academic and cultural life in Dallas, giving birth to important cultural institutions such as the African American Museum and the Dallas Black Dance Theatre.”105 The artist, Vicki Meek, cited her motivation as a desire to “reclaim African American history, restore our collective memory, and illuminate critical issues affecting the Black community.”106

103 Ibid.
105 Ibid.
106 Ibid.
In some cases, HBCUs view the act of placing historical markers on their campus an opportunity to re-write history in their own terms. In 2014, Miles College (founded 1898 in Fairfield, Alabama) unveiled a historic marker that honors the school’s civil rights contributions. It relays the story of then-President Lucius Pitts encouraging students and faculty to participate in the Civil Rights Movement, and the student-organized “selective buying campaign” that followed—“boycotting” was officially banned in the city ordinance. Current president George French said that the effort to create this marker sprung from his visit to the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, where he did not see Miles College represented. He stated, “If the story needs to be told, the story ought to be told accurately. We will not be written out of history.” The marker features a detailed narrative that covers both sides of the plaque, and it is a great source of pride for the community. U.S. Representative Terri Sewell—the Congresswoman who advocated on behalf of the Birmingham Civil Rights National Historical Park in 2016—spoke at the unveiling:

“I submit to all of you that because we are at battleground zero [i.e. ground zero for the Civil Rights Movement], that we have a special charge, a very special charge. And that charge requires us to not only know our history, not only live our history, but to make our own history.”

Yet again, what separates interpretation at HBCUs is the primacy of the mission. Congresswoman Sewell’s charged speech is a reminder that HBCU history is a living history and HBCU interpretation communicates an ongoing purpose. This continuous mission is just one part

107 Miles College Alumni Association, “Miles College Leaders, Students Active During Civil Rights Era,” Historic Marker, 2014.
108 ‘We will not be written out of history:’ Miles College unveils historical marker denoting Civil Rights Movement role,” AL, accessed May 4 2017, http://blog.al.com/spotnews/2014/02/we_will_not_be_written_out_of_1.html.
109 Ibid.
of what makes the HBCU story so moving. The other is that the interpretation at each HBCU keys into a much larger narrative, one that demonstrates the close link between education and social justice—and this narrative cannot be told at any one HBCU alone. The real HBCU story is a sum of the characters and spaces that exist across all these institutions.

**Affiliations**

A time-tested principle within the HBCU context is that these schools are stronger together than as separate entities. Thus, HBCUs benefit from affiliations exclusively dedicated to their specific needs and mission, in particular the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) or the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCF). While the role of such organizations has principally been funding student scholarships and advocating politically on behalf of HBCUs, campus heritage has recently made it onto their agenda.

The UNCF’s founding mission was to unite HBCU presidents to raise money collectively— to create “a consortium of private black colleges involved in a cooperative fundraising effort”—with the guiding principle that these schools were stronger as a unit.\(^{110}\) In 1944, Dr. Frederick D. Patterson, president of the Tuskegee Institute, penned an open letter to the presidents of other private black colleges to “pool their small monies and make a united appeal to the national conscience.”\(^{111}\) Today, the UNCF is the country’s largest minority education advocacy organization, with thirty-seven private HBCUs belonging to its network of


\(^{111}\) Ibid.
member institutions. The organization’s mission has traditionally focused on student attendance and matriculation:

UNCF’s North Star is to increase the total annual number of African American college graduates by focusing on activities that ensure more students are college-ready, enroll in college and persist to graduation. This is done through a three-pillar strategy. Positioning member institutions as a viable college option for students and investing in institutional capacity to improve student outcomes; creating transformational support programs to ensure students are enrolling and persisting through college completion; building awareness of educational attainment and cultivating college-going behaviors within the African American community.

In the last few years, the UNCF has recognized that campus heritage is one of the tools that attract and retain students. In October of 2016, the UNCF devoted a portion of its advocacy efforts in support of the federal HBCU Historic Preservation Program. Dr. Michael Lomax, president and CEO of the UNCF, expressed his support of recent legislation, H.R. 295, which would reauthorize $10 million dollars a year until 2023 for the HBCU Historic Preservation Program. He stated:

Thanks to Congressman James E. Clyburn (D-SC), a proud HBCU alumnus, this important bill is moving one step closer to the finish line, but further action is desperately required. HBCUs are indeed national treasures, and we invite everyone to join us today in supporting the restoration of more than 700 historic buildings on HBCU campuses.

This is not the first time the organization has devoted its efforts towards HBCU preservation. Historic preservation was an initiative of the UNCF from 1995 through 1999, “when the UNCF partnered with the National Park Service to support the rehabilitation of historic structures on

10 HBCU campuses."\textsuperscript{115} Historic preservation is especially present in the minds of HBCU advocates as several schools are celebrating or approaching their sesquicentennial.

On October 26, 2016, the UNCF launched a 24-hour social media campaign to encourage the Senate to pass H.R. 295 and allocate $5 million dollars to the HBCU preservation program before Congress adjourns. The campaign created the hashtag \textit{PreserveHBCUs} which allowed users to post pictures on social media of historic HBCU buildings that need restoration.\textsuperscript{116} Perhaps even more effectively, the campaign created an online platform that allowed users to easily email their senators to express their support of the bill.

Less formal affiliations among HBCUs also support campus memory and heritage. HBCUStory, a nonprofit founded in 2012, makes its mission to

\begin{quote}
preserve, present and promote inspiring stories of the Historically Black College and University (HBCU) community’s past and present, for our future. HBCUStory’s goals are three-fold: first, to curate — popularizing existing historical and contemporary facts about HBCUs; second, to cultivate — to encourage new and groundbreaking research on HBCUs; and finally, to distribute — to develop a respected publication and promotional platform to launch discourse and share new ideas.\textsuperscript{117}
\end{quote}

The organization hosts an annual HBCUStory Symposium that brings together HBCU academicians and practitioners to share research on the historic and contemporary value of HBCUs.\textsuperscript{118} The organization has a very clear vision for the usefulness of HBCU heritage—that individual stories and memories can and should be leveraged for the benefit of HBCUs collectively. The founder of HBCUStory, Dr. Crystal deGregory, believes that memories have power:

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{115}Ibid.
\end{quote}
We who believe in the mission and vision of HBCUs must leverage our HBCU stories as more than mere memories. Our memories must serve as compelling evidence for the future of these institutions as educational, cultural, and social treasures. We’re making HBCU memories matter.”119

HBCUs benefit from a mission that inspires impassioned conviction in the HBCU purpose. This conviction has created a network of individuals, organizations, and institutions that care about telling and preserving the HBCU story. These affiliations raise awareness for HBCU heritage collectively, doing for all what few could do alone. This is substantial given the challenge that campus preservation poses for small and underfunded HBCUs. Additionally, it weaves the historic and cultural value of individual campuses into a larger narrative of national historical and contemporary significance—and this aids in the collective advocacy that will be necessary for the reauthorization of the federal HBCU Preservation Fund.

*Historical Consciousness in Marketing*

Many HBCUs center campus heritage in their promotional messages. Historic structures are emblems of stability, long life, and an institution’s intellectual heritage—concepts that are attractive to potential students and donors. Many schools use institutional heritage as a marketing tool, but at HBCUs this takes on an added significance. Tradition and legacy are fundamental elements of the HBCU cultural experience, and a heritage of black excellence heavily influences many students’ decisions to go attend HBCUs.120


A survey of the websites of all HBCUs shows that 77 of 105 HBCUs display, evoke, or reference campus heritage on their main webpage (see Appendix D). On the websites of 39 of these HBCUs, a large photograph of a historic structure is the first image that visitors encounter. 28 HBCUs have an institutional logo that incorporates the image of a historic structure, and 26 have a quote that speaks directly to the campus’s heritage. This data suggest that the majority of HBCUs, at least casually, understand the usefulness of campus heritage for institutional advancement. It also suggests that HBCUs recognize that historic structures add depth and meaning to their already rich contemporary culture.

Preservation Practice at HBCUs - Conclusion

HBCUs use many of the same preservation and campus planning tools as any other institution. Yet what consistently distinguishes their practices is a living heritage and an enduring, essential mission. Historic structures are the bearers of the legacies that inspire so much pride in HBCU students and alumni. This sense of pride and mission attends the effort to preserve or interpret HBCU structures. It is evident in the delight that accompanies the placement of a historic marker or the sense of purpose written into the text of the plaque.
Chapter 5: Case Studies

The chapter will explore preservation in depth at three HBCUs: Tuskegee University, Tougaloo College, and Virginia State University. These schools were chosen not necessarily because they typify the “best” of HBCU preservation, but because they demonstrate a range of successful practices within the HBCU context. The practices and processes carried out across these three HBCUs represent a toolkit that may aid other HBCUs seeking to become responsible stewards of their historic campuses. Chapter 6 will synthesize these practices into a set of principles to take from this study.

Case One: Tuskegee University

Tuskegee University is a private university located in Tuskegee, Alabama. The richness of the school’s heritage has received the highest recognition, and today the National Park Service operates a National Historic Site on Tuskegee’s campus. The University recognizes historic preservation as an important tool outside of the NHS as well. The story of the school’s founding by the renowned educator Booker T. Washington is central to the institution’s identity, and the administration has developed a robust preservation ethic to care for this history.

Institutional History

On February 12, 1881, the Alabama state legislature approved Act No. 292, appropriating $2,000 per annum for the establishment of the “Normal School for coloured teachers” in Tuskegee, Alabama. The passage of this legislation signaled a hopeful change for African Americans in the heart of the “Black Belt”—a region stretching across the agricultural

south that was known for its dark, fertile soil, but also for the density of its African American population:

The Black Belt rose to prominence before the Civil War as an important economic center in the United States. At its height, in 1860, when cotton accounted for about 60% of the United States’ exports, Alabama accounted for 25% of this output, 50% of which came from the 10 Black Belt Counties. Cotton, as is often said, was “King” of the Black Belt, its "Barons" being the planters who amassed fabulous personal wealth through its cultivation. Enslaved Africans, the fuel of this prosperity, were brought to the area in increasing numbers as cotton production expanded during the 1850s, leading to the unusual demography of Tuskegee’s region.122

This unique demography actually enabled the passage of the act that would ultimately establish a school in Tuskegee. During Reconstruction— but before African Americans would be disenfranchised yet again by restrictive voting practices and the oppressive sharecropping system of the post-war South—black men held a great deal of political power for a brief period of time. Just after the war, no legislator to the Alabama state legislature from a Black Belt county could be elected without the endorsement of black voters.123 It was this unique circumstance that led Colonel W.F. Foster—a white Democratic candidate seeking reelection to the Alabama State Senate—to approach a prominent figure in the Tuskegee community, a formerly enslaved man by the name of Louis Adams.124

Adams was an accomplished tinsmith and blacksmith during slavery. An industrious man, he learned to read and write though he had no formal education. [...] After the war, he established an informal trade school for blacks, passing on his skills to several apprentices at his workshop in town. He had become concerned that these trades, once practiced primarily by blacks, were not being carried on by the younger generation. The scale of his operation, however, was not sufficient to meet the need. He therefore pledged the black vote to Foster with the understanding that Foster and A. L. Brooks, the Democratic contender to the State House, would support a proposal to establish a "Negro Normal School" at Tuskegee.125

123 Ibid, 8.
124 Brooks and Starks, Encyclopedia, 88.
Adams was placed on the school’s Board of Trustees and immediately began searching for the school’s first principal. By recommendation of colleagues at the Hampton Institute, Virginia’s first African American land-grant school, the board decided upon Booker T. Washington. Washington was an instructor who had received his education at Hampton, a school that emphasized industrial and agricultural education over a classical, liberal arts education. Their approach came to be known as the Hampton Model, an ideology that “stemmed from the belief that practical [i.e. manual or industrial] education would most immediately improve the plight of the impoverished rural black constituents the school served.”

Washington, confronted with the economic, social, and political realities of the region, would become a vocal advocate for the Hampton Model during a period of intense debate among black intellectuals over the form black curricula should take. Facing a student body beset by widespread rural poverty and racial hostility, Washington preached a philosophy of conciliation and pacifism as the most prudent path to black empowerment. He articulated his educational philosophy in an address to the 1895 Cotton States Exhibition, thereafter known as the “Atlanta Compromise.” There he beseeched the formerly enslaved to

Cast down your bucket where you are. Cast it down in agriculture, mechanics in commerce, in domestic service....Our greatest danger is that in the great leap from slavery to freedom we may overlook the fact that the masses of us are to live by the production of our hands, and fail to keep in mind that we shall prosper in proportion as we learn to dignify and glorify the common labour and put brains and skill into the common occupation of life... No race shall prosper till it learns that there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem.

126 Ibid.
127 Brooks and Starks, Encyclopedia, 15-16.
Washington argued that “economic prosperity was the root of race improvement. Civil rights, he was convinced, would naturally follow as black people became indispensable to the Southern economy.” His approach was criticized by other black intellectuals—most prominently W.E.B. Du Bois—as being overly pacifying and bending to the will of white benefactors. Tuskegee soon became the model of the industrial education movement, the ultimate testing ground for his philosophy of self-help.

With only a $2,000 appropriation—none of which could be used for the procurement of land or facilities—Washington was forced to act as president and fundraiser, a role in which he excelled. His accommodationist strategy allowed him to win the support of the white missionary organizations that provided much of the financial support for black education during Reconstruction, and he became the “undisputed wizard at exploiting the philanthropic sources of funds from the North.”

Washington proved to be a phenomenal fundraiser and the school left the control of the state in 1892, but maintained its status as a state land-grant college. In 1893, the state increased Tuskegee’s annual appropriation to $3,000, and the Slater Fund donated $1,000 for the development of an industrial education program. By this time, the school’s enrollment had grown to 600 students, it employed 38 faculty members, and it had acquired an additional 1,300 acres of land, resulting in a 1,400-acre campus. The site included 20 buildings, equipment, property, and livestock, in total valued at $180,000. Booker T. Washington remained the school’s president until his death in 1915.

Under Washington’s leadership, Tuskegee rose to national prominence, attracting the country’s most successful African American scholars and educators. George Washington Carver, famed botanist and scientist, came to Tuskegee in 1898 to head the Agricultural Department. R.R.
Taylor, the first black graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, came in 1892 to head the Mechanical Trades Department, and during his tenure designed many of the first buildings of the historic campus.\footnote{Grandison, “From Plantation to Campus,” 14.} David Williston, recognized as the first black landscape architect, served as the school’s superintendent of buildings and grounds. The school did not lack for talent.

By the time of Washington’s death in 1915, the debate over black curricula had shifted considerably in favor of traditional education in the liberal arts and social sciences:

HBCUs had successfully developed a thriving black middle class that sought greater control over the curriculum of black colleges. This new middle class was largely comprised of educators who recognized the value of a liberal arts education.\footnote{Brooks and Starks, Encyclopedia, 89.}

Thus under its new president, Robert R. Moton, Tuskegee’s program began to expand to offer philosophy, sociology, literature, and classical studies.

Throughout the 20th century, Tuskegee made unprecedented contributions to the American education system. In 1940, Tuskegee became the home of a program to train black pilots for the U.S. Army Air Corps, and this program produced the African American military pilots, known as Tuskegee Airmen, who fought in World War II.\footnote{Ibid.} A few years later in 1944, Tuskegee President Frederick D. Patterson founded the United Negro College Fund, a philanthropic organization that has since provided over $1 billion in tuition assistance to black students. During the turbulent 1950s and 1960s, students and professors of Tuskegee embraced the spirit of activism by participating in boycotts and protests over civil rights, with the full support of the university’s then-president, Luther H. Foster.\footnote{Brooks and Starks, Encyclopedia, 89.}
Historic Campus Resources

While many of Tuskegee’s very earliest buildings have been destroyed or demolished, an account of the campus’s earliest development is still necessary because the development of the campus throughout its history has reflected the changing ideologies in African American education. The early restraints—and opportunities—presented by the site and the school’s financial state shaped the form and organization of the campus. Echoes of this early development are still present in the cultural landscape, and the school’s preservation plan—discussed in detail later on—takes this into consideration.

If the process by which Tuskegee’s campus was developed accommodated the economic, social, and political realities of the region, then its layout accommodated both the opportunities and constraints that its site posed and reflected the philosophy that evolved in response to its regional context. Buildings were located on the high, level ground upon the ridges, while the low-lying valleys were almost without exception underdeveloped; these wooded and grassy interior spaces of the campus served, in places as pasture for the school’s livestock. Thus, unlike the extensive formality we tend to associate with American college campuses, Tuskegee’s overall layout pattern is primarily informal, its roadways and adjacent buildings turned this way and that in intimate response to the natural folds of the land. Any formal spaces, necessarily limited in extent, occur only in the areas that could really accommodate them.137

As stated previously, Washington was unable to use any of the $2,000 annual appropriation on physical infrastructure, which made finding a location for the school his first challenge as principal. Washington was introduced by Louis Adams to William Bowen, a former slave owner whose abandoned farm sat at the edge of town.138

137 Grandison, “From Plantation to Campus,” 15.
The 100 acre farm, while badly eroded from cotton cultivation, suited Washington because its utility buildings could be converted to classrooms and because it was close enough to town that students could walk to the future campus.\textsuperscript{139}

A cabin, formally used as a dining room, an old kitchen, a stable, and an old hen house were all that made up the original campus.\textsuperscript{140}

The lack of funding also forced the school to use the resources at its disposal: the minds and manpower of its students and faculty.\textsuperscript{141} The school’s first building, Porter Hall completed in 1882 but no longer standing, was designed by instructors and constructed by students. Thus, the physical campus came to embody Washington’s philosophy of self-help—“the former slave plantation was now the object of sublime progress” through manual labor.\textsuperscript{142} These building campaigns allowed many students who could not afford the school’s tuition to earn their wages by working in construction. “Moreover, as they accomplished the task of building the campus, they also learned important lessons related to the utility of labor. The notion that one could improve the quality of one’s condition by owning the products of one’s labor was reinforced.”\textsuperscript{143}

The first building to be constructed on Tuskegee’s campus was Porter Hall, a frame structure completed in 1882. As students learned the construction practices necessary to complete the campus buildings, these trades were incorporated into the curriculum. With the construction of Porter hall, saw-milling and frame-building were established within the program.\textsuperscript{144}

Later, as Tuskegee built permanent brick structures, the school was able to take advantage of the abundance of local clay that the site provided. A deep valley ran through the

\textsuperscript{139} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{140} Grandison, “From Plantation to Campus,” 1.
\textsuperscript{141} Ibid, 13.
\textsuperscript{142} Ibid, 19.
\textsuperscript{143} Ibid, 13.
\textsuperscript{144} Grandison, “From Plantation to Campus,” 13.
campus that was rich in clay, and so Washington secured a loan for $200 to build a brick kiln.\textsuperscript{145} In 1884, the school was able to manufacture the bricks to build Alabama Hall (fig. 11), an imposing four-story structure. With brick buildings came brick-making, brick-laying, and plastering as programs in the school’s industrial curriculum.\textsuperscript{146} The yield of Tuskegee’s brick production was so great that the school was soon able to supply the local community—both black and white—with its excess supply. This further reinforced Washington’s philosophy of self-help and empowerment through labor:

This [brick manufacturing] not only provided cash for continuing development and other financial needs, but also began to instill the principles of commerce in the minds of Tuskegee’s students. Furthermore, white people began to patronize the school’s sale of brick and other products and services, including brooms, mattresses, and blacksmithing services. At least locally, this exchange caused some rethinking of the original apprehension associated with the issue of black education and at first helped to ease hostilities. Washington writes that “there came to be growing appreciation of the fact that industrial education of black people had a practical and vital bearing on the life of every white family in the South.”\textsuperscript{147}

The scale and quality of this enterprise improved the image of the institution in the eyes of the community and of white patrons, fueling fundraising that allowed Washington to further develop the campus.

This early development was spontaneous and responded to the topography of the landscape, resulting in a rather informal plan:

Buildings were located on the high, level ground upon the ridges, while the low-lying valleys were almost without exception undeveloped; these wooded and grassy interior spaces of the campus served, in places, as pasture for the school’s livestock. Thus, unlike the extensive formality we tend to associate with American college campuses, Tuskegee’s overall layout pattern is primarily informal, its roadways and adjacent

\textsuperscript{145} Clement and Wynn, “Campus Heritage Plan: Tuskegee University,” 5.
\textsuperscript{146} Grandison, 13.
\textsuperscript{147} Ibid.
buildings turned this way and that in intimate response to the natural folds of the land.\textsuperscript{148}

Buildings were constructed as the need arose. Alabama Hall was constructed when “the problem of providing rooms for girls, as well as a larger boarding department for all students grew serious.”\textsuperscript{149} The campus’s third building, Armstrong Hall, was constructed to address a similar need, to house male students living outside of campus. These first three buildings—Porter, Alabama, and Armstrong—were set facing south onto a public road across from a large tract of land where students grew crops. In 1897, Washington bought land across Montgomery Road from campus and commissioned Taylor to design his personal home, a brick Queen Anne house today known as “The Oaks” (figure 12).\textsuperscript{150}

By the end of the 1890s, the campus had a basic organization that grouped buildings based on their function and use.\textsuperscript{151} The campus boasted 12 major school buildings, with academic and female dormitories grouped in the center, and industrial and male dormitories clustered toward the east edge of campus.\textsuperscript{152} The farm and agricultural activities were moved to the northwest, onto newly purchased land.\textsuperscript{153}

The early 20\textsuperscript{th} century was another period of expansion for the institution. The Tuskegee Chapel was completed in 1898, and became a new focal point for the campus—new development would orient itself around the Chapel, instead of the campus road as before.\textsuperscript{154}

“The effect of the Chapel on other buildings is most clearly seen in plan views of the campus

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148 & Grandison, “From Plantation to Campus,” 15. & & \\
149 & Booker T. Washington, quoted in Grandison, “From Plantation to Campus,” 17. & & \\
150 & Clement and Wynn, “Campus Heritage Plan: Tuskegee University,” 10-11. & & \\
151 & Ibid, 9. & & \\
152 & Clement and Wynn, “Campus Heritage Plan: Tuskegee University,” 9. & & \\
153 & Ibid. & & \\
154 & Ibid. & & \\
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after construction of White Hall and Tompkins Hall, where their axes are parallel to the Chapel’s and not to the other buildings in the area.”  

From 1892-1942, Robert Taylor, head of the Mechanical Trades Department and instructor of architectural drafting, would design most of the buildings on the campus. Under his guidance, the school “relocated the industrial school, constructed larger dormitories and larger academic buildings, built service and extension facilities, and developed a Master Plan.”  

Thrasher Hall (fig. 13)—constructed in 1893 and still extant—was a three story brick science building built opposite Porter and Armstrong Hall designed under Washington’s administration by Robert R. Taylor. The building is the second oldest still standing on campus, and its design recalls the buildings built before it. Taylor borrowed architectural details from other buildings on campus, but he also introduced a more sophisticated architectural vocabulary.  

Numerous buildings were constructed in the first decade of the 20th century. In 1901, Andrew Carnegie granted Tuskegee $20,000 to build a library, making Tuskegee’s Library the second Carnegie Library (fig. 14) in the South and the first ever built for an African American institution. It was sited across from Alabama Hall on a prominent knoll above the campus road. The Administration Building (1902) stood next to Carnegie Hall and Montgomery Road and served as an office for business interactions with the community and other partners. Rockefeller Hall (fig. 15), a three-story brick dormitory building, was completed in 1903 “at the end of the

155 Ibid, 10.  
156 Ibid, 9.  
157 Ibid, 8.  
same ridge formerly occupied by Porter Hall, which had burned by this time.”159 Tantum Hall (1906) was designed by a student to celebrate the school’s 25th anniversary, to demonstrate the skills of the Tuskegee students (fig. 16).160 Another dormitory, White Hall (fig. 17), was constructed in the same year. Tompkins Hall (fig. 18), completed in 1910, was the largest building constructed at Tuskegee during Washington’s lifetime. With the construction of White and Tompkins Hall, Alabama Hall was demolished, creating a new large quadrangle.”161 In 1909, Porter Hall was destroyed in a fire, marking the loss of the campus’s oldest building at the end of a rapid building campaign.

Prior to his death at the age of 59 in 1915, Washington could look across the Montgomery Road from his house, “The Oaks,” to a campus that some people called the “Booker T. Washington City.” It was an institution he had willed into existence. According to Dozier, “the shadow of Booker T. Washington dances across the physical expressions of his concepts—the deep red brick facades” of the Tuskegee buildings. During the 34 years of the Washington Administration, 48 major buildings and over 80 total structures were constructed on the campus. Of these buildings approximately 32 remain on the campus today as a testimony to the quality of their design and construction. The basic arrangement of the campus, which Washington formulated with the help of Taylor and Williston, was well established by 1915 and would govern the campus development for another generation. Designed by faculty, built by students, the Tuskegee Campus was the embodiment of Booker T. Washington’s vision and perseverance.”162

**Campus Preservation**

**National Historic Sites**

Tuskegee is home to not one, but two National Historic Sites—the Tuskegee Institute NHS and the off-campus Tuskegee Airmen NHS. This federal designation entails a degree of

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159 Ibid, 12.
161 Ibid, 14.
162 Clement and Wynn, “Campus Heritage Plan: Tuskegee University,” 16.
participation with the National Park Service, as well as a benchmark of required preservation planning and interpretation.

As early as 1965, the Tuskegee Institute (as it was called until 1985) was designated as a National Historic Landmark in recognition of the school’s long history of progressing economic and social equality. At the time, Edward Pryce, superintendent of buildings and grounds from 1948-1990, was concerned about the affordability of campus preservation:

Ed Pryce recognized that the cost of maintaining the aging campus would put an increasing burden on the school’s finances, so in 1972 he wrote a report recommending that the school be designated a National Historic Site. The National Park Service purchased “The Oaks,” Booker T. Washington’s home, and the George Washington Carver museum (fig. 19). After temporarily closing the buildings to perform renovations, the NPS reopened the buildings with new exhibits that commemorated the life and work of Washington and Carver. The NPS also maintains the 8.32 acres surrounding these two buildings.

Thus, shortly after, Congress increased the school’s protection by establishing the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site, allowing the federal government to procure and oversee properties on campus:

Sec. 101. (a) Unless otherwise provided hereafter, the Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as the “Secretary”) is authorized to acquire by purchase with donated or appropriated funds, donation, exchange, or by transfer from another Federal agency such lands and interests in lands as hereafter provided for establishment as units of the national park system as follows:

(5) for establishment as the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site, Alabama, those lands depicted on the map entitled “Boundary Map, Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site, Alabama”, numbered NHS-TI 20,000-C and dated September 1973, which shall

165 To provide for the establishment of the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site, Alabama and for other purposes, Public Law 93-486, U.S. Statutes at Large, 88 (1974): 1461-1463.
include the home of Booker T. Washington, the Carver Museum, and an antebellum property adjacent to the campus of Tuskegee Institute, known as Grey Columns.166

The National Park Service today owns and operates these three identified landmarks as part of the historic site: the Oaks, home of Booker T. Washington; the Carver Museum, George Washington Carver’s laboratory; and Grey Columns, an antebellum mansion adjacent to the campus. The National Park Service serves as the administrator of the sites, and like all units of the NPS system, the Tuskegee Institute NHS is required to have both a General Management Plan and a Long-Range Interpretative Plan. These plans outline certain goals and strategies for managing visitation, interpretation, and preservation of the resources, and these are intended to be updated every twenty years or so. The management objectives outlined in the NPS General Management Plan are:

- To coordinate park operations with the normal functioning of Tuskegee Institute.
- To involve Tuskegee Institute in all long- and short-range planning that affects both the institute and the national historic site.
- To obtain the necessary staffing, facilities, equipment, and funds so that the historical resources and facilities owned by the United States of America can be adequately managed and protected, and so that high standards of visitor service can be provided on a year-round basis.
- To interpret the history of Tuskegee Institute within the environment of an active campus, to conduct all interpretation and interpretive programs without making moral judgements, and to base all interpretation on solid historical documentation.
- To communicate the national significance of the historical site to all students faculty, staff, and the community.167

166 To provide for the establishment of the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site, Alabama and for other purposes, Public Law 93-486, U.S. Statutes at Large, 88 (1974): 1461-1463.
The University benefits not only from the recognition and visibility that the designation brings the institution, but also from the resources, technical assistance, and support that it entails. The partnership places the responsibility of interpreting, funding, and maintaining these three important buildings onto the National Park Service. However, the National Park Service purposefully has little jurisdiction over any other academic buildings or their preservation. A planning premise for the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site, specifically called out in the General Management Plan, is that nothing the National Park Service does or proposes to do should interfere with the normal functioning of the school. Therefore, while the University administration benefits from National Park Service tours and branding, they still have responsibility for caring and preserving their historic academic buildings.

Campus Preservation Plan

Tuskegee University was awarded a grant through the Getty Foundation Campus Heritage Initiative in 2007 to “craft a preservation plan to retain, protect, and preserve the distinguishing characteristics of the historic buildings, sites, and landscapes and to establish planning and rehabilitation standards that will preserve these characteristics.” The final product is an extremely thorough document that explores the campus’s development, informed by archival research, historic photographs, and historic architectural/landscape drawings. The plan has the essential components, such as a building inventory that lists every building—new and historic, extant and demolished—that has shaped the university over its history. It goes on to analyze in closer detail the most historically significant of these, through historic building

168 Clement and Wynn, “Campus Heritage Plan: Tuskegee University,” v.

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analysis, condition assessments, and recommendations for treatment. However, the plan goes above what is normally expected in a preservation plan by placing equal emphasis on cultural landscapes as on buildings, acknowledging that spatial patterns and open space are defining features of the campus’s historic character. Furthermore, the final product includes not only recommendations for individual building treatments, but also recommendations for changes within the school’s standard procedures and hiring practices. The result is a reflective and thoughtful document that outlines not only physical outcomes, but process changes as well.

Emphasis on Landscape

In 1996, landscape architect and historian Kendrick Ian Grandison expressed his concerns that efforts to modernize the campus were compromising its historic character, specifically the buildings’ relationship to historic open space:

Since 1977, [this historic core] has been managed as a national park by the University and the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service. The twenty-six historic buildings that comprise the site are being renovated: their exteriors are being restored and their interiors retrofitted as the needs of a modern college campus are balanced with the requisites of historic preservation. Unfortunately, accompanying these renovations are site changes which compromise the historic integrity of the campus. Some of the relationships of the buildings to each other and to the topography, which I have described, seem not to have received adequate attention. For instance, the site improvements that accompanied the restoration of Tantum Hall have compromised the historic relationship between its front and back and the once remarkable visual separation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Service areas, barrier-free access, and parking now occupy the façade facing the Big Valley, violating the visual integrity of both the monumental front of the building and the pastoral ambiance of the valley itself. Previously, the eastern valley within the historic district was extensively paved for surface parking lots. It would seem that the landscape—as distinct from buildings as isolated entities—has not been recognized as a historical artifact worthy of preservation.169

The Campus Heritage Plan addresses these concerns by thoroughly investigating the character and integrity of Tuskegee’s cultural landscapes and providing recommendations for their preservation.

Before beginning the planning process, the University first established a benchmark for identifying historic landscapes:

For purposes of designation on the National Register of Historic Places, a recognition Tuskegee has achieved, fifty years is used as the criteria for an element for to be deemed ‘historic.’ In this assessment, features that are forty years old and contribute to the historic character of the campus are considered significant and worthy of preservation. The forty year time frame is used to include features that will become historic in the next decade.\textsuperscript{170}

The planning committee then conducted detailed field inspections to assess existing landscape conditions and determine a typology of landscape features. The historic landscape features that arose from the field inspections include “the spatial relationship of historic buildings, pedestrian walkways, roadway alignments, mature vegetation, site furnishings, and historic walls.”\textsuperscript{171} After analyzing and organizing these common landscape features into typological categories, the plan outlines general recommendations to be applied across the campus to maintain a consistent character.

For specific recommendations related to significant historic landscapes, the plan breaks the overall campus landscape into landscape preservation zones, such as the campus quadrangle, the campus perimeter along Old Montgomery Road, and the main campus road, University Avenue. Without explicitly ranking or classifying the landscapes in order of significance, the plan clearly outlines which spaces should receive the highest protection.

\textsuperscript{170} Clement and Wynn, “Campus Heritage Plan: Tuskegee University,” 67.
\textsuperscript{171} Ibid.
Interestingly, the spaces that are afforded the highest protections are not necessarily the campus’s formally designed landscapes. Instead, the preservation plan calls out the Big Valley (fig. 20-21), the campus’s historic pastoral landscape, as the most significant: “The large valley in the vicinity of the Kellogg Conference Center is the most significant open space in the historic portion of campus.”  

This is the same large valley that Kendrick Ian Grandison wrote so eloquently about:

> The Big Valley below us, as we look from the ridge, offers a contrast to this public formality [at the Rockefeller quadrangle or the main spine of the ridge along Old Montgomery Road]. It is a retreat from the show, a more private place that can be accessed only on foot. Compared to the tops of the ridges, its characters seems unmanicured. With the exception of lighting and campus walks recently paved in concrete, one can almost feel its pastoral past. As we amble down the slope to the bottom of the valley, we are immersed in the rustic quality of this low-lying inner space. Buildings perched along its edge look down on us, a reminder that we are still indeed on a college campus. It is in this space that the departure from the more traditional campus aesthetics stimulates us to contemplate the underlying reasons for the layout.  

This large, rolling open space surrounded by ridges topped by academic buildings has been a significant element of the campus since its founding. Its modest appearance harkens back to the school’s humble beginnings, as well as to the principles of self-help and the dignity of labor that drove early campus development:

> It was in this valley that Washington first dug clay for making bricks. Over the decades, the school developed different uses of the valley. A photograph taken circa 1907 shows the valley filled with animal pens, perhaps installed as part of the Farmers Conference. A 1911 survey of the campus shows a naturalistic landscape with a large swath of trees in the bottom of the valley.

This informal, common space takes on an aura of sanctity within Tuskegee’s landscape. It is powerful for its meaning and its memory.

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172 Clement and Wynn, “Campus Heritage Plan: Tuskegee University,” 69.
173 Ibid, 16-17.
The plan makes clear which spaces are less significant and therefore open to change.

The plan does not necessarily prohibit new construction within the historic core of campus.

Instead, it creates a policy that ensures that the historic relationships and proportions of buildings to open space will be preserved:

Future campus development should be strategic and attempt to preserve the current balance between open space and buildings. Future construction within the historic core of campus should reutilize the footprints of non-extant buildings—i.e. Collis P. Huntington Memorial Academic Building.175

The plan recognizes that the network of formal and informal landscapes establish the balance, order, and character that define the campus. It seeks to maintain and strengthen these relationships, and it does so in a way that allows for flexibility even within the strictly regulated historic core. The plan goes on to recommend that the University establish design guidelines for the “contextual placement of contemporary structures within the NHS.”176

Grandison makes the case for why landscape preservation is so necessary, especially the preservation of those landscapes pertaining to African American history:

African Americans probably have an even greater stake in preserving their historic landscapes because so much of their history has been either misrepresented or left undocumented. Important stories of their experience are contained in “mute” forms like landscapes, rather than in texts self-consciously recording the past. Landscape is not a passive thing; it does not just “happen.” Instead, it is shaped consciously and unconsciously by people to better meet their needs, and in the case of African Americans to meet their needs as they negotiate their place in a hostile environment. As such, landscape becomes an artifact in understanding not only the African American past, but also the whole of American history.177

At Tuskegee, this is certainly true. The unorthodox arrangement of buildings and the assortment of utilitarian and formal open spaces allow for a reading of the institution’s extraordinary past.

175 Clement and Wynn, “Campus Heritage Plan: Tuskegee University,” 106.
176 Ibid, 320.
The open spaces tell this story as surely as the handsome academic buildings, and the full story must be told with all of these elements.

**Products and Policies**

Tuskegee’s preservation plan resulted in various products—the culmination of archival research, field work, and conditions assessments compiled into a physical resource—that were immediately functional. However, the preservation plan also included recommendations for policy changes—changes to be made within the institution to further integrate preservation within the normal functioning of the schools’ planning processes so that preservation becomes a part of the school’s culture. The combination gave the school actionable goals in both the short- and long-term.

Among the physical products were an illustrated building inventory, a set of recommendations for landscape preservation, and conditions assessments with recommended treatments for nine campus buildings. These nine buildings analyzed were either on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places: Thrasher Hall, the old Administration Building, Carnegie Hall, Sage Hall, and the five buildings that make up the Willcox Trades buildings. The buildings were surveyed and evaluated per the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, and an illustrated catalogue of existing conditions was completed for each.

Each assessment includes a narrative statement of historical significance followed by a historical synopsis of its changes in use or form over time. This is followed by an architectural description that highlights the character defining features that contribute to the building’s integrity. Each assessment concludes with a list of the character-defining features that should be the focus of that building’s treatment, followed by a narrative description of the treatment
strategy and work requirements. The final product is a straightforward and concise document that outlines what is significant about a structure, what the condition issues are, and forward treatment recommendations. From these building-specific recommendations, the plan extrapolates a set of general recommendations that are “applicable to all construction projects associated with the historic buildings at Tuskegee University.”

Other unique products of Tuskegee’s preservation plan were multiple historic plant lists, each dating from different periods under a significant landscape architect in the school’s history. These inventories strengthened the current administration’s connection to the landscape architects that helped shape Tuskegee through time and created a resource for decisions about new vegetation within historic landscapes.

The plan then goes beyond these immediate recommendations to provide planning and policy related proposals. The first of these has been mentioned previously—that the school designated any vacant site within the historic core that formerly housed a historic structure as a future building site, and to otherwise avoid crowding in other new buildings within the National Historic Site boundaries.

The plan also recommends that the University consider creating a second National Register Historic District on campus:

Consider creating a second National Register Historic District going southwest along Old Montgomery Road to include Moton Hall, the four Wilcox and Emery buildings, the Chambliss Business House, the three buildings designed by Paul Rudolph in collaboration with three significant African American Architects (the new University Chapel, the Kresge Center, and the General "Chappie" James Center), and then over to Thomas Campbell Hall, the former farm buildings, and the Milbank Agricultural Building. Many of these structures date back to the Booker T. Washington era. The second district would not be a NHS that would be under the oversight of the National Park Service.

The University would still retain control of the buildings, but their historic significance would then make them eligible for federal funding.\textsuperscript{179}

The process of researching the campus’s historic development shed light on other buildings and landscapes that were worthy of preservation. This proposal reflects that a greater appreciation for campus heritage—beyond just those spaces touched by Booker T. Washington—came from the preservation planning process.

An interesting proposal that came from the preservation plan was inspired by the historic relationship between campus development and the school’s own architecture department. Thus, the plan recommends that future planning efforts utilize in-house architecture and landscape faculty in addition to contracted designers:

Re-establish the tradition of involving the Head of the Department of Architecture in the campus planning effort. This tradition began when Robert R. Taylor assisted Booker T. Washington and Robert. R. Moton. The tradition was continued during the Patterson and Foster administrations when the master planning efforts culminated with the establishment of the first historic site on a college campus. The University needs the presence of an in-house campus architect and landscape architect to maintain the cultural heritage and sense of continuity as new development comes online. The Payton administration has used a variety of external firms to conduct the campus master plans since the 1980s until the present.\textsuperscript{180}

Thus, the preservation planning process allowed for an introspective analysis of the structure of campus planning at Tuskegee, resulting in methods for refinement.

The very act of completing a Campus Heritage Plan is evidence that Tuskegee understands the significance of its history. That its plan is so exquisitely researched and thoughtfully composed is further evidence that the school recognizes preservation as a tool that advances the institution.

\textsuperscript{179} Clement and Wynn, “Campus Heritage Plan: Tuskegee University,” 320.
\textsuperscript{180} Ibid.
Case Two: Tougaloo College

Tougaloo College is a private liberal arts college located just outside Jackson, Mississippi. The school has a demonstrable dedication to campus heritage, having initiated its own preservation campaign after the closure of its iconic and beloved Woodworth Chapel in the 1980s. Since then, Tougaloo has gradually and deliberately made the most of research and rehabilitation grants to fund the preservation of its historic structures.

Institutional History

The early history of Tougaloo College (fig. 22) is similar to that of most private HBCUs; the American Missionary Association (AMA) and the Freedmen’s Bureau founded the school in 1869. Following the Civil War, the AMA was responsible for founding several day schools in Reconstructionist Mississippi—four primary, eight graded, and two normal schools.181 However, following unprecedented state legislation, the AMA shifted its focus in Mississippi. In 1868, the Mississippi Reconstruction Convention drafted a new constitution that required free public schooling for all children between the ages of five and twenty-one—a complete departure from the state’s earlier educational policy.182 This created a sudden demand for black teachers. As a result of these new public schools, the AMA closed its day schools to focus on one boarding school for normal and vocational training.183

181 “Tougaloo College Historic District,” National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form (Madison County: Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 2013): sec 8, 7.
182 Ibid.
183 Ibid.
Thus, early in 1869, the AMA commissioned Allen P. Huggins, a former Union officer who had relocated to Mississippi, to find a site for a new normal and agricultural school.\textsuperscript{184} The land that he settled on was quite unexpected:

Near the small Tougaloo railway station seven miles from Jackson and straddling the boundary line between Hinds and Madison counties, Huggins found the old Boddie plantation. Its two thousand acres was the site of a spacious antebellum mansion, which a local mechanic, perhaps optimistically, estimated to have cost originally no less than $50,000. John Boddie, a bachelor in his fifties, had built it for a lovely Jackson belle whom he expected to make his bride. The mansion was built on the highest point of the property, and it had a cupola on top from which vantage point the young lady might be able to see all of Jackson. The wedding never materialized. Some said the young lady was fickle; others said she was repulsed by the harsh way Boddie used his slave labor. Whatever the reason, by the time the mansion was finished the young lady had become the bride of another. The disappointed Boddie used the elegant mansion to store his bountiful cotton crop, and from the cupola he observed, not Jackson, but the progress of his field hands. The war came and after it a reshuffling of fortunes. The Boddie plantation no longer netted a profit.\textsuperscript{185}

The mansion and 500 acres of land were purchased for $10,500 with funds provided by the Freedmen’s Bureau.\textsuperscript{186} Only four short years after the end of the Civil War, an antebellum mansion (fig. 23)—the iconic symbol of the old order constructed through the exploitation of black labor—would house a school for newly freed African American men and women. At the outset, the mansion was the only significant building serving the school, and it functioned as both a dormitory and classrooms.\textsuperscript{187}

Astonishingly, the problems that faced Tougaloo were not a result of white hostility, but rather the result of poor AMA policies and a general lack of resources.\textsuperscript{188} These problems were

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[185] Ibid.
\item[186] Ibid, 14.
\item[187] “Tougaloo College Historic District,” 8.8.
\item[188] “Tougaloo College Historic District,” 8.9.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
compounded by the realities of running a plantation, even one run for the purposes of
education. The AMA expected the plantation to make a profit, but they did not understand what
its operation would entail.\textsuperscript{189} In 1872, Tougaloo’s Normal School became a state school,
meaning it could receive state funding in the amount of $2,500 a year, though this funding was
cut shortly thereafter in 1890.

In 1877, Stanley Pope became the president of Tougaloo. Pope is considered the first
president in the school’s history to have truly been endowed with the power of that position,
signaling a shift away from AMA control. During his presidency, he developed a staff of skilled
and capable teachers.\textsuperscript{190} He also made measurable changes in the school’s curriculum, pushing
his students to receive higher levels of education:

There was the work of the normal school, which produced the black teachers so
desperately needed in the state. President Pope made the decision to divide the normal
school training into two levels. A certificate was granted for the completion of the
normal course, but a diploma would be given for the completion of higher normal
course-consisting of 11th and 12th years. He hoped this would keep many students in
school longer, to receive more training.\textsuperscript{191}

Under his administration, Tougaloo became a financially stable and organized college. This
allowed his predecessor—Frank Woodworth, the longest acting president in the school’s
history—to concentrate on the quality of the students’ education.\textsuperscript{192} He too would make drastic
changes to the structure of the school’s curriculum:

Under Woodworth’s leadership, the length of the normal course was extended and the
standards for completion of the course were raised. President Woodworth believed in
more than industrial and practical education for the black students. He proposed adding
liberal arts instruction to the curriculum. In 1889, the decision was made to close the
primary school altogether. Without this drain on Tougaloo’s resources, they could

\textsuperscript{189} “Tougaloo College Historic District,” 8.9.
\textsuperscript{190} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{191} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{192} Ibid.
concentrate their efforts on developing a better normal school, as well as a college department.\textsuperscript{193}

By the beginning of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, Tougaloo was a true college, offering a broad liberal- and vocational-based education. The college awarded its first bachelor degree in 1901.

Throughout the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, Tougaloo would serve a unique role in Jim Crow Mississippi. The school has a long and quite extraordinary history of interracial relationships, both within its own body and with other academic institutions. Race or color was never explicitly mentioned in the school’s charter, and the school’s first graduating class of 1879 included a white woman, Luella Miner, the daughter of the school’s treasurer.\textsuperscript{194} By the 1960s, the school had developed relationships with a nearby white Methodist school, Millsaps College, as well as an exchange program with Brown University.\textsuperscript{195}

These circumstances would allow Tougaloo to make vital contributions to the Civil Rights struggle in the rigidly segregated state of Mississippi, and the school would serve as a refuge and organizational focus for regional activists and sympathizers. Beginning in 1952, a Tougaloo sociology professor established the Social Science Forums, a series of lectures and discussions that were critical of the state’s system of White supremacy.\textsuperscript{196} Housed in the basement of the non-descript Warren Hall (fig. 5), these forums would pull in interracial audiences of students, teachers, and progressive locals. The forum hosted prominent local and national Civil Rights leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Medgar Evers, and Malcolm X. Larger lectures—sometimes attracting audiences of over 200 people—would be held in the

\textsuperscript{193} “Tougaloo College Historic District,” 8.9.
\textsuperscript{194} Ibid, 8.8.
\textsuperscript{195} Ibid, 8.11.
\textsuperscript{196} Maria Lowe, “Sowing the Seeds of Discontent,” 868.
beloved Woodworth Chapel (fig. 24), the spiritual center of Tougaloo College. At these events, attendees both black and white were not only asked to mingle to discuss the content of the lecture, they were encouraged to dine with one another—arguably the most defiant of acts in the segregated South. These forums served as a pre-figurative social laboratory where attendees experienced, however briefly, integration and social harmony.

Tougaloo’s president throughout the Civil Rights Era was Dr. Adam Beittel, a skilled financial manager who eliminated the school’s deficit and attracted national grants. While he never officially endorsed the participation of students and faculty in protests or sit-ins, he was many times responsible for bailing them out of jail. During his administration, an interracial group of students organized a little-known protest in 1963, informally called the “Tougaloo Movement.” The movement centered on live entertainers; the students persuaded performers to cancel their concerts for white-only audiences in Jackson, in order to give a free concert to an interracial audience at Tougaloo. “After this, some schools were more willing to work with Tougaloo to provide integrated concerts. In 1963, Joan Baez performed at Woodworth Chapel to the most integrated audience the building had ever seen.”

In 1909, it was said of Tougaloo: “no other influence has been more potent for the best development of the Negro race in Mississippi than Tougaloo.” This held true throughout the

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197 “Tougaloo College Historic District,” 7.4.
200 “Tougaloo College Historic District,” 8.11.
201 Ibid, 8.12.
202 Ibid.
20th century—Tougaloo has long been a positive force meeting the needs of the black community in Mississippi.

**Historic Campus Resources**

Tougaloo College is one of the nation’s oldest HBCUs. Throughout its history, the school experienced several distinctive periods of development and retains structures of high integrity from each. Today the campus reads like an illustrated history of the institution. A brochure published by the College on its architectural heritage outlined these periods of development:

In the early years, from 1869 through 1885, campus construction supported a working farm. From 1894 through 1910, the school’s comprehensive educational program was expanded with the addition of the Woodworth Chapel and new classroom facilities. Between 1925 and 1950, liberal arts education began to replace the school’s normal and agricultural foci and the campus gradually changed to accommodate this philosophy. During the Civil Rights Era, 1960 through 1973, campus buildings were designed to reflect a break with the past and a renewed hope for the future. Finally, the past fifteen years have brought an enlightened appreciation for the school’s historic legacy and a concerted effort to respect the richness of its built environment.204

The oldest building on Tougaloo’s campus—the John Boddie Mansion, today known as the Robert O. Wilder Building—dates to before the Civil War. The structure has served many functions for the college—from dormitory and classrooms at the school’s founding to the President’s office today. Other buildings dating to this early period are Pope Cottage, a farmhouse constructed in 1880 as the faculty residence for President G. Stanley Pope, and Ballard Hall (fig. 25), the oldest surviving academic building on campus.205

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205 Ibid.
Woodworth Chapel, named for President Frank G. Woodworth, was completed in 1901 during the school’s second period of development. It is a frame building in the Queen Anne style—an unusual choice for a religious structure. Many civic, spiritual, and educational leaders have spoken from the chapel’s pulpit, and it is considered the symbolic home of Mississippi’s Civil Rights Movement.\textsuperscript{206}

The 1960s—while socially and spiritually inspiring for the student and teacher body—were a time of decline for the physical plant. George Owens, Tougaloo’s first black president and President Adam Beittel’s successor in 1964, had been Tougaloo’s business manager under two presidents, and was quite familiar with the school’s capital needs:

While President Beittel had been in the public arena, supporting the efforts of the Tougaloo movement to bring racial equality to the larger community beyond the Tougaloo gates, George Owens had been on the Tougaloo campus, dealing with the pressures of crowded conditions from accelerated enrollment, deferred maintenance of the older building stock, and changing needs for faculty housing.\textsuperscript{207}

In 1965, Tougaloo received a $75,000 grant for the development of a master building plan through an unusual but extraordinary series of events. The grant came from J. Irwin Miller, CEO of the Cummins Engine Foundation. Miller served as the president of the National Council of Churches from 1960 to 1963, and during his tenure founded the Commission on Religion and Race.\textsuperscript{208} “The National Council was a sponsor of the March on Washington, and on June 17, 1963, Miller led a delegation of religious leaders to meet with President John. F Kennedy.”\textsuperscript{209}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{206} “Historic Tougaloo College,” \textit{Campus Heritage Network}.
\item \textsuperscript{207} “Cultural Landscape Report: Tougaloo College,” \textit{Campus Heritage Network}, 127.
\item \textsuperscript{208} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{209} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
Miller chaired this meeting two days before Kennedy introduced his first piece of civil rights legislation into Congress, what would later become the Civil Rights Act of 1964. 210

Exactly how Miller became acquainted with Tougaloo and decided to invest $75,000 to the school’s development is unclear. One could assume that Tougaloo’s leadership role in Mississippi and Miller’s involvement with Civil Rights activities in the South brought them in contact. 211 Miller selected Gunnar Birkerts, a modern architect, as the lead designer for the plan. Miller himself was a lover of Modernist design—during his study at Yale, his roommate had been Finnish-born architecture student Eero Saarinen and their time together convinced Miller of the “value of modern design on the human experience.” 212 The plan that resulted (fig. 26) from Miller and Birkerts’ partnership was thus unabashedly Modern:

When the Birkerts plan was unveiled in 1966, it was met in the Tougaloo community with surprise—and shock—by some, who had not been prepared for the modernism of the firm’s work, nor for the fact that the plan would propose the demolition of all buildings on campus more than ten years old. This essentially meant that only Warren and Kincheloe halls were to be retained, and the rest of the campus replaced by new buildings that integrated the functions of “living, learning, and recreation” – the conceptual basis of Birkerts’ new plan. Although Campbell and Rogers’ book describes Birkerts’ architecture as “nontraditional,” today it might be termed “brutalism.” The poured concrete structures made no attempt to speak to the context of the Tougaloo campus. The plan was a bold attempt to experiment with circulation as the “driver” of the plan, and the presumption may have been that tradition would best be removed and replaced with a clean slate. The Mansion and other early campus buildings were not only in disrepair and poorly suited to the contemporary needs of an educational institution, but were, in fact remnants of the antebellum past. The fact that alums felt attachment and sentiment for the Mansion may have come as a revelation to the designer from the Midwest (and originally middle Europe), who may have assumed that reminders of this era of enslavement would be disdained by the descendants of slaves, since the plan was being developed during the tumultuous period of racial unrest. 213

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210 Ibid.
211 Ibid, 128.
212 Ibid, 127.
213 Ibid, 128-129.
The uproar to save the Mansion was ultimately successful, and a new location was chosen for the new Birkerts library that would have replaced it. The $75,000 was only sufficient to construct three of the proposed structures—a library and two dormitories (fig. 27). The rest of the plan was abandoned.

Even as the institution sought to modernize its facilities—as evidenced in its ultra-modern Birkerts plan—it still had pressing financial and capital needs, especially related to its historic structures. In the early 1970s, the administration struggled to stabilize its finances and address deferred maintenance and facility issues. The college sought to meet short-term needs by altering existing structures “until long-term funding solutions could address the pressures in a more appropriate way.”

In 1968, the graceful open-arched arcades of Holmes Hall were closed in to create needed office space. Around 1970, two mezzanine floors were inserted within the western portions of the first floor of the Mansion, reducing the ceiling heights of the original rooms.

Such radical changes to significant structures reflect not just the institution’s early policy toward preservation, but also that historic preservation in America was still somewhat in its infancy.

Campus Preservation

Tougaloo’s attitude toward preservation and stewardship changed very drastically only a short time later. In the 1980s, the school was forced to close Woodworth Chapel because of deterioration and termite damage. The administration quickly began to look for avenues and funding streams to protect its historic resources, and this vigorous preservation ethic has

215 Ibid.
remained a part of the College’s planning culture. Slowly over the course of the last few decades, Tougaloo College has taken advantage of these studies to build a solid base for preservation projects, leveraging research grants to attract funding for rehabilitation projects. In addition to this effort, the school also interprets its rich history through a published brochure. The College took on the added responsibility of acquiring and operating a house museum at Medgar Evers’ nearby home. Finally, the school understands the importance of preserving cultural landscapes, using its Getty Campus Heritage Funding to complete a Cultural Landscape Report.

Leveraging Grants to Promote Preservation

Shortly after the closure of the Woodworth Chapel, Tougaloo partnered with the National Park Service to conduct the necessary research for historic designation and future funding:

In 1989 assistance was provided by the National Park Service in the form of a collaborative study with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and Tougaloo College, in preparation for protecting not only individual historic buildings, but the collection of historic structures through the creation of a campus historic district. The resultant report, *Campus Planning and Development Assessment*, laid important groundwork for more detailed preservation funding and studies.²¹⁷

In 1992, the National Park Service conducted a study that identified 144 historic structures at HBCUs.²¹⁸ The Robert O. Wilder building (The Mansion) at Tougaloo was one of eleven sites chosen at HBCUs to receive funding through the HBCU Preservation Program. This funding allowed the school to contract WFT Architects, a firm that specialized in both preservation and

²¹⁷ Ibid.
²¹⁸ Ibid.
planning, to complete a Historic Structures Report (HSR) for the Boddie Mansion. This HSR, completed in 1998, also included a developmental history of the overall campus. The sum of research conducted on Tougaloo’s cultural heritage between 1989 and 1998 contributed to the school’s listing on the National Register as the Tougaloo Campus National Register Historic District, including ten contributing buildings and the campus landscape. Also in 1998, funding was again secured through the NPS HBCU Initiative to begin the restoration of the Woodworth Chapel, eleven years after the school had been forced to close the space. The school had achieved its goal of funding the restoration of the beloved Chapel, but its preservation efforts did not end there.

Building on the momentum of the past decade of research, Tougaloo hired a firm in 1999 to develop a new campus master plan for expansion and circulation. However, the plan that was produced “did not reflect the historic, cultural, and topographic issues that are valued by the Tougaloo community.” Therefore, the school returned to WFT Architects in 2002 to produce a revision to this plan, and this revision was called the “Historical and Cultural Building Program: Master Plan Update.” This revision emphasized the picturesque landscape and historic character of the historic core. It made the historic core pedestrian-only by moving automobile circulation and parking into an outer loop surrounding the core. It additionally proposed the removal of the Birkerts dorms, but this has not materialized, as the dorms have become beloved in their own right.

219 Ibid.
220 Ibid.
222 Ibid, 131.
Based on the 2002 master plan revision, the school secured a $75,000 grant through the Getty Foundation’s Campus Heritage Initiative to prepare further documentation and planning reports as support for the implementation of the approach outlined in the plan. Typically these grants were used to complete a preservation plan—Tougaloo is the only HBCU that used its Campus Heritage grant otherwise, as it had very recently completed a master plan that emphasized preservation. The grant generated four products: an HSR for Ballard Hall, an HSR for Holmes Hall, a Cultural Landscape Report, and an interpretive brochure about the school’s architectural heritage.

The most recent restoration project undertaken at Tougaloo was the Robert O. Wilder building. The project began in 2003, again with WFT Architects at the helm. It was determined at the outset that there was not sufficient funding for the College to complete the entire project in one campaign. Thus, WFT Architects worked with Tougaloo to devise a “phased renovation plan that would allow the work to be undertaken as funding became available.” The firm also remained involved in the grant writing process as the school seeks further funding. The first phase of the restoration began in 2003 to stabilize the structural systems of the building, including...

repairing and rehabilitating the foundation, re-engineering and rebuilding the floor and roofing systems, installing a new roof and replacing many other structural components that had either deteriorated over the years or were not adequately engineered in their original capacity.

223 Ibid.
225 Ibid.
Funds from the U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Department of Housing and Development, and the College’s resources were used for this first phase. The second phase of restoration was completed in the summer of 2012, and involved the restoration of the building’s exterior and painting to its mid-19th century color scheme. Another National Park Service grant was provided to Tougaloo through the HBCU Fund, making Tougaloo a recipient of the Park Service’s first and last HBCU preservation grants.

As of December of 2016, the Mansion’s interior was gutted, leaving only wood-framed walls in place. The projected cost of this final phase is $1,300,000 and will require…

a total rebuild and restoration of the interior of the building, including repairing and replicating the original ornately detailed crown moldings, restoring the original grand staircase and original doors and transoms, and installing new electrical, heating, cooling, plumbing, and elevator systems, new painting and flooring, wall and window coverings, and new historically accurate landscaping.

The school has capitalized on the last few decade of research and preservation efforts by launching the Woodworth Chapel Legacy Initiative, a fundraising campaign that connects the experiences and memories of students, alumni, and community members to campus heritage:

The Chapel is the physical embodiment of Tougaloo College’s core values. It has always been the spiritual center of the campus. Tougaloo alumni know the Chapel as not only a sanctuary where they could come to reflect and collect their thoughts during exams or a moment of crisis, it was also where they were intellectually challenged by some of the greatest minds of the time. For others, it is a place of worship deeply rooted in the United Church of Christ and the Disciples of Christ. This Chapel is many things to many people. […]

As part of the extensive campus capital improvements, a brick plaza with benches was constructed in front of the Chapel. This Legacy Initiative pays tribute to the College’s rich heritage and commemorates momentous occasions in the lives of thousands. It offers alumni, students, friends, churches and partners of the College an opportunity to

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227 Ibid.
228 Ibid.
229 Ibid, 25.
230 Ibid.
leave their lasting mark by purchasing a paver. Honor friends, loved ones, mentors, your graduating classes, favorite organizations or purchase a piece of history for yourself. Your investment to the Chapel Legacy Initiative will support the Tougaloo College 1869 Annual Fund and sustain this historic institution’s advancement of equality, freedom, justice and America’s promise.

If there were ever a school that made the case for the impact of the National Park Service’s HBCU Initiative, it is Tougaloo College. Tougaloo made the highest use of research and rehabilitation grants, leveraging them not only as a strategic capital tool, but as a way to build appreciation within the school and community for the campus’s cultural heritage. Tougaloo clearly understands that campus heritage is a powerful tool for institutional advancement.

**Medgar Evers Museum**

Tougaloo College has extended its stewardship responsibilities beyond that of its own campus buildings. In 1993, the Jackson home of Medgar Evers (fig. 28) was donated to the College. Evers, a field secretary of the NAACP and an influential Civil Rights activist in Mississippi, was tragically gunned down the driveway of his home. Today, Tougaloo operates the home as a museum to the life and death of Medgar Evers and the civil rights struggle in Mississippi.

When the College acquired the home, it was in poor condition after several years of abandonment. The College worked with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and WFT Architects to restore the home’s sagging floors and mildew damage. WFT first produced a Historic Structure Report that documented the home’s existing conditions, and analyzed the characteristics that were significant to Evers’ life in the home. The research also included:

- descriptions and photographs of the house provided by Myrlie Evers-Williams, on site analysis of existing finishes, interviews with the original developers of the neighborhood, and study of newsreel footage, newspaper articles, and evidence files.

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[that] helped develop a complete understanding of the house’s architectural and historical significance.\textsuperscript{232}

In 2015, legislation was introduced to the U.S. Senate that would direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a Special Resource Study of the home to evaluate the national significance of the site and the suitability of designating it as a unit of the National Park System. The study is not yet finished, but without Tougaloo’s proactive intervention and dedicated care of the site, this national treasure may have been lost.

Case Three: Virginia State University

Virginia State University (fig. 29) is a public university located in Ettrick, Virginia, a small village across the Appomattox River from the larger city of Petersburg. The University incorporates a clear role for preservation into its campus master plan, which allows for the consideration of heritage resources in broader capital decisions-making. The school has also made use of innovative partnerships to bring preservation onto campus and encourage student engagement with campus heritage.

Institutional History

The school was founded in 1882 as the Virginia Normal and Collegiate Institute through the efforts of William Mahone, a former Confederate general and railroad engineer:

The school’s history begins in 1880 when the Readjuster Party, led by former Confederate General William Mahone, came to power overthrowing the long-entrenched Democratic Party. Black votes were mainly responsible for this political upheaval, responding to Readjuster promises to keep open their schools, pay their teachers, and establish a college for them. One of Mahone’s chief lieutenants was Alfred W. Harris, an attorney who resided in Dinwiddie County and maintained a law office in Petersburg. Representing the county, Harris was one of the 13 blacks serving in the Virginia House of Delegates in 1882. Delegate Harris introduced and pushed to passage the bill fulfilling the Readjusters’ pledge to establish a school for blacks. The law incorporating Virginia Normal and Collegiate Institute was enacted on March 6, 1882 and provided for a normal program (teacher-training) of up to three years, as well as 2 four-year college program in the classics, higher mathematics and other humanities.233

The bill that created the Virginia Normal and Collegiate Institute specified that a board of seven members would govern the institution, of whom six would be black.234 The school opened on 33

234 Ibid.
acres with 126 students, seven black faculty members, one building, a 200-book library, and a $20,000 budget.\(^{235}\)

As Mahone’s party fell out of power following Reconstruction, mounting state antagonism towards African American education restricted the institution’s resources and operations:

Whites replaced blacks on the board; the college appropriation was cut and the faculty reduced; and the first president, John M. Langston resigned. The school’s second president, James Hugh Johnston, Sr. assumed the office on January 1, 1888. He headed the institution for 26 years and managed to isolate the college from the hazardous political climate. Subscribing to the accommodationist policies of Booker T. Washington, President of Tuskegee Institute, President Johnston tried to show politicians that the school was rendering valuable service to the total community. Increasingly, he became a disciple of vocational training offered at Hampton Institute and Tuskegee. Courses in carpentry, cooking, sewing, shoe-making were added to the curriculum during the 1890s.\(^{236}\)

In 1902, a revision of the school’s charter by the state legislature restricted its curriculum, and this was reflected by its change in name to the Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute.\(^{237}\) When the school finally offered a vocational agriculture course as part of its curriculum in the 1910s, its annual state appropriation was reinstated to the $20,000 assured in the 1882 act.\(^{238}\)

Under President James Gandy’s administration, beginning in 1914, the institution expanded in both curriculum and physical plant.\(^{239}\) Following the passage of the Second Morrill Land Grant Act (summarized in the history section), the institution became Virginia’s black land grant college in 1920; in 1923 the Board of Visitors restored a four-year college department.\(^{240}\)

\(^{236}\) “Vawter Hall and Old President’s House,” section 8.
\(^{237}\) Brooks and Starks, Encyclopedia, 96.
\(^{238}\) “Vawter Hall and Old President’s House,” section 8.
\(^{239}\) Ibid.
\(^{240}\) Ibid.
The school’s name would change thrice more, reflecting further liberalization of the institution from state control—to Virginia State College for Negroes in 1930, Virginia State College in 1946 and finally to Virginia State University in 1979.

Historic Campus Resources

The school’s earliest building, Virginia Hall (1888), was a large brick building designed in the Second Empire style by Harrison Waite (fig. 30). While this building no longer stands, another by Waite remains; Vawter Hall, the oldest extant building on campus, was constructed in 1908 (fig. 31). The building is a two-and-a-half story H-shaped structure with eared gable parapets and central dormers on its long façade. The second oldest building, constructed in 1913, is the Old President’s House—a two-and-a-half story brick building with wood trim (fig. 32). When constructed, these two buildings formed the eastern boundary of the college quadrangle, and today they ground the historic core at the southern edge of campus. Vawter Hall and the Old President’s House are the only campus buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Between 1920 and 1930, the Georgian Revival brick dormitories that line the north side of Hayden Street were added to the campus, designed by the architect Charles M. Robinson. Another architect of the same firm, John Binford Walford, designed the second Virginia Hall in 1937. Today this three-and-a-half-story brick building with a pedimented Doric portico acts as the campus’s principle building, fronting the campus green and overlooking the Appomattox

241 “Vawter Hall and Old President’s House,” section 8.
243 Ibid.
River. Over the course of the 20th century, newer development spread to the north of the historic core along University Avenue.

Campus Preservation

Virginia State University is an institution that recognizes the value of its heritage, and it actively interprets its colorful history to students, faculty, and the public. Its university library is home to an immense collection of rare books, historical documents, memoirs, artifacts, and historic photographs pertaining not just to its own history, but also to Virginia history, Virginia educational history, and African-American heritage. 244 The University makes its history available by exhibiting portions of its rich archives in a gallery space on campus. 245 The University’s commitment to institutional heritage extends beyond its archival collections to the campus itself. Through the inclusion of preservation principles in planning documents and the creative implementation of preservation projects on its campus, the University has demonstrated a dedication to its historic buildings and open spaces. VSU makes an interesting case study not only because it has a master plan that emphasizes the importance of campus heritage as a tool for institutional advancement, but also because it leverages strategic partnerships to bring preservation to campus. Additionally, VSU encourages student involvement to make preservation a part of campus culture.

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Campus Master Plan

In March of 2014, Virginia State University began a yearlong process of updating its campus master plan, with the goal to set the ideals of its 2014 strategic plan, *Building a Better World*, into physical form. The five priorities outlined in this strategic plan are expanded constituent services and productivity; programmatic sustainability and sponsored research; global and civic engagement; infrastructural innovation; and entrepreneurship for the millennial academic enterprise. VSU partnered with the architecture and planning firm Hanbury Evans Wright Vlatts + Company, a company well versed in preservation planning that also created the preservation plans for the Virginia State Capitol and the Fort Monroe National Monument. Together, the campus planning committee and stakeholders engaged in an open planning process that included interviews, focus groups, online surveys and feedback, and more than 60 consultations. At its conclusion, Interim President Pamela Hammond called the plan a “vision which unites the history of VSU and the modern university it has become,” introducing key features such as a new central greenspace and student union with modern academic and research facilities, “all while preserving the beauty and charm of our historic campus.”

Early within the planning process, campus heritage preservation was identified as a critical component of the Master Plan, and this was reflected in the Executive Summary of the final document. The Master Plan begins with an affirmation of the importance of campus history and a commitment to protecting and enhancing the features that tell the story of the campus’s rich past:

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248 Ibid.
249 Jane Harris, Interviewed by Katlyn Cotton, Phone Interview (July 2016).
Executive Summary 1.2 - Building on Campus Heritage:

Virginia State University has a rich campus heritage that includes not only historic campus features such as Virginia Hall, but also less obvious heritage features such as the Appomattox River, Randolph Farm, and two University owned and one affiliate owned buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. As the nation’s oldest state-supported land grant college for African Americans, VSU desires to celebrate and build upon its history through the preservation and expression of these cultural and physical resources. The Master Plan provides an opportunity to preserve, acknowledge and share this heritage more fully. Master Plan recommendations identify opportunities to give new life to old features and enhance their value and visibility to the University and the region.250

The spirit of this declaration of commitment to campus heritage persists throughout the Master Plan and is reinforced in the plan’s themes and objectives. Alongside objectives that reshape and modernize the campus—such as creating a new iconic core and greenspace, integrating newly acquired properties, and constructing a new academic and research building—the plan makes reinventing the Historic Core a primary objective.

Objective 4: Reinventing the Historic Core:

This area of campus has the benefit of a distinctive architectural character, mature trees, and proximity to the Virginia Hall lawn to the south and the new campus core to the north. By preserving the heritage of the campus’ older buildings through renovations and repurposing, as well as the careful insertion of a new academic building, the long-established character of this historic area will be enhanced. The open space south of the library is currently underutilized but has tremendous potential to enrich the campus’ culture. The proposed enhancements of this area will help link this entire area to the rest of campus, as well as offer places to study, gather, and socialize between classes.251

VSU’s Master Plan stands out because it very clearly exhibits an understanding that preservation and growth are not mutually exclusive. The first of the plan’s stated principles is “Preserve Campus Heritage: Preserve the architectural and cultural heritage of Virginia State

251 “2015 Campus Master Plan: Virginia State University,” Virginia State University, 14.
University while nurturing growth.”\textsuperscript{252} The advantage of having a campus master plan that incorporates preservation—as opposed to a standalone campus preservation plan like that at Tuskegee University—is that consideration of campus heritage is not limited solely to decisions about historic structures. The VSU Master Plan creates a framework for considering the impact of development beyond the historic core on the campus’s character and sense of place. Additionally, it prevents the common misconception that no new development can occur within the historic core. Instead of roping off the historic core, the Master Plan allows for the careful insertion of new facilities within the historic sector to enhance its functionality and strengthen its relationship to the newer parts of campus. The Master Plan fosters a forward-thinking approach to the relationship between campus preservation and growth, one that allows the university to pursue opportunities that strengthen the institution while maintaining the heritage that students and faculty treasure.

Another goal of the Master Plan is to “maximize the value and usefulness of existing campus infrastructure while accommodating growth.”\textsuperscript{253} Thus, the plan frequently employs preservation practices—without using explicit preservation terminology—by emphasizing reuse and repurposing as strategic development tools. In total, it identifies two buildings for repurposing and six buildings for renovation. The plan recognizes “repurposing” as giving a new function to a building without extensive physical intervention or alteration. Such was the case with Lindsay-Montague Hall:

\begin{quote}
With the relocation of the University’s archives for display and storage in a more suitable building, Lindsay-Montague hall will be repurposed as a classroom building to...
\end{quote}

better align with its original academic use and the neighboring buildings in the historic area of campus.254

The term “renovation” was applied to buildings where condition called for intervention, or where the proposed programmatic changes necessitated a physical or organizational change. The Post Office Building, located in the Historic Focus Area near Lindsay-Montague Hall, was one such building:

Renovation of the Post Office Building: To address the strategic priority of creating academic excellence, a portion of this building will be converted for use as a faculty commons. As a way to preserve and exhibit the University’s rich history, a portion of the archives will be displayed in a renovated gallery space on the first floor.255

However, the Plan also acknowledges that demolition has a place within campus planning, and calls for the strategic demolition of Harris Hall due to a lack of code compliance and hazardous material issues.256 The plan allows Harris Hall’s previous functions to be relocated in a new building in the Historic Core, and for the construction of a new building with state-of-the-art research labs and instructional spaces to take its place. This decision was not undertaken lightly—it was weighed against the cost to restore the outdated building versus the opportunities that a new research facility would create to increase the university’s funded research.257 In the end, this decision aligned with the university’s strategic plan. The framework provided within the Master Plan, one that identifies heritage resources for protection as well as openings for growth and development, made this decision possible.

254 Ibid, 29.
255 Ibid.
Strategic Partnerships and Student Involvement

In addition to a thoughtfully crafted Master Plan that encourages preservation, Virginia State University pursued strategic partnerships to make campus preservation projects possible. In 2016, VSU collaborated with national, state, and local partners to offer a preservation field school on its campus, where students and community volunteers from the greater Richmond area could help to rehabilitate a university-owned building. The subject of the field school was a small Italianate cottage, the last remaining landmark denoting the historic milltown of Ettrick. The one-room, raised cottage—known to locals as Summerseat, as it was rumored to have once served as a courthouse for the village of Ettrick—is located on the western side of campus, along Chesterfield Avenue in an area that the master plan slated for mixed-use development. The project was made possible through the coordination of several organizations who sought to see a preservation training brought to the region. A $130,000 grant from the Cameron Foundation, a local grant-making organization that seeks to revitalize and enrich the local region, enabled HistoriCorps, a nationally recognized volunteer preservation organization, to bring their expertise to the project. The project also created an opportunity for community outreach, as the Citizens Committee for Summerseat and local historians were brought onboard. Over the course of six weeks, students and community volunteers removed vinyl siding, rehabilitated exterior architectural wood elements, and repaired the front porch and stairs, preparing the building for adaptive reuse for university functions.
Jane Harris, Vice President of Capital Outlay for VSU, was excited about the project because it got students involved with preservation efforts on campus, creating a greater sense of appreciation and ownership of university heritage. Before beginning the project, she said,

> The broad support for this preservation effort reflects the importance of this historic building to our community and VSU. We were delighted to participate with HistoriCorps, The Cameron Foundation, and our local resident group, the Citizens Committee for Summerseat, through the planning and implementation process.

The success of the 2016 Summerseat project laid the foundation for preservation partnerships for VSU and other academic institutions in the region that are intended to be long-lasting. In January, HistoriCorps secured a second Cameron grant—this time for $350,000—to establish a regional office in the Tri-Cities area as the organization’s east coast headquarters.

Summerseat served as a pilot project to test the viability of a new branch in the region, and the director of HistoriCorps found the support from VSU and the local community encouraging. Cameron Foundation President J. Todd Graham expressed enthusiasm for the educational opportunities that the new headquarters would bring to the region:

> While the preservation of Summerseat is important, we also are interested in the greater potential that HistoriCorps can bring to this region through its educational partnerships. These local field schools can provide valuable training and workforce skills in the preservation trades and at the same time restore some of the fabric within our communities. With such a diverse stock of historic buildings in need of rehabilitation, this collaboration can benefit the community in many ways.

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258 Jane Harris, Interviewed by Katlyn Cotton, Phone Interview (July 2016).
260 Todd Graham, quoted in “HistoriCorps to preserve Summerseat, explore local preservation school,” The Cameron Foundation.
Jane Harris echoed this sentiment, saying that the project has stirred conversation about offering preservation training through VSU, though nothing formal has come about.²⁶¹ Nonetheless, the project has raised the profile of preservation on campus, making an appreciation for university heritage a greater part of campus culture.

²⁶¹ Jane Harris says that she has advocated for a course or program to be offered, but nothing official has been implemented.
Chapter 6: Analysis and Conclusion

HBCUs steward a heritage that is nonpareil, and through this study, it became clear that such a remarkable inheritance obliges certain practices. This chapter calls out certain themes that persisted across this thesis—from the HBCU context in Chapter 3, HBCU preservation practices in Chapter 4, and the case studies in Chapter 6. At the core of these themes is a central principle—the primacy of the living HBCU mission.

Interpretation Fosters Appreciation

Tradition and legacy are elemental to HBCU campus culture, but this does not necessarily translate to a campus wide appreciation for historic places. Arguably, the simplest and most effective way to foster an appreciation for institutional history is to make the student body and larger community aware of this cultural heritage. Interpretation ties campus history and tradition to tangible spaces, reiterating their contribution to the legacies that many cherish.

The HBCUs studied in this thesis used interpretation to reinforce a historical consciousness on campus. Tuskegee is undeniably an institution where the campus’s fabric is tied to a sense of institutional pride. The University fosters an awareness of the campus’s extraordinary past by offering its own historical campus tours, in addition to those offered by onsite National Park Service staff. Tougaloo College used a portion of its Getty Campus Heritage Initiative funding to produce a brochure that illustrated the architectural history of the campus. Virginia State University displays a portion of its rich archives on campus history in a gallery space in a historic campus building. These forms of interpretation reinforce a sense of place over time that connects current students and faculty to the people and events that shaped their
institutions. Many students and alumni love their campus for the experiences and personal memories associated with it, but interpretation gives time-depth to this love for place.

The effort at Miles College to place a historical marker on its campus demonstrates that interpretation places into historical perspective the important work that HBCUs do. The historic campuses of HBCUs tell not only their own story, but are part of a larger narrative about education and racial justice. Interpretation is key to tying individual buildings and places to this larger significance.

Room for Growth

Tuskegee University and Virginia State University both conducted heritage planning in such a way that allowed room for growth. Tuskegee created a policy for the insertion of new buildings within its highly protected historic core that would maintain a character-defining ratio of open space to building. This policy was accompanied by a recommendation for design guidelines that would ensure this sympathetic design of these new buildings. Virginia State planned for the careful addition of a new academic building to increase the functionality of the historic core of campus.

The lesson here is a common one, but especially important in the context of HBCUs. Growth and preservation are not mutually exclusive, but should be balanced against each other. A cultural landscapes approach—one that recognizes that change as a necessary part of campus development—is important in HBCU preservation. HBCUs, like all colleges and universities, seek to be attractive to students and donors by offering state-of-the-art-research facilities and instructional technologies. A good preservation plan promotes campus heritage as another tool
for institutional advancement, but it also accommodates these desires. Within the HBCU context, growth and preservation are essential to mission impact.

Landscapes Are Key

The case studies illustrated the importance of landscape preservation within the HBCU context. Landscapes are not inactive or passive features of a campus. They are the product of people shaping their environment to meet their needs with the resources at their disposal. There is much recorded—consciously and unconsciously—within these landscapes that reveal truths about the African American experience navigating an unjust world. This was certainly the case at Tuskegee, where the campus’s early development was deeply tied to the land’s topography, abundant natural resources, and scarce financial capital. Evidence of this is still visible in the landscape through the irregular arrangement of buildings and the large undeveloped valleys, where livestock once grazed and clay once extracted for the campus’s early buildings. The Tuskegee preservation plan was very conscious of the important relationship between buildings and open space, and sought to preserve and enhance this feature of the cultural landscape. Oakwood University celebrated the many layers—absent and extant—of its cultural landscape through historical markers. Its interpretation weaved together past and present landscape features, honoring the now open spaces that once held auction blocks and slave cabins.

Within the HBCU context, a historic landscape survey—if not a separate Cultural Landscape Report—is particularly important. In a practical sense, this tool can help the institution identify appropriate areas for development. In a more meaningful sense, this form of
investigation can unearth significant narratives inscribed within the cultural landscape and restore appreciation for open spaces and voids.

Leverage Research and Funding

While not every HBCU struggles with funding issues, financial concerns are certainly a delimiting consideration in capital decision-making among HBCUs. Many schools lack the financial resources and technical knowledge necessary to document the significance of their historic structures or to achieve a National Register listing, which are important as a foundation for rehabilitation and restoration work.

The study of Tougaloo College’s thirty-year campaign to research and restore its historic campus makes a persuasive case for the incremental approach to campus preservation. Tougaloo used an initial National Park Service research grant as a springboard for a campus wide preservation effort. The knowledge and support generated by this grant fueled further efforts—additional grants to study individual structures and the campus landscape and preservation grants for the rehabilitation significant places like the Woodworth Chapel and the Robert O. Wilder Building. Over this long process, the school built a relationship with a local preservation and planning firm, WFT Architects, who came to understand the school’s needs. WFT helped the school develop a phased rehabilitation plan for the Robert O. Wilder Building, so that the school could carry out renovations as funding became available.262 This model is useful for HBCUs that struggle with fiscal resources and seek to finance preservation efforts.

Conclusion

College campuses are places of powerful presence and strong attachment. Their historic structures are carriers of intergenerational memory that connect students, alumni, and community to one another and to their institutional heritage. All colleges and universities have a deep responsibility to steward the special places they have inherited. Yet historically black colleges and universities have a special obligation to their heritage, because their histories are significant beyond the context of personal attachment or institutional memory. The campuses of HBCUs, individually and collectively, are crucial to a fuller and richer telling of American history. Their historic halls and campus greens illustrate an account of African American struggle and achievement unlike few other settings. These campuses are sites of empowerment and activism that have played a special role in creating a more equal and just society, and they continuously perform this role today. Their honorable historic missions—as necessary now as they ever were—set HBCUs apart. Theirs is a living history; their historic purpose is ongoing, vibrant, and present in the contemporary culture. As these institutions modernize and adjust to new needs, it is tremendously important to safeguard the places that symbolize this long and noble effort.

Therein lays the case for preservation planning at HBCUs. Yet one must acknowledge the challenges that face preservation at colleges and universities in general and HBCUs in particular. As is true for most campuses, the spaces that hold great meaning can be neglected or demolished for the sake of progress. This is too often the case at HBCUs, which seek to offer leading-edge instructional and research facilities for the greatest benefit of their students and the advancement of the institution. Financial concerns and issues with deferred maintenance frequently skew the negotiation between preservation and modernization.
This thesis does not purport to arrive at any universality among HBCUs, nor does it aim to create a set of guidelines, standards, or paradigms for their practice. Rather, this thesis presents the excellent heritage work at HBCUs within its own context. It highlights the centrality of the mission within HBCU preservation practices—a mission rooted in history but with incontestable contemporary impact. HBCUs unquestionably deserve the support and attention of the preservation community, not solely because their structures are historically significant. HBCUs steward something immaterial and powerful—a living history that is continually re-enacted and continually produces its impact. As the preservation field increasingly and necessarily engages with the politics of space and heritage, the care of places that speak to historic and current perseverance against injustice is paramount.
Bibliography

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Miles College Alumni Association, “Miles College Leaders, Students Active During Civil Rights Era,” Historic Marker, 2014.


*To provide for the establishment of the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site, Alabama and for other purposes,* Public Law 93-486, U.S. Statutes at Large, 88 (1974): 1461-1463.


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### Appendix B: Preservation Infrastructure at HBCUs

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### Appendix D: Historical Consciousness in Promotional Materials

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