

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Drake University Campus Historic District  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number Roughly 2 blocks along University Ave. near/ 25th Street  not for publication  
city, town Des Moines  vicinity  
state Iowa code IA county Polk code 153 zip code 50311

### 3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>6</u>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ sites
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ structures
		<u>6</u>	_____ objects
			<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
Drake University and Related Properties in  
Des Moines, Iowa, 1881-1918

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

James E. Lamb July 15, 1988  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Bureau of Historic Preservation, State Historical Society of Iowa  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
Education/college

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
Education/college

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals/  
Classical Revival

foundation Limestone  
walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Limestone  
Concrete

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

**General Characteristics.** The six semi-public buildings of the Drake University Campus District anchor the southeast part of the school's parklike campus. These collegiate (and one religious) buildings are concentrated near the intersection of 25th Street and University Avenue. The buildings are united by theme (development of Drake University, the school's relationship with the Christian Church, and the role of both Drake University and University Christian Church in area settlement) as well as by location. All are brick and share similar building materials, scale, siting, and such details as arched entries. A high canopy of deciduous trees arches over them and the curving connecting cement walks, providing dappled changes of light and shade. The collegiate buildings date from 1882-83 to 1908 and call attention to the three pivotal periods of University development. They demonstrate the various separate colleges that comprised the University and the role of significant philanthropic and educational participants in University development. Located next to Memorial Hall, University Christian Church (1908) and its Education Building annex (1926) have both been used repeatedly for University functions, and the church is a prominent architectural feature of the area.

**Special Features.** Although the significance of the Campus District is primarily historical, architectural elements contribute to the feeling of time and place and to the district's cohesiveness. All but the five-story Education Building for University Christian Church are two- or three-stories, and all exhibit a basically rectangular shape. All six buildings are brick with contrasting limestone or concrete trim. However, various shades of brick (red with dark grey on Cole Hall, pinkish tan with golden and dark red brown for the Carnegie Library, for example) provide variety and distinctiveness.

All or part of all six buildings were constructed in a span of

## 8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Education

Settlement

Period of Significance

1881-1918

Significant Dates

1882-83

1903-08

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Bell, Hill McClelland, et al.

Architect/Builder

Smith & Gage

Proudfoot & Bird

C.B. Lakin

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

**Significance.** Established in 1881, Drake University is the oldest surviving university in Des Moines. Buildings directly associated with the pivotal periods of its development reflect the rapid educational and collegiate financial development of Drake University in Des Moines. The Drake University Campus District illustrates educational development that had a significant impact on the growth of higher education in Des Moines. As the reason behind creation and settlement of University Place, the campus calls attention to area settlement, including the role of the Disciples of Christ. Buildings in the district are also directly associated with the various administrations of key leaders. The Campus District is significant under Criteria A: properties that are strongly associated with factors and effects of Drake University's development and the role of the Disciples of Christ in early development. It is also significant under Criterion B: properties that are associated with the lives of pivotal persons directly involved with Drake University's educational and financial development. Five closely sited collegiate buildings in the Campus District illustrate variously the financial, educational, and philanthropic roles of Chancellor Carpenter and General Francis M. Drake in establishing the school, the consolidation period under Chancellor Craig, and the progressive period of the Hill M. Bell administration. University Christian Church calls attention to the crucial place of the Disciples of Christ in University genesis and development and best exemplifies that association. Clustered about Old Main, the buildings in the Drake University Campus District reflect directly and in a well preserved manner the educational evolution of this private university and the important influences upon it. Unifying features--brick, limestone or concrete trim, siting, shape and proportions, tree-covered campus--result in a distinct and distinctive district.

See continuation sheet

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Ritchey, Charles J. Drake University through 75 Years. Des Moines: Drake University, 1956.  
Bureau of Historic Preservation, Architects in Iowa files.  
Art Work of Des Moines. Chicago: Gravure Illustration Co., 1915).  
Quax. 1905, 1906, 1908, 1910  
Curt Teich Postcard Collection. Undated postcards.  
Drake University. "Portraits of Prominent Officers. Views of Buildings and Grounds." 1912.  
Photo Files, Drake University Archives, Cowles Library.  
Long, Barbara Beving. "The Successful Beginnings of Drake University." Multiple Property Document, National Register Nomination. 1987.

See continuation sheet

### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 8.99

### UTM References

A 

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

C 

1	5	4	4	5	5	4	0	4	6	0	5	5	6	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

E 

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

B 

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

D 

1	5	4	4	5	5	4	0	4	6	0	5	4	3	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

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Verbal Boundary Description District is bounded on east by 25th Street and on north by Carpenter Avenue. West boundary is a line between the oldest campus buildings and Cowles Library (roughly 28th Street). On the south University Avenue forms the boundary except for Memorial Hall and University Christian Church which are located along University on the south side, between 25th and 26th Street. See map.

See continuation sheet

### Boundary Justification

The district includes early extant campus development (to 1908) as well as an adjacent church whose history is intimately associated with University development. Streets form several clear lines of demarcation.

See continuation sheet

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Barbara Beving Long, Historian

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just five years (1903-08).<sup>1</sup> This contributes strongly to the cohesive appearance of the Campus District. Construction dates for Old Main (1882-83) represent the initial pioneer period of Drake's development.

Except for Old Main, all buildings in the district display a restrained use of classical elements, including brick corner quoins, keystones, consoles, and mouldings. All campus buildings rest either on a high basement or a noticeable base. Prominent horizontal courses and continuous sills occur on all examples. And all but the former Carnegie Library feature round arches, either at entrances or windows.

Both Old Main and University Christian Church fittingly stand apart in appearance. Old Main is the sole nineteenth century example, the first brick building on the campus. As such, it exhibits late Victorian elements, notably the tall narrow windows (original), centered belltower, and series of stone courses that enliven the red brick wall surface. Its multiple front gables feature fine corbelled brick chimneys, and there is an excellent Romanesque Revival projecting entry (added in 1900).

As the sole religious building, University Christian Church takes on an ecclesiastical appearance. Unlike the collegiate classroom buildings, its Education Building has a notable corner bell tower. Its bulky appearance is reminiscent of Tuscan churches, especially the arcades of windows and prominent courses between stories. However, the golden tan brick, geometric brick patterns, stone trim, round-arched openings, and stately mien assure a complementary role in the Campus District.

The Drake University Campus District enjoys considerable grassy open space beneath the trees. The rectangles of the University buildings are interspersed amid tall oaks and curving walks. Just east of the church and the campus is the commercial sector of former University Place. South of the district are residences. The west end of the district marks the 1908 extent of the campus. Carpenter Avenue provides the north boundary, and beyond it is recent campus construction and more housing.

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<sup>1</sup>The Auditorium addition to Old Main dates from 1900 and the Education Building annex to the University Christian Church was added in 1926.

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**General Condition.** All buildings retain original wall surfaces and ornamentation and stand in a good state of preservation. Modern requirements (energy conservation, access for the handicapped) have prompted some changes. Most buildings in the district do not have original windows, and mullion patterns have not always been respected. (See Building List for details.) A small double ramp has been added to the north side of Cole Hall, and a door to a special elevator added to the west side of Memorial Hall. Interiors of classroom buildings have generally been altered over the years. The Auditorium addition to Old Main (1900) and Howard Hall both retain their superb stained or colored glass windows, although they have been covered on the outside with protective panes on Howard Hall. The rather modest interior of the Auditorium is virtually unaltered.

All six buildings in the Drake University Campus District contribute to its historic appearance. Old Main, the oldest building on campus, is of primary contributing significance.

**Building List.**

1. Old Main. 1882-3; three-story red brick rectangular shape; five front-facing gables with centered bell tower; some star tie rods; long narrow windows are double-hung and 4/4; lively surface: bricks set at angle between windows, corbelled chimneys, stone courses serve as sills and lintels, and decorated stone panels over top windows in center; exterior appears unaltered, windows original; in 1900 Auditorium addition to side rear (excellent arcades of eight stained glass windows with rectangular stained glass windows above them); also in 1900 enlarged main entrance which has massive round arch (red stone) with rusticated voussoirs; in 1903 stairway access added to Auditorium; architect for Old Main: C.B. Lakin.

Auditorium relates to General Drake's role as major donor; Old Main best calls attention to pioneer period of University development; prominent campus landmark houses University offices; oldest extant building on campus; **PRIMARY contributing.**

2. Howard Hall (Drake University Conservatory of Music); 1903 with 1908 east wing addition as originally planned--west wing never built; irregular shape although effect of rectangular building; unifying elements with district: brick quoins, continuous stone sills and lintels, raised basement, round-arched

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windows; distinctive large colored glass window with music motifs over main entrance; shallow hipped roof and small parapet; second-story round-arched windows have original stone semi-circular panels; architect: Smith & Gage; looks unaltered though windows not original.

Important campus building dating from President Bell years; also relates to General Drake's role as major donor; **contributing**.

3. Cole Hall (Law School); 1904; two-story red brick with dark grey brick base and concrete trim; early drawing shows was intended to have higher basement and squarer proportions; unifying elements within district: brick quoins, semi-circular pediment with small consoles over entry, continuous sills, restrained use classical elements; note center bay slightly recessed and prominent lintels with projecting concrete panels; architect: Smith & Gage; alterations include well-designed concrete ramp for handicapped and dark brown metal windows; original mullion pattern was 3/1; interior changed for use as admissions office.

When opened in 1904-05 anchored then northwest corner of campus; named for Judge C.C. Cole and housed law school and law library; important campus building dating from President Bell years; relates to General Drake's role as major donor and the consolidation of various schools on the present campus and under direct University control; **contributing**.

4. Memorial Hall (Bible College); 1905; three-story reddish brick rectangle with very high dark red-brown base and tan brick at slightly projecting entries; unifying elements within district: rusticated brick for high basement, continuous sills and lintels, concrete moulding, concrete round-arched entries on west and north, classical detail; architect: Smith & Gage; appears unaltered although 2/2 windows not original and small door added to right (south) of west side entry; original mullion pattern 3/1.

Important campus building dating from President Bell years; relates to General Drake's importance as major donor and significant place of Disciples of Christ in campus development and Drake University history; **contributing**.

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5. Carnegie Library; 1907-08; two-story rectangle resting on high basement; effective use of brick colors a Proudfoot & Bird characteristic: pilasters are pinkish tan, panels between windows are golden, and base is dark red-brown brick; architect: Proudfoot & Bird; unifying elements within district: brick, high basement, restrained use classical motifs, shape, continuous sill at base; note simple cornice with dentils, stone capitals with geometric pattern, stone squares beneath second story sills; original windows three-part much like those of present first floor; second story windows had multiple panes and upper transom (now an opaque panel); interior changed to accommodate Law Library.

Important campus building dating from President Bell years; calls attention to shift from sectarian college and search for funding at national level, and progressive and sophisticated educational policies at Drake; **contributing**.

6. University Christian Church; 1908 with 1926 Education Building annex; present 1908 Sanctuary built adjacent to 1890 University Place Christian Chapel which then replaced by Education Building; Education Building is five-story tan brick; notable features: red tile roof, corner campanile, brick patterns (corbelling, dentils), stone trim (especially Corinthian pilasters, arcades on second story and campanile; good example period revival design; Sanctuary matches many of later Education Building motifs and materials but has more elaborate brick patterns (diapering in front gable end) and two-story round-arched entries (not original); Education Building has some forty church school class rooms, a gymnasium, church offices, chapel, and Fellowship Hall; architect for 1908 Sanctuary Proudfoot & Bird, for 1926 Education Building Burdette Higgins.

Most alterations are to interior and include addition of Memorial Chapel (second floor, Education Building) added in memory of World War II casualties in 1947; 1955: Sanctuary interior remodeled; architect: Tinsley, Higgins, Lighter & Lyon (Des Moines); 1977: (When Central Christian and University Christian merged to form First Christian Church in this building) Sanctuary again remodeled; 2-story arches replace original one-story stone entry surrounds at entrance; architect Gene O'Neil of Woodburn & O'Neil (Des Moines).



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University Place Christian Chapel was formally organized in 1888 with 382 charter members. However, Disciples of Christ services were first held beginning in September of 1881 at Drake University. The first minister for the Chapel was, fittingly, from the Drake faculty. The Rev. David R. Dungan served from 1888-89, then went to Palestine. George T. Carpenter, Drake's first Chancellor, was the first chairman of the University Place Christian Chapel Board.

Isaac Newton McCash served as minister between 1893 and 1903. An excellent evangelistic speaker, he led the congregation out of debt and saw Sunday School attendance grow to six hundred. Under the stewardship of the Reverend Charles S. Medbury, the two present buildings (Sanctuary and Education Building) were constructed with specific uses in mind. The Sanctuary provided a large meeting space (capacity three thousand) for revivals and other large religious assemblies. Medbury conceived of the Education Building as a facility "for the enlargement of life," which is engraved above the entrance.

University Christian Church is historically significant for its association with the Rev. Charles S. Medbury, who served the congregation from 1904 until 1932. Under his charismatic leadership, the church flourished, and Medbury was well known and highly regarded throughout the city for his progressive efforts at temperance and moral reform. He died at the close of Sunday services on April 24, 1932, seated before the congregation.

The Sanctuary and classrooms were frequently used by University; best calls attention to role of Disciples of Christ in both area settlement and in University genesis and development; **contributing.**

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The period of significance dates from 1881 to 1918--the year Drake University was established to the end of President Hill M. Bell's tenure. The period of significance relates to key themes discussed in the historic context section of the Multiple Property Documentation Form for "The Successful Beginnings of Drake University." See Context section, Curriculum and Colleges, pages 5-11.

**Historical Development.** For discussion of historical development of the Campus District, see the Multiple Property Documentation Form for "The Successful Beginnings of Drake University." Of special note are the following subheadings in Context section: Role of Disciples of Christ, Curriculum and Colleges, Collegiate Financing, and Settlement in University Place.

**Related Buildings.** Two early campus buildings no longer stand. The Student's Home, the original building, was hastily built in time for classes the fall of 1881 and was razed in 1894. By then, the rather modest wood frame building was used only for limited student housing. Also dating from the pioneer period of Drake's development was Science Hall, which opened in 1892. Also known as Alumni Hall and Sage Hall, it stood on the site of the present Cowles Library, which was built in the 1930s just west of the Campus District. No buildings remain from the period when the school maintained off-campus buildings that were part of Drake University. From the President Bell years, only the Men's Gymnasium (c.1907) is not longer extant on the present campus.

For discussion of other collegiate buildings in Des Moines, see Property Types section of Multiple Property Documentation Form.

**Design Sources.** Some of Des Moines' most well regarded architectural firms were responsible for buildings in the Campus District. Smith & Gage designed three (Howard, Cole, and Memorial Halls), Proudfoot & Bird (or Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson) were responsible for two (Carnegie Library, University Christian Church Sanctuary, and also the 1908 addition to Howard Hall, probably following closely Smith & Gage designs), while C.B. Lakin designed Old Main, and Burdette Higgins designed the 1926 Education Building annex to University Christian Church.

Little is known of C.B. Lakin. He was an architect in Des Moines, but was only listed in city directories in 1881 and 1882.

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Smith & Gage practiced together in Des Moines in the early twentieth century. They designed a number of important public buildings, including the courthouses in Decatur, Appanoose and Monroe Counties, and the public library in Eagle Grove. Gage spent three years in the New York architectural office of McKim, Mead and White before coming to Des Moines in 1899.

Proudfoot & Bird, and its successor firms, were the foremost architectural firm in Iowa beginning in the 1890s and extending to the 1930s. Although their practice included all types of commissions, they were especially known for their collegiate work, which included major buildings at all three state campuses, Simpson College, and Grinnell College, as well as Drake University.

Burdette Higgins attended Drake University and Harvard in the 1910s and later worked as a draftsman for Proudfoot, Bird & Rawson. In 1921 he set out on his own and was later part of the Des Moines firm of Tinsley, McBroom & Higgins. Among his commissions were the City Hall for Sigourney, a hospital in Clarinda, and a hotel and office building in Barranquilla, Columbia. Perhaps the best known work of the firm is the Bankers Life home office building in Des Moines.

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Architects in Iowa files. Bureau of Historic Preservation.  
First Christian Church. Archives.

"To the Glory of God and the Enlargement of Life. University  
Christian Church. Des Moines, Iowa. 1888-1956. First  
Christian Church. Archives.

Stringfellow, Myrtle. "A Short History of University Church."  
[1963.] First Christian Church. Archives.













