

= Students ' Building (Vassar College) =

The Students ' Building on the campus of Vassar College in the town of Poughkeepsie , New York , U.S. , houses the school 's All Campus Dining Center (ACDC or Deece) as well as additional multifunctional student space on its second floor . Designed by Joseph Herenden Clark of McKim , Mead & White and built in 1913 , the structure originally housed a variety of different student organizations and school functions . In 1973 , it was converted into a campuswide dining hall ; it underwent a second renovation in 2003 that returned multipurpose student functionalities to its upper floors .

= = History = =

James Monroe Taylor , fourth president of Vassar College in the town of Poughkeepsie , New York , wrote in 1901 of a dearth of a dedicated social space on campus " not devoted to college work but to college recreation . " He envisioned a building akin to Harvard 's University Club and the University of Pennsylvania 's Houston Club ; with a swelling student body size and rapid decentralization of the campus over the course of the first decade of the 1900s , the need for such a structure become even more crucial .

The Students ' Building was erected in 1913 after its cornerstone was laid on September 25 , 1912 . Funding for its construction came from an anonymous donor who sought to provide for the " exclusive needs and interests of student organizations " with the gift and who specified the name Students ' Building for the structure . Mary Babbott Ladd of the Vassar class of 1908 was later identified as that donor .

Until World War II , dining at Vassar was an elegant affair with table linens and serving maids , but after the war was over , these features were never brought back to student life . In 1973 , the All Campus Dining Center , also called the ACDC or the Deece , opened within the building , serving as a replacement to individual dining rooms in each of the college 's dormitories . The old system had proved too costly and overcrowded , necessitating the ACDC 's creation . The \$ 3 @ .@ 5 million renovation was conducted by Walker O. Cain and Associates , with over \$ 1 million of the funds coming from friends and family of Babbott Ladd . An \$ 11 million renovation in 2003 was designed by Finegold Alexander + Associates Inc .

= = Architecture and uses = =

The Students ' Building was designed by the New York City architecture firm of McKim , Mead & White , representing their only project at Vassar College . The plans were drawn up by young architect Joseph Herenden Clark , a recent graduate of the Columbia School of Architecture who , upon hearing the requirement that the structure be made from brick with white trim and a slate roof , recalled Christ Church in Alexandria , Virginia . Clark had studied Christ Church , which George Washington attended , during his days at Columbia . He trekked to Alexandria to study the interior and exterior of the church and ultimately the designs for the Students ' Building , his first public plan , were inspired by its architecture and features . Bishop and Company were contracted to construct the Students ' Building , an example of the Southern colonial revival style . It sits on the north edge of campus due south of the college 's North Gate and southeast of residential quad dorms like Lathrop House . Noyes House was built in 1958 and rests immediately to the southeast of the Students ' Building .

When the Students ' Building opened , it stood two stories tall with a basement , as well as wooden pillars on its facade supporting a pediment . A cupola topped the structure and stairs beneath the pediment led to a three sets of double doors ? one large , the others smaller but otherwise identical . Above each set of doors was a single large window . In the 1973 renovation , two red brick wings were added to the east and west sides of the building to accommodate numerous dining rooms . Featuring large windows , the new wings were more modern in their style than the old central portion of the building .

The first floor of the building was built as a grand 1 @, @ 200 @-@ seat auditorium with a proscenium stage , and meeting rooms dedicated to student organizations . The second floor consisted of a U @-@ shaped balcony and the Old Council Room , a gathering space for smaller organizations . The Old Council Room was repainted in 1945 as part of a minor renovation of the building that also included the opening of a student eatery called The Hoot on the west side . The ceiling was made from decorated plaster and dentils evoked the exterior neoclassical architectural style . The basement housed several offices and later a bicycle exchange , used bookshop , and student storage space . After the 1973 renovation , dishwashing equipment for the ACDC was housed upstairs , along with staff offices . The 2003 renovation saw the removal of this dishwashing equipment ; instead , the second upstairs was repurposed as a multifunctional student space , in line with the original intentions for the building . The second story ? called UpC ? is now an open space capable of seating 600 people when chairs are added ; it also features multimedia equipment and a third @-@ floor mezzanine that , until 2015 , housed the UpC Cafe .

Historically , the structure was used by and for student organizations . Formerly housed in the Calisthenium and Riding Academy and later the Alumnae Gymnasium , the Philaletheis Society moved into the Students ' Building upon its opening and began to use the space for its theatrical performances . The junior prom , lectures from a wide array of speakers , and faculty @-@ led skits all took place beneath the building 's roof . Vassar 's yearbook , the Vassarion , as well as its weekly newspaper , The Miscellany News , were also headquartered in the Students ' Building . An annual Christmas party , complete with students clad as reindeer pulling a sled on which sat political science professor Charles Gordon Post dressed as Santa Claus , once occurred within the building as well .