

WESTERN STATE NORMAL SCHOOL, WEST HALL
Western State Normal School Historic District
Western Michigan University, bounded by Stadium, Oliver and Davis
streets
Kalamazoo
Kalamazoo County
Michigan

HABS MI-448-C
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

WESTERN STATE NORMAL SCHOOL, WEST HALL

HABS No. MI-448-C

Location: West Hall is located on Oakland Drive, Western Michigan University campus, Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo County, Michigan (refer to attached maps).

The coordinates for building are approximately 42.286651,-85.597991 and were obtained through Google Maps in August, 2013 using WGS 84. There is no restriction on the release of the locational data to the public.

Significance: West Hall (1915) is the second of the four original buildings that were built on the Prospect Hill, the original campus of Western State Normal School (the present-day Western Michigan University). Originally called the Science Building, it was designed by architect E.W. Arnold, who also designed nearby East Hall. Together they are believed to be the only surviving examples of his work in Michigan.

Description: West Hall at Western Michigan University is a four-story red Georgian Style red brick structure with contrasting cream-colored engaged column pilasters with ionic capitals. It has limestone and terra cotta trim and a shallow sloped roof, edged by dentiled pressed metal cornices. Although it is no longer extant, historic photographs show that at one time a balustrade surrounded the roof. Windows are of three types: non-original aluminum triple hung, wood double hung, and wood hopper windows. The structural system consists of steel beams and columns with a poured concrete floor structure. It is approximately 150 feet long by 82 feet wide with a gross area of 35,586 square feet.

The interior of the building has been much modified during its life. The interior is a combination of walls and finishes from various eras. Remaining from the original building are stairways with cast iron balusters and newel posts, some stile and rail doors with glazing in the top half, floor mounted seats with integral writing surfaces in lecture rooms (some on stepped risers), some original cabinetry, lab sinks, and some classrooms retain their original black slate blackboards. Non-original modifications include modernized bathrooms, drywall and concrete masonry unit walls, addition of dropped lay-in ceilings, new floor finishes, new lighting, new cabinetry new flush wood doors, and new exterior doors.

History: The Science Building was built in 1915 using a \$75,000 grant from the State of Michigan, with an additional \$10,000 grant used to purchase equipment for laboratories, classrooms, and lectures halls. Instruction in geology, biology, botany, zoology, chemistry, physics, physiology, psychology and geography was offered in the Science Building. It continued to be used for education in the sciences until the 1960s when the need for updated facilities, modern technology, and additional space for instruction in the sciences resulted in construction of new facilities for the sciences on west campus. The Science Building was subsequently occupied by the College of Business, and became

known as West Hall. The building was last used for the Geology Department's Core Lab, which moved to another location in 2006. The building has been unused since then.

Historian: Gregory A. Jones, AIA

Project Information: In 2013-14, documentation of the Western State Normal School was sponsored by Western Michigan University and undertaken by HopkinsBurns Design Studio, Ann Arbor, Michigan, in consultation with the Historic American Building Survey, Catherine C. Lavoie, Chief. The field measurements were taken by Eugene C. Hopkins, FAIA, Principal; Gregory A. Jones, AIA; Evan Winterson Hall, Assoc. AIA; and David B. Rochlen, Assoc. AIA, and the drawings produced by David B. Rochlen, Assoc. AIA; Evan Winterson Hall, Assoc. AIA; Jessica M. Green, Assoc. AIA; and Lisa Heine. Dietrich G. Floeter took the large format photographs and Gregory A. Jones, AIA served as the project historian.