

Buildings and Landmarks Review – Research Team Report

May 6, 2022

Process

In [November 2020](#), the Buildings and Landmarks Committee made four recommendations to the campus administration. They were:

1. Recommended action on immediate findings from research committee.
The Research Team researched and reviewed 23 buildings and identified no major concerns at this time. One landmark was reviewed, the Abraham Lincoln statue in the Centennial Student Union, and was identified as a major concern. Change is recommended. Please see the Research Team report for more details.
2. Recommendation for university policy development. The advisory team recommends that the President and Provost consider the need for a campus policy and process that would guide potential challenges to the suitability of a building or landmark name. Colleges and Universities around the country have developed such policies and processes in the past decade. We further recommend that any new naming on campus be aligned with the principles above.
3. Representation of people of color and their accomplishments should be the top priority for the naming of any new buildings that are not philanthropically funded. The committee also recommends that acknowledgement of these individuals could be done through the naming of signature rooms/locations on campus (i.e., CSU Ballroom and Armstrong Lecture Halls) and/or statues, monuments, etc. This will help us acknowledge the individuals in a timelier fashion while not having to wait years before a new building is constructed.
4. Recommend that remaining named outdoor spaces and landmarks be reviewed.

Following presentations to Meet and Confers in February 2021, the Research Team of the Buildings and Landmarks Committee began implementing recommendation four, continue reviewing named spaces on campus. The work continued in AY2022.

The Research Team utilized the same research and review process as developed in fall 2020.

Spring 2022 Review

The Research Team researched and reviewed eight campus named spaces in the spring of 2022.

With this report, the Buildings and Landmarks Research Team has completed its review of named campus spaces and landmarks.

Below is a chart that very briefly documents what was reviewed, why individuals were recognized, and if the Research Team identified concerns. All compiled research material and meeting notes are available upon request.

Minor concerns – An action or statement was identified that does not reflect current University values but based on current information and the research questions posed it does not indicate that change is needed at this time. These are indicated with a footnote, so the minor concern is documented. No further action is recommended unless new information is identified.

Major concerns – An action(s) and/or statement(s) was identified that does not reflect current University values and the research questions posed indicate significant concerns. These are specifically addressed following the chart.

No major concerns were identified in this named space review.

Name of Building or Landmark	Individual(s) Researched	University Affiliation	Reason for Recognition	Concerns
Rummy Macias Wrestling Room	Rometo “Rummy” Macias	Faculty	Outstanding years of service	None at this time.
Marilyn J. Lass Center for Minnesota Studies	Marilyn J. Lass	Faculty	Outstanding years of service	None at this time.
Brock/Otto Hall of Champions	Georgene Brock ¹	Faculty	Outstanding years of service	None at this time.
James A. Zimmer Rock Garden	James A. Zimmer	Faculty	Outstanding years of service	None at this time.
Amos Owen Garden	Amos Owen	Friend of university	Respected Dakota spiritual and community leader	None at this time. ²
James Peterson (Rugby Pitch-Proposed)	James Peterson	Faculty	Outstanding years of service	None at this time.
James Nickerson Conference Room	James Nickerson	President of University	Outstanding years of service	None at this time.
Edward Searing Conference Room	Edward Searing	President of University	Outstanding years of service; previous lower campus building named after him	None at this time.

Major Concerns

None as part of this review

Recommendation Related to this Review

Move the dedication plaque for Amos Owen to a new cottonwood tree in the campus arboretum.

¹ Robert “Bob” Otto was previously reviewed for the Otto Recreation Center. No concerns at that time.

² See “Recommendation Related to this Review.”

As part of the review, the Archives Team discovered that the Amos Owen tree that is described on the [campus dedications and memorials webpage](#), no longer exists. The plaque to honor Owen remains.

The tree was originally planted and dedicated in 1990 as part of a “Amos Owen Days” at the University.³

Recommendation about Daniel Buck Conference Room

Background

In the [Buildings and Landmarks Research Team – Report – December 10, 2021](#), we recommended that the naming of the Daniel Buck Conference Room in the CSU be reviewed. President Inch has asked for recommendations on how to handle the concerns addressed in our report.

Recommendations from Research Team about Daniel Buck Conference Room

- 1. We recommend removing the name Daniel Buck from the room and documenting the change and justification on a campus website dedicated to buildings and landmarks review and any future name proposals.**

The group considered changing the signage in the room to add historical context and un-naming the space after Daniel Buck. The group strongly recommended the un-naming of the space. While Buck has an important connection to the founding of the Normal School, his documented white supremacist ideology and hostile attitudes toward indigenous people are counter to the University’s current values of diversity and inclusion.

According to CSU personnel, most people refer to the room by its number (CSU 203) rather than the name (Daniel Buck Conference Room.) The room was named after Daniel Buck in 1988. It was one of four rooms in the student union named after former Valley campus buildings.⁴ The original building was Daniel Buck Hall, the first residence hall at the Normal School and the only one not named after a President of the institution.

Daniel Buck’s documented beliefs about indigenous people warrant the un-naming of the room. His contributions to the founding of the Normal School are recognized through the historical records of the university. He is also profiled in Dr. William E. Lass’s history of the university, *Minnesota State University, Mankato 1868-2018: A Sesquicentennial History*.⁵

- 2. Utilize the new campus [naming places or landmarks on campus policy](#) (currently in final review) to re-name CSU 203 after someone or something related to the Valley Campus of the University.**
This would honor the original intent of the room name.

³ [Photograph of 1990 proclamation](#) signed by President Preska. Photos of tree-planting [MSU12752](#) and [MSU12754](#). Gilbert, Sara, “[The Good Earth](#),” *TODAY*, Winter 2009, 19. Article focuses on garden but mentions tree.

⁴ “[Mankato State lower campus remembered in Student Union rooms](#),” *Reporter*, January 26, 1988, 2.

⁵ Lass, William E. *Minnesota State University, Mankato 1868-2018: A Sesquicentennial History*, p. 11.

Research Team - Buildings and Landmarks Committee – Spring 2022

Daardi Mixon, Professor, University Archivist

Kayla Brinkman, Archives Graduate Assistant, History

Adam Smith, Archives Technician

Chad McCutchen, Assistant Professor, History

H. Matthew Loayza, Dean of Social and Behavioral Sciences

Gwen Westerman, Professor, English

Keb Spear, Student, Political Science