



Carnegie Mellon University - Baker Hall

Baker Hall was designed in 1900 by Henry Hornbostel as one of Carnegie Mellon's first academic buildings. The project was a small addition to this historically significant building on a carefully master planned campus, for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. The critical factors behind the approach on this work included respect for the existing campus architecture and appropriate exterior and interior design.

The Baker Hall Addition consisted of 25,000 s.f. of new construction with an additional 5,000 s.f. of renovated space within the existing building envelope. The rhythm of the existing building - a series of wings organized around a central spine - dictated the building footprint and location. Because the program requirements exceeded the building footprint, a decision was made to build a substantial portion of the building (18,000 s.f.) below grade. The introduction of skylights, exterior stairwells and a manipulation of the landscape allowed natural light to penetrate below ground.

The program elements consisted of faculty and administrative offices, psychology laboratories, a 150-seat lecture hall, a 75-seat lecture hall, and interactive classrooms. In addition, lounge spaces were provided in different locations and scales as informal spaces where students could have serendipitous meetings in a non-institutionalized setting. These lounge spaces include a coffee bar and an outdoor study plaza. All public spaces are fully data networked to allow LAN and web access by students from laptops.

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