



Name of Property: University Heights Campus
(Bronx Community College of The City University of New York)

City, State: Bronx, New York

Period of Significance: 1894-1912

NHL Criteria: 4

NHL Theme: III. Expressing Cultural Values
5. Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Urban Design

Previous Recognition: 1979 National Register of Historic Places, Hall of Flame Complex
(portion of proposed district)

National Historic Context: Special Study
XVI. Architecture
M. Period Revivals (1870-1940)
6. Beaux-Arts (1890-1915)

NHL Significance:

- Stanford White’s design for New York University’s “University Heights Campus” is a nationally significant example of Beaux-Arts architecture in the United States, and is among the most important works by White, partner in McKim, Mead & White, the preeminent American architectural firm at the turn of the century.
- The location of the campus, on a picturesque bluff in the Bronx in what was then a rural setting outside of dense Manhattan, exemplifies an important period trend in campus planning: the push to abandon older hemmed-in urban campuses and construct spacious new ones in bucolic, pastoral settings.
- The dramatic site for NYU’s new campus was soon matched by a stunning plan conceived by renowned architect Stanford White of McKim, Mead & White. The campus is situated on the highest natural point in the Bronx. While having a formal arrangement of buildings typical of the period, White’s design did not overpower the landscape. The loose grouping of primary buildings framed views out into the landscape that took advantage of the natural topography and beauty of the bluff-top site.
- The exquisitely detailed Gould Library, the campus’s centerpiece, sits on a high podium along the top of which runs the Hall of Fame for Great Americans, a colonnade



containing busts of those elected, making it the first of its kind in the United States. The colonnade provides a terminus to the physical campus, but a permeable one that underscores White's desire to integrate the natural and built environments.

Integrity:

- Although White's plan was never fully implemented, the core of his University Heights Campus retains its principal buildings and essential, character-defining features that are an important demonstration of the flexibility of Beaux-Arts design and of Stanford White's prowess as an architect. The buildings have been in constant use and, despite a significant change in institutional ownership, have been cared for and maintain a high degree of integrity
- The proposed NHL boundary focuses on the centerpiece buildings on the western edge of the campus—the Gould Memorial Library, Hall of Languages, Hall of Philosophy, the Hall of Fame for Great Americans, and the Havemeyer Laboratory—and the formal lawn onto which they front. These elements ably convey White's vision for the campus, which contrasts the formality of the lawn and its adjacent buildings with view sheds to the dramatic natural landscape to the west.

Owner of Property: The City University in the City of New York; Bronx Community College occupies the buildings.

Acreage of Property: Approximately 7.1 acres.

Origins of Nomination: The Bronx Community College, with the support of The City University of New York, hired a consulting firm to prepare the NHL nomination.

Potential for Positive Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:

- NHL designation will recognize one of McKim, Mead & White's exceptional Beaux-Arts designs.
- NHL designation will increase awareness of the campus community and neighborhood, and associated encouragement of public participation in events, programs, and functions on campus.
- Designation as an NHL will increase visibility of and visitation to the Hall of Fame for Great Americans.

Potential for Negative Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program: None known.

Public Comments Favoring Designation (comments received as of 11/10/11):

The Honorable José E. Serrano, U.S. Congressman, 16th District, New York
Carole M. Berotte Joseph, Ph.D., President, Bronx Community College (owner)
Matthew Goldstein, Chancellor, City University of New York

Landmarks Committee Comments:



Landmarks Committee Recommendation: Designation. Dr. Clark Hines moved, Dr. Seale seconded; unanimous approval.

Advisory Board Recommendation: