

PAVILION IX

THE JEFFERSONIAN PRECINCT

Originally called the Academical Village, the present Jeffersonian Precinct of the University of Virginia occupies a twenty-eight-acre site in the rolling hills just east of the Shenandoah Valley. The original U-shaped complex of buildings is situated on an elevated site that slopes gently down toward the south. The Rotunda, which originally housed classrooms and the library, is located at the heart of the complex at the northern end of the central green space, called the Lawn. Two rows of five pavilions, each with connecting dormitory rooms, form the east and west sides of the Lawn and terminate at the foot of the Rotunda. Behind each row of pavilions is a row of three hotels, which were built as eating facilities, and connecting dormitory rooms. Between these inner and outer ranges are gardens bounded by serpentine walls.

The ten pavilions are numbered I to X. Odd-numbered pavilions are on the west, and even numbered pavilions are on the east. The lower the number of the pavilion, the closer it is to the Rotunda. Each of the pavilions originally housed one of the University's ten original, separate schools. Each contained classrooms and the professor's living quarters. The professors lived on the upper floors and taught their classes on the lower floors.

The pavilions are connected by a continuous colonnade, which offers shelter from the weather and partially screens the utilitarian dormitories from public view. The walkway on the roofs of the colonnade that connects the second-floor levels of the pavilions is reserved for the private use of the faculty and their families.

Each of the pavilions was designed by Thomas Jefferson with elements drawn from classical models as published by Palladio, Fréart de Chambray, and Charles Errard. Each is different, thereby offering a separate lesson in classical orders and architecture.

The Lawn itself measures 740 feet in length and 192 feet in width. Lined with rows of trees, the Lawn is terraced in gradual steps from north to south. The Jeffersonian Precinct is separated from the newer sections of the University by roads on the west, north, and east sides and by a wide walkway on the south.