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Dundon-Berchtold Hall



Courtesy of Soderstrom Architects

A new University of Portland building will include classroom, office and auditorium space.

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Dundon-Berchtold Hall, a new University of Portland building scheduled for completion in 2019, will be an architectural rarity in the Rose City.

"What is unusual about it is the interests of the university and the donor gravitated towards a collegiate gothic expression," Soderstrom Architects principal Andrew Burke said.

Gothic architecture was especially popular for high school and college buildings in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It is still used for schools in the Northeast, but rarely on the West Coast.

"This is not something you commonly see done in Portland, Oregon," said Dan Danielson, managing principal at Soderstrom Architects.

The style often features ornate, recessed entries surrounded by stone moldings and niches for statues and stone carvings. Also, pointed arches stand out.

"If you go to Reed College, you will find buildings somewhat emulating the style," Danielson said.

Dundon-Berchtold Hall will replace Howard Hall and architecturally continue themes used in Lund Family Hall, which was completed in 2014. The new building will serve as a centerpiece and be one of the most dominant ones on campus. The idea to use collegiate gothic style necessitated collaboration between Soderstrom Architects and Robert A.M. Stern Architects in New York.

"The challenge was to try to design the building in a way to make our building look good and make all the other buildings look good," said Gary Brewer, partner at Robert A.M. Stern Architects. "A grouping of buildings is more important than one building."

Robert A.M. Stern Architects served as the design architect while Soderstrom Architects was the executive architect and the architect of record. Soderstrom Architects also secured all of the construction documents.

ON THE BOARDS



When completed, the building will have 63,000 square feet, including 18 classrooms, 30 offices and a 150-seat auditorium. The estimated construction cost is \$30 million. University officials selected Fortis Construction to build

the new hall.

"The point we would make is that you are able to do a high-performance building with modern electrical and HVAC and state-of-the-art classrooms all within this stylistic expression," Burke said.

It wasn't an easy goal to accomplish, despite architects from two firms working on the project.

"Even with the design lead, with their knowledge of the language and everything, it took us several iterations to perfect the scale, the proportion of the building and the proportion of the windows to the mass of the building," Danielson said.

The new building will provide the growing university with much needed classroom space. Some classrooms will feature movable screens and furniture. Other cluster classrooms will give students a chance to collaborate on various projects.

"The student population has grown 30 percent over the last 10 years," said Beth Sorensen, associate director of media relations for the University of Portland. "The building will also house the Dundon-Berchtold Institute for moral formation and applied ethics and provide a home for that program."

On the Boards is a DJC feature offering a look at the projects in Oregon being tackled by local architecture firms. To have your firm's projects considered, contact DJC architecture and engineering reporter Kent Hohlfeld at 503-802-7224 or khohlfeld@djcoregon.com.