

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina	
COUNTY: Mecklenburg	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Eumenean Hall

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
Davidson College Campus

CITY OR TOWN:
Davidson (Ninth Congressional District, The Hon. Charles R. Jonas)

STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37 COUNTY: Mecklenburg CODE: 119

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Davidson College

STREET AND NUMBER:
Main Street

CITY OR TOWN: Davidson STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Mecklenburg County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Charlotte STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1934 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:
East Capitol and Independence Avenue S.E.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: D.C. CODE: 11

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Eumenean Hall, like its counterpart, Philanthropic Hall, is a two-story temple-form brick structure three bays wide and three bays long with the second level expressed as a piano nobile. Dominating the main (southeast) facade is a tetrastyle Doric portico. The brick walls of the front and sides are laid in common bond, while the rear, facing the road, is in Flemish.

The pediment of the portico is covered with flush siding and supported by four massive columns of stuccoed brick that rise from the stuccoed water table which continues around the building. The two outer columns are set on heavy square stuccoed piers which rise to the second level while the inner columns are uninterrupted. Corresponding pilaster corner posts complete the facade. A basement screen wall of brick surmounted by a turned balustrade shields the lower sides of the portico, but the portico, unlike that of Philanthropic Hall, is open at both levels at the front. A stair rises on each side in a broken double flight, meeting at an entrance landing at the upper level. The slender grace of the double stair with its molded handrail and thin turned balusters is set off by the contrasting massiveness of the portico columns that support it. The main entrance, Palladian in design, consists of a double door, each leaf containing five flat panels crowned by a fanlight and flanked by five-pane sidelights. A fluted architrave with roundel corner blocks outlines the elements. The secondary entrance, at the basement level, repeats the design of the main one, but a transom occurs instead of the fanlight. Flanking the main door are large windows with nine-over-nine sash, featuring stone sills, wooden lintels, and fine flat arches.

Like Philanthropic Hall, Eumenean Hall has stuccoed pilasters dividing the bays of the sides and supporting a simple wooden cornice. In each pilaster can be seen the head of an iron tie rod that runs through the building between the stories. A simple double door with transom occurs in the central bay at the first level on each side; the remaining bays at both levels are marked by windows like those of the front. The splayed arches above the basement windows consist of a double row of brick stretchers, while a single row forms the arch above the upper windows. The rear is dominated by a fine Palladian window, repeating the elements of the main entrance. At the basement level a window has been filled with brick. Rear interior chimneys with molded caps rise on either side of the ridge of the roof.

The interior of the main hall, which occupies the whole upper floor, contains fine classical trim. The original plaster cornice and ceiling medallion has been removed, but their replacements maintain the dignity and character of the room. A wide plain baseboard and heavy plaster cornice with a grapevine frieze and rope molding punctuated by acanthus cartouches accentuate the boundaries of the room. The central oval plaster medallion is ornamented with palmette, tulip, and pea pod motifs. Fluted architraves with roundel corner blocks like those on the exterior Palladian openings surround the large windows and the entrance. The plain chimney breasts project slightly into the chamber on either side of the rear Palladian window. The elevated platform at the rear of the hall contains its original furniture, consisting of a large desk with the emblem of the society, inscribed "Eumenean Hall, 1837," its chair, and two smaller flanking desks with chairs. The

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Victorian chandelier was a later addition. The entire structure is in excellent condition, having been completely restored in 1956. The basement interior, which was remodeled at that time for office use, retains none of its original interior trim.

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

From the earliest days of Davidson College until the turn of the twentieth century, student life and government centered around two debating societies, the Eumenean and Philanthropic Societies.

The Concord Presbytery voted to establish an institution of higher learning in western North Carolina on March 12, 1835; on August 25 the presbytery resolved to purchase two tracts of land in Mecklenburg County from William L. Davidson; and on the following day they voted to name the school Davidson College in honor of Davidson's father, William Davidson, a revolutionary war hero. The college began exercises March 1, 1837, and by the end of that year a number of buildings had been constructed on the new campus.

The first of the two debating societies to be formed was the Eumenean Society, organized as the Polemic Debating Society on April 14, 1837; it assumed its present name in 1838. The records of the group begin with the thirty-ninth meeting, on November 9, 1838; for several years their meetings were held in "Professor Sparrow's classroom." Both societies, secret and formal in nature, were primarily debating organizations, but they had a much more important influence than their avowed purpose might suggest. Society rules were very strict about the behavior of their members, imposing fines for fighting, swearing, intoxication, and "lying to the faculty." There were "vigilance committees" for reporting offenses. Since nearly all students were members of one society or the other, "student government really dates from the beginning," with regulation of behavior coming from the two societies. It is said that "around the two halls centered college loyalty and affection." They provided excellent libraries, and from the first commencement until 1913 the societies joined in selecting and paying the expenses of the commencement orator, "known as the Orator before the Literary Societies and for years an honorary member of one of them." The chief marshal, an office alternating between the two societies, was the highest office of the student body. He presided at commencement and wore elegant regalia, a fringed and ornamented sash.

On November 12, 1842, the members of the Eumenean Society unanimously approved the motion of Mr. A. M. Boger "that we make an attempt to erect a Society Hall." In January a committee from the Philanthropic Society, who also wished to construct a hall, met with the Eumeneans to confer about the design of the two buildings. Despite long rivalry between the two groups, a spirit of cooperation attended the planning and construction of the halls. It was decided that "each Society should act independently, but that the

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halls should be 'alike in size, material, and magnificence,' and cost \$1,500 apiece." Sites were selected December 14, 1848, and construction began soon afterward. The two halls were designed to complete the open-ended quadrangle plan of the campus. Eumenean on the west and Philanthropic on the east are two-story pavilions with tetrastyle prostyle porticos. Their form as well as their position at the ends of the quadrangle, with one-story dormitory "rows" between them and the axial Chapel, give the campus an arrangement similar to the more elaborate quadrangle at the University of Virginia, designed by Thomas Jefferson.

Eumenean Hall was the first to be dedicated--in November, 1849, with an address by "Mr. McDowell." A paper found in an old bottle, discovered during the 1956 renovations, is dated June 11 of that year. The purpose of the document, signed by A. Alexander, is explicit: "Should it stand two hundred Posterity may find this and know who were persons who built and those who had it built." It lists the twenty-five members of the society at the time and mentions that the library had 1,200 volumes and that the cost of erecting the hall was \$2,500. The names of the contractors (Lewis Dinkins and Daniel Alexander), plasterer, and carpenters of the structure are included as well. The document concludes hopefully, "May peace prosperity & liberty always pervade the land of America. May the day always be when the citizen of American [sic] will feel proud to say I am an American."

In 1853 lightning rods, blinds, and "spit boxes" were ordered for Eumenean Hall, and \$1,000 was borrowed to buy furniture, which arrived in July, 1854. In the following year the hall and "'the property appertaining thereto' was transferred" to the two men who had signed the note for the loan. Ten years later, an honorary member, William L. Davidson of Alabama, "saved them by a legacy of a thousand dollars," part of which was used to settle the debt.

The Civil War had a drastic effect upon the life of the college. The Eumeneans met on April 19, 1861, but not again until February 13, 1862. Though their numbers were much reduced, they remained active through February, 1865, and were able to open again in March, 1866. After the war, the subjects for their debates reflected the disturbing events of the Reconstruction period. Some names of honorary members were stricken because of "offensive prominence in the carpet-bagger days," and new honorary members included a number of well known Confederate generals.

On October 4, 1873, Davidson freshman Thomas Woodrow Wilson (president of the United States, 1913-1921) was initiated into the Eumenean Society. As a member of the society, he led debates, delivered an original oration, and read compositions. He was elected corresponding secretary. The dais furniture Wilson is said to have used is still in the hall. The story is told that when President Wilson visited Davidson in 1916, he was requested to make a speech from the balcony of Eumenean Hall. He responded, "I failed in my first speech in this hall and will not attempt to make another."

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Toward the end of the nineteenth century and increasingly in the twentieth, the dominance of the debating societies began to wane. The colors of the two societies, pink (Eumenean) and blue (Philanthropic) had traditionally been combined to form the school colors, but in 1895 the students voted to adopt crimson and black as Davidson's official colors. Debating had long been the societies' exclusive territory, but in 1907 Davidson students began taking part in the intercollegiate debating. During the nineteenth century nearly all students had belonged to one of the societies, but by 1920 society members included only thirty-five percent of the students. The societies no longer run student life, but they continue as literary societies, still using their original halls and providing a link with the early years of the college.

The intention of the building committee that Eumenean Hall and Philanthropic Hall, which face one another across the original quadrangle of Davidson College, be "alike in size, material, and magnificence" was realized, for the structures correspond in both size and basic configuration. The subtle variations in the treatment of the portico, the main entrance, and the brick bond of the wall surfaces of each hall, as well as the distinction in the interior trim, result in a sophisticated interplay of repetition and variation. The crisp use of the Greek Revival forms as well as the balance achieved between the abstract classical purity of the applied elements and the warmth of the brick surfaces make these buildings one of the few truly architectonic Greek Revival complexes in the state.

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Shaw, Cornelia Rebekah. Davidson College. New York: Fleming H. Revell Press,
1923.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Boyer, Mary. "Eumenean Hall," 1971. An unpublished report in the (Survey) files of the State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Mecklenburg County Records, Mecklenburg County Courthouse, Charlotte, North Carolina, Office of the Register of Deeds. (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).

Mecklenburg County Records, State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina. (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "	35°	30'	00"
NE	° ' "	° ' "	80°	50'	51"
SE	° ' "	° ' "			
SW	° ' "	° ' "			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1/2 Acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:

Survey and Planning Unit Staff, John B. Wells, III, Supervisor

ORGANIZATION

State Department of Archives and History

DATE

8 December 1971

STREET AND NUMBER:

109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Raleigh

STATE

North Carolina

CODE

37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name

H. G. Jones

Title

Director, State Department of Archives and History

Date

8 December 1971

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

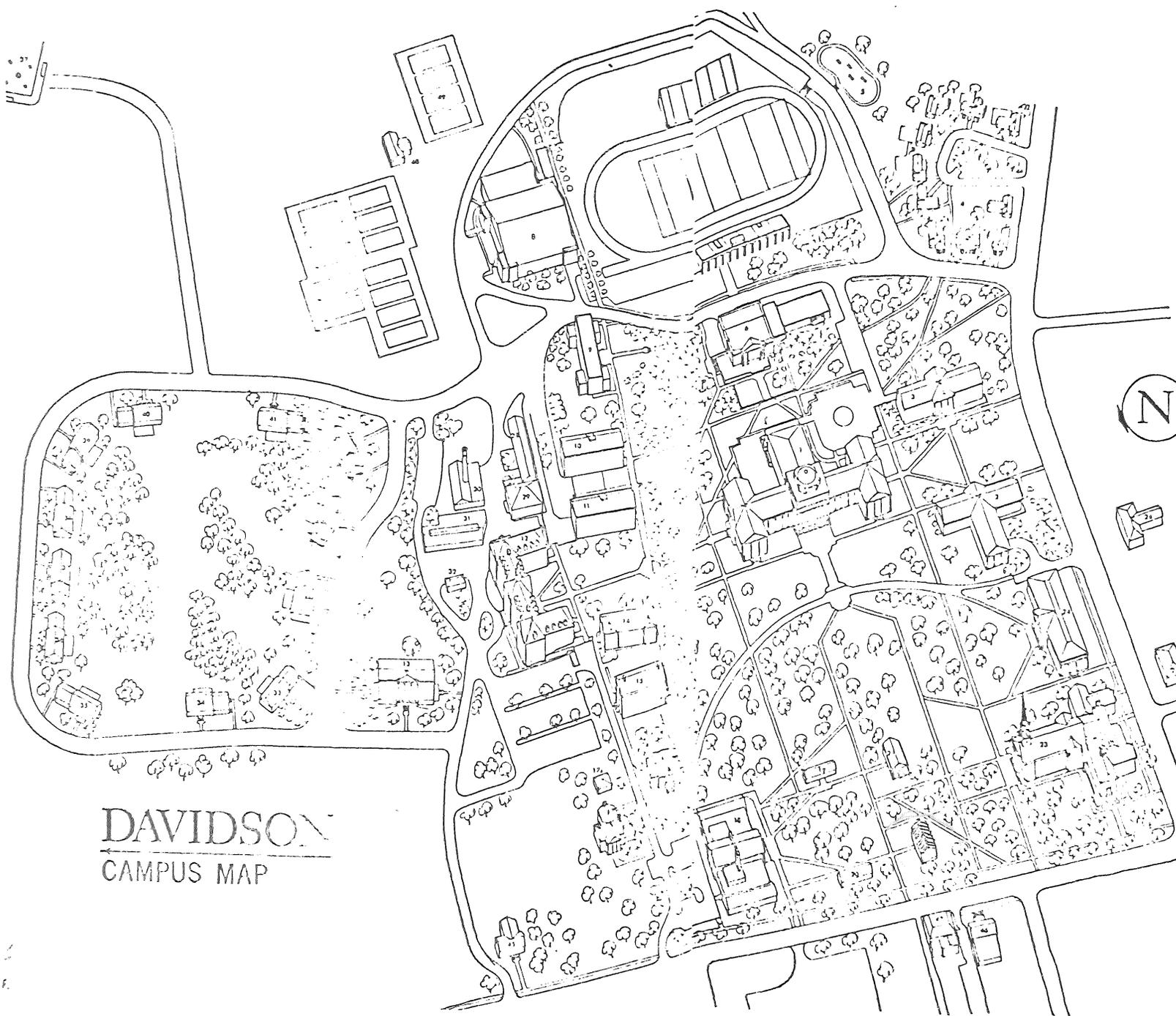
Date

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



- 1 Chambers Building
- 2 Grey Memorial
- 3 Martin Schaefer
- 4 F. L. Jackson
- 5 Hobart Park
- 6 David Owen
- 7 Richardson Field
- 8 Johnston Gym
- 9 Duke Residence
- 10 East Residence
- 11 J. Archie Campbell
- 12 W. H. Baker
- 13 Richardson
- 14 Watts Residence
- 15 E. H. Little
- 16 Guest House
- 17 President's Office
- 17A Garages
- 18 J. R. Curran Fine Arts
- 19 Film Row
- 20 Old Row
- 21 Philanthropy
- 22 Library
- 23 College Inn
- 24 Commons
- 25 Old Medical
- 26 Project House
- 27 Baseball
- 28 Shop (new)
- 29 Shop (old)
- 30 Student Union
- 31 Laundry
- 32 Security Office
- 33 Pi Kappa Alpha
- 34 Sigma Nu
- 35 Kappa Sigma
- 36 Phi Delta Theta
- 37 Sigma Alpha Epsilon
- 38 Alpha Tau Omega
- 39 Pi Kappa Phi
- 40 Sigma Chi
- 41 Beta Theta Pi
- 42 Kappa Alpha
- 43 Sigma Phi Epsilon
- 44 Phi Gamma Delta
- 45 Martin Manor
- 46 Davidson Post Office
- 47 Carolina Inn
- 48 Stone Tennis Hall
- 49 Tennis Courts

DAVIDSON
CAMPUS MAP

