

Historical Information Sheet for a UGS Trial Tour

- ✓ You are **not required** to know or include every fact on this sheet. Please spend more time practicing your trial tour than memorizing every fact. It's impossible to include all this in a 15 min. tour anyway.
- ✓ You are **encouraged** to observe an actual historical tour. Then pick the facts and stories from both the tour and this factsheet that interest you to craft a unique, cohesive tour that shows off your personality.
- ✓ **Feel free** to include material from your own independent research, but that is certainly not obligatory.

I. The Founding of the University

Jefferson, as part of his lifelong pursuit for the advancement of public education, sought to found a new university based on “the illimitable freedom of the human mind,” where any subject imaginable could be studied.

1816	Central College, Jefferson’s original plan for an institution of higher education in Charlottesville (so named due to its proposed location at the then geographic center of the state of Virginia), is chartered.
1817	Construction of Central College began when, in the presence of Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe, the cornerstone of Pavilion VII was laid.
1818	The Virginia General Assembly passed a bill to charter a state university.
1819	The University of Virginia is founded when Central College is selected as the site for the state university.
1825	On March 7, the first students arrive for classes, and Jefferson lives to see “the hobby of [his] old age” open its doors.
1826	Jefferson, and coincidentally John Adams, both die on July 4, the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

II. The Academical Village

Set-up: The culmination of Jefferson's dream for higher education was the creation of an “Academical Village” where students and faculty would live and learn together.

- The Rotunda serves as the focal point of the open, expansive Lawn, surrounded by ten Pavilions interspersed amongst 54 student rooms.
- The Ranges, with six hotels (originally dining halls) and 55 student rooms, comprise the exterior boundaries.
- Behind each of the 10 Pavilions is a unique European-style garden.

Reasoning: Jefferson designed the Academical Village in this way because he sought to avoid the example of places like William and Mary (Jefferson’s alma mater), which, at the time, consisted of one large building where students ate, studied, slept, and lived. Jefferson did not believe these large buildings were conducive to health or intellectual interaction, and thus the Academical Village was born.

Slavery: It should be noted that Jefferson’s vision came to fruition as a result of the labor of university and faculty slaves. Enslaved persons performed the vast majority of the hard labor, as well as some of the master craftsmanship, involved in building the Academical Village. Once UVa opened its doors in 1825, slaves aided in the upkeep of the University and were prevalent on Grounds until the conclusion of the Civil War.

Pavilions: Each pavilion was designed after Greek and Roman temples, except for Pavilion IX which was modeled after a French hotel. Jefferson originally assigned an individual academic discipline to be studied in each pavilion, such as the study of ancient languages or law, and classes for that discipline were held on the ground floor of the pavilion, while the professor of that discipline resided on the upper floor. For example, law classes originally met on the ground floor of Pavilion III, and the professor of law lived on the upper floor of Pavilion III.

Uses Today: All of the pavilions, except Pavilion VII (the Colonnade Club), are still used as faculty residences, and all of these residences, except Pavilion VIII, devote both floors to faculty living quarters. (In Pavilion VIII, classes are still taught on the ground floor, while a faculty member lives on the upper floor, making it the only pavilion to serve its original purpose.) Finally, each Lawn Room now houses a selected fourth-year student who has contributed significantly to the University.

UNESCO: The Academical Village, along with Monticello, has been named a UNESCO World Heritage Site, due to Jefferson’s contribution to American architecture and the ideas his work exemplifies. UVa is one of the few places with this distinction that is still used for the original purpose for which it was built.

III. The Rotunda

1826	Jefferson's centerpiece, the Rotunda (modeled after the Pantheon in Rome), becomes the last of the original buildings to be constructed. Physically centering the University on a library (and symbolically centering it around seeking knowledge) rather than a chapel was unconventional and controversial in Jefferson's day.
1853	An annex, designed by Robert Mills, is added to the north side of the Rotunda for additional classroom space.
1895	On October 27, a fire breaks out in the Annex, destroying both it and the Rotunda. Only the Rotunda's exterior walls remain.
1895-1898	Stanford White, a famous architect from New York, reconstructs the Rotunda in a highly elaborate, decorative style with a two-story Dome Room. White also designs Old Cabell, Rouss, and Cocke Halls to add academic space in response to the increasing student body; their construction closes off the south end of the Lawn.
1938	The library is moved from the Rotunda to Alderman Library.
1976	The Rotunda is restored to its original Jeffersonian design, and begins to function as a meeting place for the Board of Visitors, a study space for students, a venue for important speakers and small classes, and as the repository for selected books.
2010	The damaged capitals of the Rotunda's exterior columns are covered in black sheets.

IV. Different Facets of the Lawn

The Floating Balcony: Many pavilions (like the first five) feature a "floating balcony". Most pavilions were modeled after single-story Greek and Roman temples, but Jefferson needed two floors for his design – thus, the hanging balcony outside these pavilions creates the illusion of one long continuous window or door behind it.

The Import Tax: When the capitals for Pavilion III, Pavilion V and the Rotunda arrived from Italy, they were met with an exorbitant import duty on luxury goods. Jefferson successfully avoided the tariff by emphasizing to Congress the capitals' *educational* (not luxurious) nature: these capitals were an integral part of the Lawn's intended purpose as a 3-D architectural textbook.

Pavilion VII: The cornerstone of the University was laid here (and was the first completed). It is the only pavilion with an arcade rather than columns. It housed the University library until the Rotunda's completion in 1826. Since 1907 it has housed the Colonnade Club, a faculty-alumni social club. There's also a 7 Society plaque on the pathway bricks outside.

Pavilion X: On Nov. 12, 1840, Prof. John Davis was shot and killed outside Pav X by a masked student, marking the height of negative relations between students and faculty at the University. Two years later, in an effort to ease the tension between students and faculty (and in response to several allegations of cheating), Professor Henry St. George Tucker, also a resident of Pavilion X, instituted the first version of the Honor System at UVa with the consent and cooperation of the students. (Also, in 2010, the white paint of Pav X was removed to reveal the Lawn's original sandy colors.)

V. Student Chronology

1825	On March 7, the University first opens its doors to rich, white, southern male students. The only women on Grounds are professors' family members.
1861-1865	Enrollment drops from several hundred to around 50 as most students go to fight for the Confederate Army. UVa is one of the few universities to remain open during the Civil War.
1870-1970	Female students begin to take UVa classes in select disciplines at the co-ed summer school, and are eventually permitted to attend specialty graduate programs. But women are not permitted to enroll in the undergraduate College with their male peers.
1950	Gregory Swanson, with the help of the American Civil Liberties Union, gains admission to UVa Law School, becoming the University's first African American student. In the same year, Walter Ridley joins the UVa doctoral program in education. Swanson leaves UVa due to negative treatment from professors and students, but Ridley goes on to become the first African American graduate of the University in 1953.
1968-1969	Student leaders and enrolled black students convince the administration to actively recruit and admit African-American students.
1969	The Board of Visitors votes to lift all restrictions regarding the admission of women to the College of Arts and Sciences, planning for the very gradual admission of women throughout the next decade. Faculty wives and daughters were the first to be admitted in a so-called "transitional" phase.
1970	Two women sue for admission into the College and, with the help of a UVa Law School graduate, win the case, therefore expediting the coeducation process and mandating full coeducation within three years. 450 women enter the College that fall.
Today	The UVa undergraduate population is 54% female, 28% minorities, and from 47 states and 120 countries.