

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Chi Omega Sorority House

and/or common Chi Omega Sorority House

2. Location

street & number 1345 West Campus Road not for publication

city, town Lawrence N/A vicinity of

state Kansas code 20 county Douglas code 045

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Sorority Hous

4. Owner of Property

name Chi Omega Fraternity, Inc., Lambda Chapter

street & number 1345 West Campus Road

city, town Lawrence N/A vicinity of state Kansas 66044

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number Douglas County Courthouse

city, town Lawrence state Kansas 66044

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date None  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records None

city, town None state

## 7. Descriptor

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The 1925 Chi Omega sorority house is situated toward the north end of the University of Kansas campus. Several other Greek organizations have built their houses in the vicinity as well. The three story brick structure is built in the Jacobethan style. Window and door surrounds and other decorative details are done in stone. Additions made in 1964 are entirely compatible with the original construction. The house has been changed only insofar as was necessary to accommodate modern needs. Its historic character has not been altered.

The building was originally constructed with a seven bay east elevation in an L shaped configuration. To the north of the entrance bay was a two story wing that was terminated with a stone balustrade and flat roof. The wing immediately south of the main block, containing the sun room, was also flat roofed and terminated in a stone balustrade. The dimensions of the building were 77 x 89 feet and its L shape was created by the dining room (now used as a study/television room), which extended to the west.

In 1964 the Sorority requested that the building be expanded to accommodate the growing number of its residents. The Kansas City architectural firm of Folger and Pearson was awarded the contract for an addition and the B. A. Green Construction Company of Lawrence was selected as the general contractor.

The addition sensitively recreates the original features of the house and thus is virtually unnoticeable as an addition.

The new wing to the north contains the dining room facilities and kitchen. On the second and attic stories is dormitory space. The wing on the south was extended to complete an attic story, also used for needed dormitory space. The building, as expanded, retains its basic "L" shaped configuration and the architects, in using identical construction materials and in maintaining the same articulation of the facade, arrived at a remarkably consistent structure.

The primary facade (east) is symmetrically composed of 11 bays and has a central projecting entrance bay. A gabled dormer pierces the roof line above each bay, further defining the balanced arrangement of the facade.

The wood front door is placed within a stone, compound Tudor arch and is approached by three flights of steps. The stone door surround is quoined and continues up to form the base and surround for a tri-sided oriel window on the second floor. This window is surmounted by a quoined brick balcony. Above this, on the attic story, a multipaned casement window is capped with a stone lintel. The parapet peaks in a steep gable over the entrance bay and is embellished with smooth stone coping.

The fenestration of the three bays flanking the entrance on the first floor consists of double, multipaned French doors which features Tudor arch transoms. These doors possess stone quoined surrounds. Above each of these doors at the second level is a casement window that also has stone quoined surrounds, sills, and lintels. The attic story windows are contained in gable roofed dormers. The pediment of the dormers is stuccoed and decorated with half timbering. These windows have stone lugsills.

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The projecting castellated bays are tri-sided, with casement windows on the first and second stories. The base of the first floor windows, and the window surrounds, are of smooth stone. The brick spandrel separating the first from the second story is embellished with stone quoining. A rectangular stone panel set into the spandrel is inscribed with the Greek Letters X (Chi) and Ω (Omega). The bays terminate with castellations, faced with stone. Set back on the same plane as the other attic dormers is a gabled dormer.

The end bays of the primary facade were part of the 1964 addition and alteration project. The subtle differences in their treatment reflect the interior arrangement of the building. The southern bay is characterized by a group of three multipaned casement windows which again feature an elliptical transom. The large window surface area facilitates the use of the room as a sunroom/study. Molded rectangular panels form the wooden base of the windows. A running stone sill below the three second floor windows serves as a string course. These are also multipaned casement windows. Centrally placed above the bay is a gabled dormer, slightly narrower than the other attic story dormers. This bay breaks the plane created by the main mass of the building as it is slightly recessed. The bay at the north end of this facade features a single two-leafed casement window with a quoined surround and elliptical transom. This bay is also slightly recessed. A single second story window is multipaned and also quoined with stone lugsills. The gable dormer of the attic story contains a casement window.

The gable roof of the house is covered with variegated asphalt shingles. A chimney with clay chimney pots is at the south end of the roof.

The west, or rear of the building, features a flat roof. The lower story, a kitchen addition, projects slightly. A canvas canopy marks the back entrance. A secondary entrance is provided for the housemother, in an extension at the juncture of the original wings of the house. The dormer treatment of this facade is similar to the treatment of the main (east) facade.

The south facade is a wing that extends towards the west, off the main facade. The wing repeats the motifs of the primary facade. An entrance door which again features a Tudor arch set within a quoined surround, is placed at the west end. The entrance bay is three stories in height and peaks in a gable that also terminates in stone coping. The fenestration of each of the bays is a multipaned rectangular window set within a stone surround. Gable roofed dormers are placed above the windows on the second story and are identical to those of the primary facade. A bandcourse of stone separates the basement from the first story.

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On the north facade, centrally located on the first story, is a single rectangular window of a tripartite arrangement set within a Tudor arch surround. Above it, on the second and third stories, are single doorways that lead onto the fire escape.

At the north end of the property, behind the house, is a frame garage with a gable roof. A large overhead door is on the south facade of the garage. This building was erected in 1975 and is not a significant feature.

Interior

Glover's design of the interior arrangement of the sorority house lent itself to providing a gracious home-like atmosphere and common spaces that were large, airy, and well appointed. While Glover was committed to mitigating any dormitory qualities to the house, his specific patrons were carefully recognized. The formal living room, to the left of the main foyer, contains a plasterwork ceiling that features an unusual quatrefoil and lozenge pattern. The juxtaposition of these two decorative forms portrays the Greek letters X (Chi) and  $\omega$  (Omega).

The fireplace at the south end of the living room possesses a segmental arch opening which reflects the exterior ornamentation. Elaborately carved consoles support the mantelpiece and the sides of the fireplace are carved in relief with foliate ornament.

A grand staircase leads to the upper stories of the house from the entrance hall. The staircase features carved balustrades.

Both the old dining room (to the west of the living room) and the new dining room (directly north of the main entrance) feature dark wood paneling. The old dining room has a beamed ceiling.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

*Written - See Nom level*

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**Specific dates**    1925                      **Builder/Architect**    William Glover

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Chi Omega Sorority House in Lawrence, Kansas is a particularly distinguished example of the Jacobethan style of architecture, popular in the United States during the first quarter of the twentieth century. The architect, William Glover, used the motifs of this late English style to create a contemporary interpretation of an historic mode. The sorority house defies classification as either a residence or apartment/hotel, and so, presents singular design problems. The architect was asked to house fifty women while maintaining the atmosphere of a private residential dwelling. Glover resolved these problems as he adapted his design to suit these specific needs and created spacious quarters that had no resemblance to a dormitory.

The sorority is the fourth oldest at the University of Kansas and according to sorority history pioneered in several aspects: the first to live in a house together with a housemother; the first to erect a house adjacent to the campus rather than several blocks away.

The construction of the house followed closely a major building program on the campus, as in 1921 the State Legislature appropriated several million dollars for the construction of new buildings. Actual construction of the Chi Omega house, however, did not begin until 1923.

The University of Kansas at Lawrence was opened 1863. Greek organizations were organized slowly at first, but grew rapidly as the University expanded. The number of Greek organizations grew from two in 1873, nine in 1889, thirteen in 1903, and seventeen in 1909.

The Chi Omega fraternity was founded nationally on April 5, 1895 at Arkansas University in Fayetteville, Arkansas. The Lambda Chapter of Chi Omega was installed at the University of Kansas in 1902. Chi Omega was only the fourth sorority to be installed on the University of Kansas campus, as the previous three sororities were installed in 1883.

The success of the sorority is evidenced by the progression of their facilities. The original seven founders of the Lambda Chapter first met in the attic of a private home. The Chapter was installed in 1902 at the home of Blanche Ward Foster at 1320 Ohio. In 1903-04 the Lambda Chapter leased a house at 1400 Ohio and hired a housemother, becoming the first women's sorority to live in a house together with a housemother. Between 1905-1911, membership in the sorority grew from 17 to 28 members and larger quarters became necessary.

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In 1911 the Chapter contracted with J.T. Constant, a Lawrence builder, to construct a house at 1137 Indiana, becoming the first sorority on the campus to undertake both the building and financing of their own home. This house was constructed at a cost of almost \$8,000. This house, as were most other fraternity and sorority houses at the time, was located to the east of the campus, in a residential area below the hill on which the campus is located.

Membership in the Chapter continued to grow and at a meeting that took place in October of 1919, it was announced that a "Chapter House Fund" would be established in order to provide the means to finance construction of a new Chapter house. A legal document entitled "Proposed Rules for Governing a Fund for the Erection of a Chapter House for the Lambda Chapter of the Chi Omega Fraternity" was presented to the members. The plan, which estimated revenues for the new building through the solicitation of funds from alumnae and present sorority members, along with the revenue which would be generated by the sale of their present house, was presented to the Chapter. The cost of the acquisition of the land was estimated at \$4,000 and the cost of construction at \$50,000.

The original members of the building committee were Helen Dana, Louise Cowdrey, Emily Moeller, and Marjorie Stauffer. Ms. Dana was named chairman of this committee. She was also President of the sorority during the time the building was being constructed, was instrumental in the selection of the architect, and closely supervised the subsequent building activities.

Walter Glover was selected as architect for the project in November of 1924. In a letter to the sisters of Chi Omega, dated January 24, 1925, Ms. Dana stressed the Chapter's good fortune in retaining Mr. Glover as the architect:

Our architect Mr. Walter E. Glover, of Topeka, has drawn up a beautiful set of plans, artistically designed with rich interior decoration. He has displayed strength in the construction, in keeping with his past reputation. We are fortunate in having such a competent architect and hope that the contractor whom we choose in two weeks will be satisfactory.

Walter Earl Glover was born in 1889 in Terre Haute, Indiana. When he was fourteen his parents moved to Topeka where he completed his high school education. After spending a year and a half attending the Kansas State Agricultural College at Manhattan, Glover transferred to the University of Illinois where he graduated in 1915 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering and Architecture. During World War I, Glover served with the architectural department of the Navy, designing hospitals. In 1919

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he returned to Topeka to open an architectural office. Some of Glover's distinguished designs for Topeka included the Security Benefit Association building, the Charles H. Seidon Community House, the Stormont Hospital Buildings, and the Central Congregational Community House.

The Chi Omega House was designed in the Jacobethan Revival style, a style especially popular during the first two decades of the 20th century. The style finds its historical precedent in English architecture of the early 17th century. The distinguishing features of the Jacobethan Revival style include a preference for the use of brick and stone as construction materials; a profusion of windows which pierce the wall surface; steep gables which rise above the roof; and bay windows. While brick composes the major mass of the building, stone was preferred as a decorative accent, and was often used as mullions to divide the windows, for lintels and sills, and as door surrounds. These features were successfully incorporated into the Chi Omega Sorority house by Mr. Glover.

Ground breaking ceremonies were held on February 20, 1925. Helen Dana addressed the assembled group and moved the first shovel full of dirt. The architect also spoke, noting that this was the first house he had designed in Lawrence. The publicized descriptions of the house indicated that it would accomodate 50 girls. The basement would contain a maid's room, laundry, trunk storage, and boiler room. The first floor would have a 44 x 27 foot recreation room (living room), a sun room, a 37 x 20 foot dining room, matron's suite, and parlors. The second and third floors would consist of large "sleeping porches", and twenty-six study rooms. The heating of the house would be by a vapor vacuum system.

J. T. Constant was selected as contractor for the house. He had built their previous house at 1137 Indiana. The landscaping contract was awarded to the landscaping department of the Mt. Hope Nurseries in Lawrence.

The Sorority was able to hold their fall rush parties in the house as they moved in during September of 1925, although much finishing work still needed to be completed on the interior. Other Greek organizations followed Chi Omega's lead in erecting houses along Michigan Street (now known as West Campus Road), adjacent to the college campus, although the most attractive lot had already been acquired by the sorority.

THIS STATEMENT REFLECTS CURRENT KNOWLEDGE AND IS SUBJECT TO AMENDMENT.

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"Capsule History of Lambda," from the collection of Lambda Chapter, Chi Omega, Lawrence, Kansas.

"Chi Omega Will Hold Ground Breaking Service," University Daily Kansan, Feb. 17, 1925, p. 1.

The Jayhawker, University of Kansas Yearbook, 1905-1911.

"A New Mt. Oread 'Skyline,'" Kansas City Times, May 21, 1923, p. 2.

"Sorority Lets Contract," University Daily Kansan, Feb. 15, 1925, p.1.

"Sorority to Have New Home," Topeka Daily Capital, Feb. 16, 1925, p.5.

This Nomination is Based on Materials Submitted by Sherry Piland & Ellen Uguccioni.



## 9. Major Bibliographical References

"Breaking of Ground Begins Construction of Chi Omega House," "University Daily Kansan, Feb. 20, 1925, p. 1.

(See continuation sheet)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Lawrence West Quad

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 

1	5
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3	0	4	9	4	10
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4	13	1	4	4	4	10
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H 

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Verbal boundary description and justification University Heights Part I, Lots 8, 9, 19, & E 1/2 Lot 13. Boundaries define lot on which house was constructed and where it remains still.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Nora Pat Small, Architectural Historian

organization Kansas State Historical Society date

street & number 120 West Tenth telephone 913 296-3251

city or town Topeka state Kansas 66612

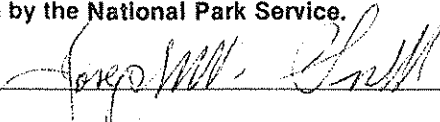
## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title Ex. Director & State Historic Preservation Officer

date 1/5/83

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration