



Materiality and the Art of Brick

The Tykeson Hall site is prominent, thus for the building we originally proposed a contemporary terra cotta clad structure. Thereafter we soon discovered that although one client group wanted an iconic terra cotta building, another strongly preferred the aesthetic of traditional brick, the most common material element found throughout the campus. Solving this became an opportunity to create architectural forms with both materials: modern performative terra cotta cladding and locally sourced brick.

We researched prospective brick layouts and discovered an interesting pattern known as an English Cross bond, which creates a diagonal pattern by staggering the vertical mortar joints from course to course. To this we added a course of longer Norman bricks, creating a new design which we called a Norman Cross Bond. Our firm worked closely with the brick supplier on dry-stack mock-ups to develop a custom mix with 78,000 Columbia Red and Autumn Blend brick types fabricated with clay from the region.

Since it rains frequently in Eugene, Oregon, we looked at the color and texture of the chosen bricks in wet and dry conditions and used a light grey mortar to highlight the diagonal pattern. Attention to the craft of the corner detail and window openings adds richness to the brick aesthetic.

