Building Use

In Regents Hall, space use is essential to an interactive learning environment. The intentional design of the floor layouts optimizes student comfort, communication, and interdisciplinary learning.

For instance, the office space is mixed across disciplines. Departments are loosely organized by floor, but professors interact across departments with the mixed office setting. For example, the biology department is spread across three different wings of the building.

The rooms were also deliberately located. Generally, offices are located on the south side of the building, research labs are in the middle, and teaching labs are on the north end. The offices on the south end have large windows that let light into the hallway, providing natural lighting to all parts of the building year around.

Sometimes you have to go outside the classrooms and hallways to see the unique uses of the building. The green room maximizes rainwater collection and maximizes the efficiency of the heating and cooling systems of the building.

Building Materials

One of the most sustainable aspects of Regents Hall that is often overlooked is the materials that was used to construct it. Here are some of the most striking features of the building:

- Much of the flooring is made of linoleum, a sustainable and durable material that doesn’t require heavy toxic chemicals to clean.
- All wood products in the building are certified by the Forest Stewardship Council and are free of toxins that many treated wood products contain.
- The carpets are all made from recycled materials, as well as many of the furnishing.
**Sustainability at Regents Hall of Natural Sciences**

When Regents Hall was designed, it was designed so as a green building that serves as a teaching tool to students. In 2009, it earned a LEEDS Platinum rating and has been featured in *World’s Greenest Buildings* (Routledge Publishing 2013).

Regents Hall is one of a kind. It’s a complex facility that integrates multiple disciplines and structures, and that is why its sustainability is so remarkable. Much of the time, the sustainable aspects are hidden in plain sight, so look closely to identify many sustainable features of the building.

At St. Olaf, sustainability has a broad definition. At Regents Hall, it goes beyond the state of the art heating and cooling system and its rainwater collection system. It is ingrained in how the building was designed, how students work, and what is taught in the building.

**Green Chemistry**

One of the most overlooked features of Regents Hall is its famous Green Chemistry program, which not only made the building more financially sound, but also more sustainable.

The Green Chemistry program was designed by St. Olaf faculty, and changed how chemistry was done at St. Olaf. It uses less volatile compounds and allows for less wasteful disposal of these chemicals. Since less toxins are used, it takes less to ventilate, thus power, the program. Reduced electricity consumption has decreased carbon pollution from St. Olaf.

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**Regents Hall: The Numbers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>300</th>
<th>Number of Plant species on the Green Roof.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>The amount of total square footage of the building, one of the largest of its kind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$452,600</td>
<td>The total amount in annual energy savings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$63,000,000</td>
<td>The total cost of Regents Hall of Natural Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
<td>The percentage of total graduates in the sciences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>