

Albert Diaz

UCF is host to a large amount of successful and inviting public places. Memory mall, the reflection pond, and the Student Union are prime examples of our campus' beauty and uniqueness. The John T. Washington Center, or 'The Breezeway', is one of the most successful and convenient public places on campus. Located in front of the Student Union and beside the Library, the Breezeway becomes one of the most accessible places for students and faculty to visit. The John T. Washington Center is a place for UCF to eat, socialize, shop, study, and much more. The Breezeway is actively being used at any point during the Day. From buying school supplies, to picking up coffee or even getting a haircut this is easily one of UCF's most active and diverse public spaces.

The building itself is designed intuitively to seem inviting and pleasant to walk through. There are no doors on either side of the Breezeway, instead you are greeted by a large open area with pillars sustaining a high ceiling. It's high ceiling is covered in glass, as to let the natural light flow in. This combined with foliage and openness, makes the Breezeway a pleasant rest from the scorching Orlando sun. It's linearity and clear walkway divisions allow for a natural flow of pedestrian traffic. Students seem to inherently walk on a respective side of the building depending on the direction they're heading. During the short walk between both ends of the Breezeway, one can see a dynamic use of public seating and space. The first half of the Breezeway has very minimal public seating. A few tables and seats adjacent to the bookstore, and a couple benches pushed against the wall allows for larger and more open space. Moving forward, the area feels more enclosed as the ceiling is lowered, and paths are divided by plants that rest on concrete slabs, which can double as public seating. Students will

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sit on these concrete divisions to study, draw or even play instruments. In the final stretch of the John T. Washington Center, we see a larger variety of public seating within a large space. A short time ago, new seating was implemented between Chick-Fil-A and the boutique. Larger outdoor padded couches replaced the abundant round tables we typically see in UCF's public realm. This benefited the area much more than before since comfier seats means more people are prone to sit down. Many students, faculty and organizations use that space for eating, socializing, studying and conducting meetings. One of the student organizations on campus will set up a TV with a console and multiple remote controls to have a public video game session. The change in the type of seating available allows for students to work in groups easier than before.

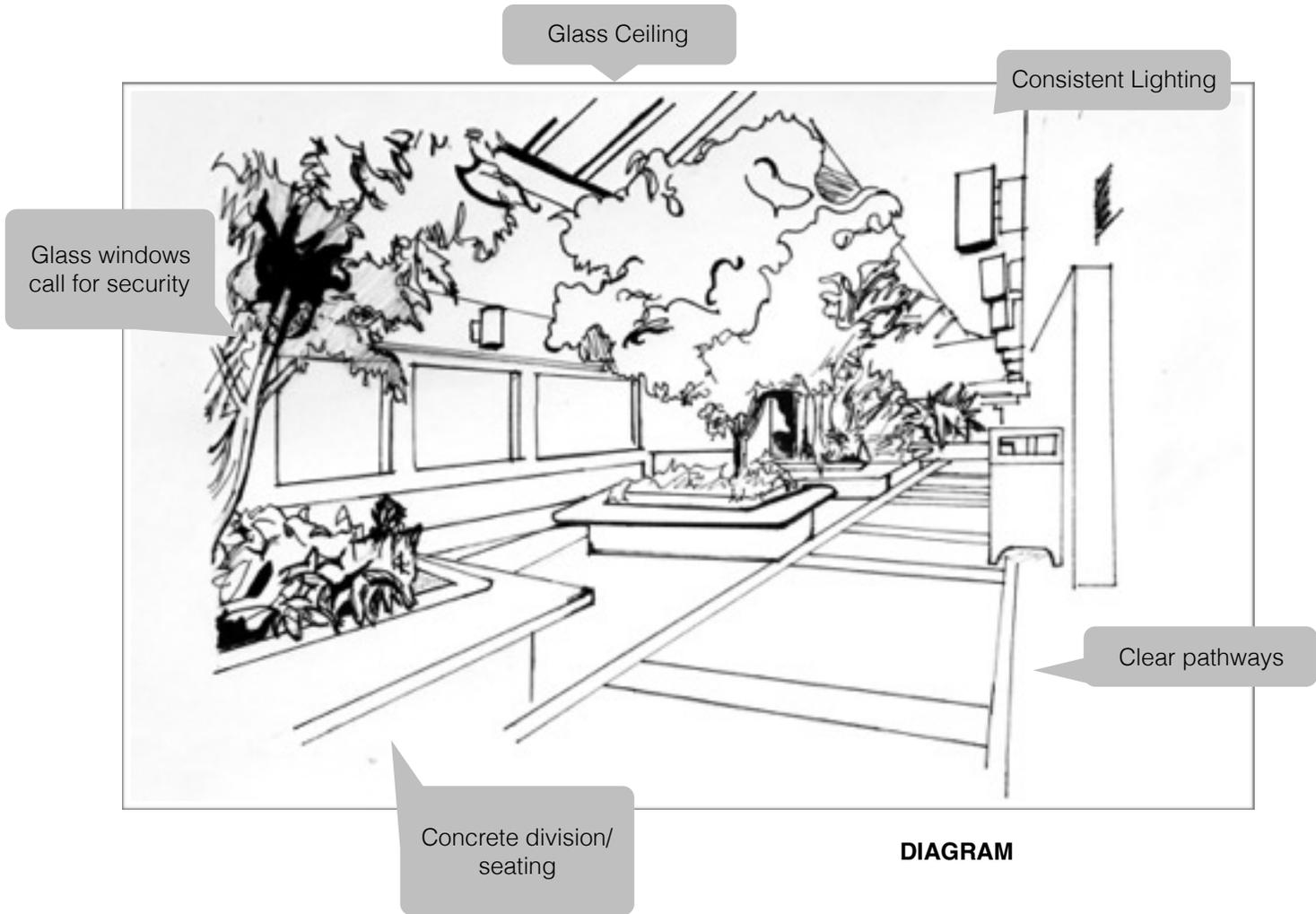
According to William H. Whyte's research and observations, people tend to sit where seating is provided; the same is applied for the seating provided here.

All businesses and services within the Breezeway are divided from the main walkway with glass; an interesting variation on Jane Jacobs' "eyes on the street" concept.

Businesses within the breezeway all face towards pedestrian traffic allowing for increased security and an established secure atmosphere. Lighting throughout is also consistent, although the building was designed to use natural lighting as its main source. This calls into question whether lighting during night time is sufficient, as this is a very open and accessible area on campus.

Overall, the John T. Washington Center, is welcoming, accessible and an all around successful public space. The breezeway does a great job at boosting student involvement in UCF's campus by providing amenities, shade, seating, and a pleasant pedestrian experience.

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NEW SEATING