

HAMPSHIRE DINING COMMONS

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS

AMHERST

A dining hall renovation that serves up innovation, sustainability, and healthy student living.

SWEETS

WHEN IT COMES TO FOOD,

UMass Amherst is all about raising the bar. Already known for its nationally-recognized dining program, the goal for Hampshire Dining Commons was nothing short of creating the healthiest, most sustainable student dining experience in the country. Bergmeyer's assignment: transform the existing mid-1960's concrete dining hall into an inspiring venue where the food is the star.

The key was turning the center of the building's 20,000-sf main level into a single, open kitchen ringed with flexible cooking stations. Dubbed "the egg", this circular plan allows each menu station to feature a different cuisine, resulting in a guest experience akin to shopping in a continuous street market. This big move also served to spread the seating into smaller groups around the building's glassy, pavilion-like perimeter giving every table a front-row seat for the food preparation.

Given the ambitious food quality agenda, it was just as important for Bergmeyer to help the facility's operators understand where NOT to spend money. Leveraging the spartan beauty of the building's structure, Hampshire's simple palette of exposed concrete, raw steel, and reclaimed wood was driven as much by budget as by sustainability considerations. The aesthetic is contemporary New England, influenced by the aging agrarian structures dotting the surrounding landscape. The result is a dynamic, relaxed, destination experience with the food truly at the center.

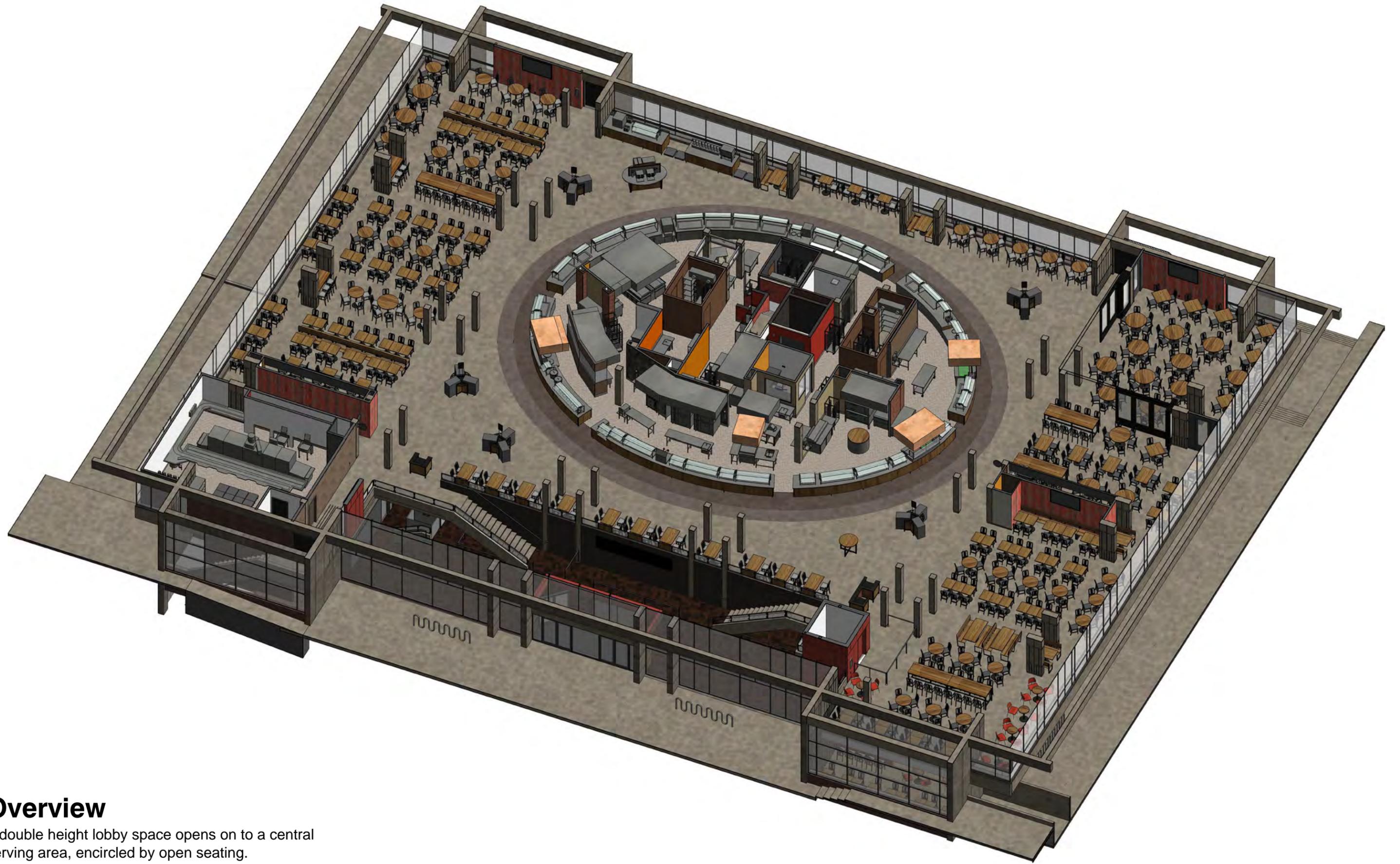
LEED Silver certification anticipated.





A New View

Beyond the “Egg”, high-top seating overlooks the new lobby and plaza beyond.



Overview

A double height lobby space opens on to a central serving area, encircled by open seating.



Then



Now

With new retail cafe space on the ground level and the removal of interior masonry walls, the new dining commons warmly engages the adjacent plaza.



Then



Now

With the removal of the brick walls, the aroma of the food cooking above welcomes students to the commons.



Then



Now

Reclaimed wood on soffits, serving counters, and tables creates a warm dialogue with the existing Brutalist concrete language.



Then



Now

The sweeping form of the "Egg", with its twelve separate and unique food stations, promotes smooth circulation and ease of selection.



Then



Now

A galaxy of pendant and accent lighting reinforces the connection with the central servery, while the openness allows views to the exterior courtyards and plazas.



Then



Now

Varied seating and playful lighting produce a unique dining and social environment. Dramatic views to the outside create a sense of connection to the campus.



Then



Now

By embracing the existing structure and inserting a limited palette of materials, the Hampshire Dining Commons was designed for LEED Silver certification.