Almost 30 years ago the U.S. Department of Civil Defense designated several USL buildings as potential nuclear-fallout shelters.

In 1962, during what is now referred to as the Cuban Missile Crisis, Soviet missiles were detected by American planes flying over Cuba. The climax occurred when Soviet ships approached a naval blockade surrounding Cuba. There was talk of a possible nuclear confrontation, but the ships turned away, and both the Soviet Union and the United States agreed to make concessions to avert a nuclear war.

During the Cold War the department selected certain public buildings throughout the country as nuclear fallout shelters including seven buildings on campus. The buildings were chosen for their stout construction, thick walls, and basements, according to Michael Bridges, director of USL's physical plant.

The shelters on campus are located in O.K. Allen Hall, Hamilton Hall, McNaspy Stadium and the dormitory buildings of Buchanan, Harris, Bonin, and McCullough.

According to Bridges the buildings were not constructed to be fallout shelters and never were fully equipped with water, food, emergency generators, medical supplies, and blankets which are essential in order to sustain human life for any extended period of time. USL's shelters would not be in "usable condition" in the event of a nuclear attack, he added.

However, signs reading "Nuclear Fallout Shelter" still remain on the outside and inside of the designated buildings.