Throughout the Danforth Campus of Washington University in St. Louis are odd-looking creations and shapes that perch on cornices, crouch above portals and glare from the darkened recesses of the university’s Gothic archways. Imitating distorted, fantastic human and animal forms, these sculptures are called bosses or grotesques. They evolved from Gothic gargoyles—ornamental waterspouts that channel rain water off and away from buildings. Because none of the university’s sculptures are designed as rain spouts, they technically cannot be called gargoyles, although the term is often used today.