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O'Dowd Hall classroom to be renovated

By **Jeff Samoray**, OU Web Writer

By the fall 2003 semester, Oakland University will have converted a 440-seat classroom in O'Dowd Hall into three smaller, more manageable, technologically equipped classrooms. In addition to making the rooms more suitable for OU classes, space also will be provided for **Thomas M. Cooley Law School** following its agreement to expand its **partnership with the university** by making OU a satellite campus.

"The current configuration of Room 202 is not well-suited for holding classes," said Assistant Vice President for Facilities Management Rusty Postlewait. "It's very large and the distance from the upper seats to the instructor is about 70 feet. The acoustics are not conducive for classroom use. Without an ongoing need for larger classroom capacity, this room has a number of shortcomings. It's currently being used only for classes of about 40 to 100 students. The new configuration essentially will provide three times the effective classroom capacity of the current room."

After renovations are complete, two of the renovated rooms will seat 90 and a third will seat about 100. One of the 90-seat rooms will be used by Cooley Law School beginning this fall. Cooley then will use the second 90-seat room beginning in fall 2004 as it follows its phased enrollment plan. The third room will serve as a general-purpose classroom for OU use.

Each of the three new classrooms will contain:

- tiered seats;
- level III AV instructional technology, including a multimedia presentation podium, PC computer, DVD player, document camera and wireless network connectivity;
- ADA accessibility for faculty and students;
- updated seating to replace the current fiberglass swivel seats;
- separate entrances;
- utility system modification for individual classroom control.

The renovations will begin in early July and are scheduled for completion by the beginning of the fall 2003 semester.

"The fact the entire classroom is tiered and the limited amount of time available for construction makes these renovations the most challenging project I've been involved with at Oakland," Postlewait said. "However, we do have a contingency plan in case the rooms are not complete by the beginning of the fall term."

The reconfiguration of Room 202 is estimated to cost \$690,000, including payments of \$200,000 from Cooley Law School.

In April, the **OU Board of Trustees** approved a satellite agreement with Cooley Law School, which allows the first two years of Cooley's standard part-time, 36-month curriculum at OU. A night section of these courses began in May, a morning section will begin in September, and an afternoon section will begin in January 2004.

For more information on Cooley Law School classes at OU, visit the **Cooley Law School at Oakland University** Web page or contact Brandi Houghton at (248) 370-3148 or houghtob@cooley.edu.

SUMMARY

OU is converting a 440-seat classroom in O'Dowd Hall into three smaller, more technologically equipped classrooms. In addition to making the rooms more suitable for OU classes, space also will be provided for Cooley Law School classes. After renovations are complete, two of the renovated rooms will seat 90 and a third will seat about 100.

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