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Student Financial Services Office opens

By **Jeff Samoray**, OU Web Writer

Oakland University students now can conduct nearly all their university financial business in one place at the new Office of Student Financial Services in North Foundation Hall.

The new office, temporarily located in room 159, contains the former Cashier's Office and Financial Aid Accounting and Student Accounts offices. Financial Aid will remain temporarily in room 161 while the university completes a \$1.4 million renovation of North Foundation Hall.

When the first phase of renovations is completed in mid-November, the Office of Student Financial Services, including Financial Aid, will operate in their new location in room 120, the area where the cashier's office was formerly based.

Renovations include new lighting, flooring, paint and ceiling in the building corridors, electrical and mechanical improvements, and new exterior doors to the four main entrances. These improvements are designed to make the building, the first university structure dating from 1959, more inviting and student-friendly.

The Office of Student Financial Services provides a convenient and efficient center where all financial matters and questions can be handled in one stop, said Kelly Carter, manager of receivables and cashing services.

"Students can come into our office and get all of their questions answered without being shuffled around on campus," Carter said. "Because of the way the offices were previously located, there was some frustration on the students' part because there wasn't a good place where they could get all the information they needed. With all of our offices consolidated in one location, we can eliminate at least 50 percent of the students' questions. We've been cross-training our staff to handle a wide variety of questions, so already we've been experiencing the one-stop benefits."

In addition, the renovated space for the Office of Student Financial Services will contain a service counter where staff members handle the majority of student requests and specialists address more in-depth questions or problems. The office also will contain a kiosk area with computers where students can transact business online, such as register for classes or fill out a financial aid form.

"I think our services will be an enormous improvement," Carter said. "Student account representatives will be able to process credit card and check payments and will be able to handle a question a student may have about a bill. The representative can answer a financial aid question, for example, or make an appointment or referral for the student if needed."

The second phase of the North Foundation Hall renovations, which will commence in mid-November, involves renovating the space vacated by Financial Aid for the **Office of Graduate Study**. The move will be made when renovations are completed sometime in February 2002.

SUMMARY

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