CASE STUDY: New Academic Center

NEW ACADEMIC CENTER

The last major construction project funded by the Measure C bond involved the replacement of several older buildings (Admin, Business Center, Harlan Center, and Olney Hall) by a single complex housing both academic and administrative programs. One of the most notable features of this New Academic Center relative to the previous projects at the Kentfield Campus (PE, Art, Science), was its emphasis on general-purpose lecture classrooms. Due to both this chronology and emphasis, programming of the NAC played a pivotal role in determining the long-term status of lecture room availability for the entire campus.

Consequently, a special core advisory group was formed with representation from faculty, staff, and students (all endorsed by their respective senates), as well as administrators and modernization staff, in order to evaluate the campus-wide lecture room utilization and provide recommendations regarding the programming of the NAC project. In order to produce the final recommendations, the group met 2-4 times per month over a six-month period, while incorporating feedback obtained from presentations of the ongoing analysis (see Appendix G) to a wide range of governance and stakeholder groups, including: Faculty Academic Senate (May 6, 2010), Board of Trustees (May 18, 2010), Student Learning Council (June 22, 2010), College-wide Flex presentation (August 12, 2010), Faculty Academic Senate (September 16, 2010), Board of Trustees (September 21, 2010).

Recommendations were informed by state standards guidelines, room utilization data, class size distribution data, the campus-wide Master Schedule, and strategic priorities to serve evening students. One of the greatest challenges in achieving greater utilization efficiency is that the evening program serving working adults is currently one of the peak periods of lecture room usage on the KTD campus, thereby limiting opportunities for re-scheduling of classes into the “off-peak” afternoon periods. However, by the time the NAC project is completed in 2015, the college will have achieved an 18% reduction in its overall lecture classroom inventory (from 51 to 42), thereby making substantial progress toward its utilization efficiency goals. Although this reduction in classroom inventory does require re-scheduling of some classes, an inclusive and transparent process using the Master Schedule as a framework should result in minimal adverse impacts upon students. From a longer-term perspective, if the college devises viable solutions in the future to further “smooth out” scheduling of its lecture classes, this can yield further gains in utilization efficiency by retiring portable classrooms.