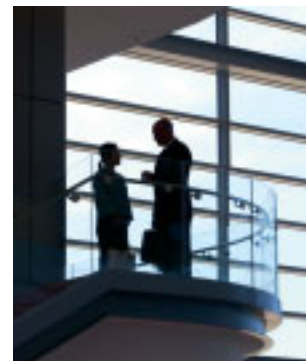
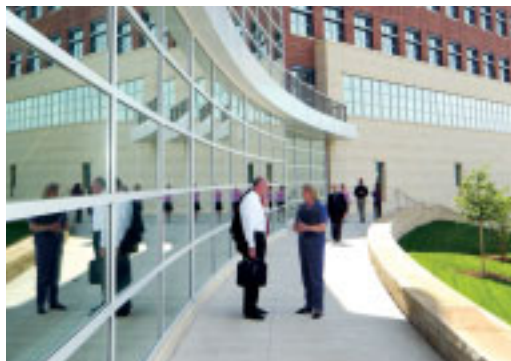


Business as Usual? NO WAY!

Business school curricula at many colleges and universities traditionally have focused on finance, marketing and other core disciplines. However, because the Internet and wireless communications have made for a more interactive society – and business itself has become more complex and interconnected – corporate recruiters are demanding MBA graduates who are better communicators, team-builders and innovative thinkers.

▲ Penn State's Smeal School of Business has an open layout that encourages a free, frequent flow of ideas among students and faculty.

The 21st-century business school offers research, real-world experience, increased interaction among student and faculty, and a culture of collaboration.



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STIMULUS FOR CULTURAL CHANGE

In an effort to create a more specialized, integrated and experiential environment, architects and builders are scrapping old B-school blueprints in favor of 21st-century strategies that encourage collaboration and connectivity. For example, Penn State's 210,000-square-foot Smeal College of Business, designed by Robert A.M. Stern Architects, stands beside the Food Science and Forest Resources buildings, and diagonally across from the future site of the university's Law School in a layout that encourages interdisciplinary interaction among faculty and students on a daily basis.

"We felt that this building should be a stimulus for cultural change, including collaborative discussions that cross boundaries," says Business School Dean Judy D. Olian. "We have created research centers that sit at the intersection of internal departments and are the key interface with the business world."



▲ The Trading Room at Smeal allows students to participate in a real-time, fast-paced business environment.

A network of pedestrian walkways further integrates existing and planned campus elements in the university quad so that the Socratic exchange of ideas can take place. One element that wasn't working for the school was tiered classroom flooring: it kept all eyes on the professor, but didn't encourage student interaction. Gilbane Project Executive Stephen O'Connor explains:

"We solved the problem with raised flooring systems similar to those we use in mission critical spaces, and at the same time saved the school \$200,000. Some of us even pitched in on school recruitment, chaperoning tours for prospective students!"

SERENDIPITOUS ENCOUNTERS, COLLABORATIVE THINKING

At the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan, business education is undergoing a fundamental change: lecture-style classes are giving way to interactive experiences that integrate individual preparation, teamwork and in-class discussion.

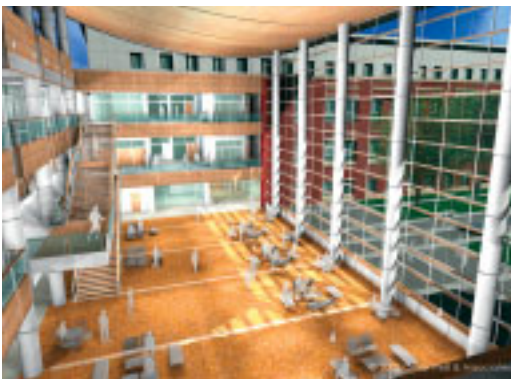
The new 270,000-square-foot structure, designed by Kohn Pedersen Fox Architects, fosters a collaborative culture, with lots of space for one-on-one interaction as well as

collaborative culture

a sense of community



▲ The new facilities at the University of Michigan will provide 85-seat, U-shaped classrooms with tiered seating and small-group discussion areas. This will facilitate a seamless transition from formal classwork to team interaction in a single class session.



▲ The Business Instructional Facility at the University of Illinois will feature state-of-the-art facilities, and engage students by mimicking real business situations.

team participation. “A student commons will act as a hub for the life of the school,” says Ross School Dean Robert J. Dolan, “allowing serendipitous encounters among students, faculty, staff and visitors that will establish a sense of community.”

The biggest challenge for Gilbane is the project’s schedule. “The completion date for Ross is etched in stone, and the entire Gilbane team is giving 120 percent to make that date,” says Project Executive Russell J. Hinds. “Business-school classes haven’t had any interruptions, and the anticipated completion for the school is right on target.”

LEARNING COMES TO LIFE

“Casual conversation is as important as the discussion in the classroom,” notes architect Cesar Pelli. “By talking and debating with your friends and classmates, an idea gets fixed in your mind, grows, gets developed.” The \$60 million Business Instructional Facility at the University of Illinois will be a testament to the university’s belief in interaction and flow. More than 160,000 square feet will accommodate state-of-the-art facilities, and learning will come to life in a Market Information Laboratory, where students may engage in hands-on exercises that mimic a broad spectrum of real business situations.

Because Gilbane was engaged in the design process later than what would’ve been ideal, the entire building team has had to double its efforts to meet the school’s program, schedule and budget. “Everyone understands the enormous significance of this signature architect’s Gold level LEED® design,” says Russell J. Hinds, Gilbane project executive. “We’ve never let it overwhelm us – rather, we’re taking it step by step, applying the skills and experience we bring to every challenge. The school will have a huge impact on higher education. and we take great pride in helping bring it to fruition.”

It is business as usual at Gilbane – the business of applying teamwork, high standards and innovative thinking to higher education projects around the country. By building more than buildings, Gilbane is helping to create an interdisciplinary workforce that will impact commerce around the globe and rev the engine of American business.

At the McIntire School of Commerce at the University of Virginia, Gilbane constructed indoor and outdoor environments designed to promote an informal exchange of ideas – plus classrooms, labs, student work-rooms and lounges that enable faculty and staff to work in teams.



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