

MEETING MINUTES

Western Washington University
 Viking Union (VU) Reprogramming and Ethnic Student Center (ESC)

Workshop #1

Opsis Project No. 4627-01

Meeting Date: Thursday, July 23, 2015

Location: Viking Union Rm 462A

Time: 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Attending:

Ed Simpson	Asst. Dir. of Facilities Development and Capital Budget
Sherrie Montgomery	Facilities Development
Linda Beckman	Dir. Budget & Administration for Enrollment & Student Services
Eric Alexander	Asst. Dean of Student Engagement & Director of Viking Union
Greg McBride	Asst. Director of Viking Union Facilities
Nate Panelo	Ethnic Student Center
Abby Ramos	Associated Students and Ethnic Student Center
Danielle Smith	Ethnic Student Center
Renee Collins	Associate Dean of Students, Director of the Ethnic Student Center
Ted Pratt	Dean of Students

Brailsford & Dunlavey (B&D):

Matt Bohannon	Regional VP (West Coast)
Andrew Perez	Project Manager

Opsis Architecture:

Jim Kalvelage	Partner
John Shorb	Project Manager

Submitted By: John Shorb with additional notes from B&D

This represents my understanding of the discussions and conversations during the Meeting. Revisions by participants should be communicated to **Opsis Architecture** ^{LLP}.

Review Documentation Requests: 9:00 AM – 9:30 AM

Opsis reviewed, and the team discussed, the working Phase-1 reprogramming schedule and draft overall schedule that continues through ESC construction in the summer of 2016 (attached).

Eric confirmed the total budget for the project is +/- \$1.5 million. Sherrie noted that the Maximum Allowable Construction Cost (MACC) will likely be less than \$1 million. WWU will also be contacting potential donors about additional fundraising.

This year marks the 25th Anniversary of the Ethnic Student Center.

Opsis confirmed they have the existing documents needed to begin the project. B&D will be requesting select additional data following the workshop.

ESC Strategic Visioning Exercise: 9:30 AM – 11:00 AM

B&D facilitated an interactive visioning process focused on the ESC. See the attached slideshow for documentation of the results. The discussion is summarized below with “X” indicating the existing condition and “O” representing the desired condition. The number ranking system depicts a 1-10 range with 1 illustrating the lowest and 10 highest.

1. Enrollment Management:

- a. Recruitment (X: 3 & O: 9) – Tours currently do not go through the ESC because of its location in a corner (referred to as “hidden” and “uninviting”). The ESC is considered an “unofficial recruitment tool.” It does not need to be a recruitment tool but instead focus on student persistence and retention. Students are not proud of their space which cuts down on their sense of pride, ownership, and investment in the ESC. Future space should be inviting enough for tours to stop by (transparency; windows to see in) but avoid allowing tours to go through the ESC to prevent disruption.
- b. Retention (Facilities - X: 3 & O: 8; Programs – X: 6 & O: 10) – Institutional experience for ethnic students should be about retention, or from a student’s perspective, their persistence at WWU. The ESC was built specifically for the retention of ESC students which has helped through academic advisement and various programs/resources. From a facilities perspective, the space should feel safe and comfortable. Programs are successful and make the ESC successful despite having inadequate space. The ESC should continue to encourage leadership, academic success, and social responsibility in a larger space. Aesthetics are important: quote from a committee member “clean and professional like you’re going to get something done.” There are also needs to be a focus on providing more space for staff and for resources to support programmatic elements of the ESC. Space for dance clubs (up to 50 people) and storage for clubs/organizations.

2. Educational Outcomes:

- a. Leadership Development (Facilities – X: 3 & O: 10; Programs – X: 8 & O: 10) – Leadership development is embedded within the culture of the ESC (intangible aspects vs. formal programming) through the students’ interaction between upper and lower division. Programs do a great job of supporting this informally via staff that educate and motivate their students to get involved. Last year 5 of the 6 Viking Union Board of Directors were from the ESC (2 members this upcoming academic year). Some committee members indicated ESC students are involved in too many leadership opportunities and have neglected their academics. Facilities do not support the existing initiatives or growth potential of the programs, clubs, and resources being offered.
- b. Student Employment (X: 7 & O: 10) – Do not consider students as a form of labor for “filler positions” but instead value the opportunity to help them grow personally and professionally. Viking Union and ESC are focused on being co-curricular in their student employment opportunities. Want more space opportunities to hold career fairs and educate students about staff/career paths within the University.
- c. Leisure Activities (X: 2 & O: 9) – There is a need for more social and leisure spaces throughout the Viking Union and ESC. Currently, the VU’s primary social and leisure space is the food service area. However, when that closes the VU activity is drastically reduced and students are forced to use elevator lobby areas as study or lounge spaces. Students typically purchase food then leave the building. VU activity is heavily dependent upon programmed activities and events which are behind closed doors so the perceived liveliness of the building is minimal throughout the day and into the evenings.

- d. Out-of-Classroom Experience (X: 5 & O: 10) – The VU and ESC want to be more co-curricular overall. There is philosophical support but not practical day-to-day experiences with out-of-classroom activities. ESC was described as a “safe zone in a larger combat zone within the university” where students of color or various ethnicities feel comfortable escaping to. The VU desires to bring balance between creating safe space, open space, and work space.

Ethnic Student Center - Organizational Restructure Slideshow: 11:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Presented by Nate Panelo, ESC Coordinator

Nate summarized the strengths and weaknesses of the ESC and outlined opportunities he sees for improving the center. Examples of the strengths include:

- ESC Conference and Commencement
- Cultural Programs and Events
- Academic Advising
- Campus Partner Collaborations/Allies
- Reputation
- Student Leadership

The primary weakness stated was the location. The space is not big enough to provide clubs the space needed to feel ownership and conduct meetings.

ESC statistics:

2.5 Professional staff

2 Student staff

3 Front desk staff

16+ Affiliated Clubs

30+ Events Annually

100+ Club Leaders

1000+ Members

Organizational restructure is a natural catalyst for space growth. Programs are doing well but need to focus on developing additional space to support students and idea of what the ESC is. Many do not know how to explain what the ESC is (space vs. resource vs. organization vs. hang out space, etc).

Diagram Exercises for ESC and VU (Opsis): 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM & 1:45 PM – 2:30 PM

(Opsis drawings with meeting mark-ups attached for reference)

Opsis walked through the campus and building drawings noting initial observations and questions.

The group discussed a range of ideas and thoughts, including the following:

- Resource and Outreach Programs (ROP) relationship to ESC is beneficial
- Club Hub provides support. Some overlap with ESC
- No relationship to AS Board
- Need Club space. (10-50/club, one room for 14-15 students). Flexible work stations for student orgs/clubs (open floor plan similarly seen at University of Washington’s Husky Union Building)
- Computer Center and study space both a part of ESC
- Kitchen / kitchenette essential (Cultural Identity)
- Many dance groups need practice/performance space

- Club room (16-20 students)
- Individual club space can be shared (UW MCC)
- Home address
- Open collaborative club space
- Dedicated storage area (shared), but not private club offices, too often these turn into storage rooms.
- Name meeting rooms: make existing conference rooms more culturally significant; highlighting cultural diversity on campus on the walls of the meeting rooms
- Improved wayfinding is critically important.
- Brand rooms/place
- Multi-cultural community
- Academic advising is confidential and secure/ protected info
- UW- Commuter lounge HUB
- Bookstore – eventual adaptive reuse if relocated could be a multi-purpose room or student program space. Logistics of possible bookstore relocation is 5-10 years out.
- Art Gallery is underutilized and its relocation should be considered; relocation to another part of the VU or somewhere else on campus
- Wall of Art concept: possibility on the 5th level in a hallway (500G) across from the theater
- Discussed idea to make Level 5 all student spaces and making Level 4 all administrative spaces
- Concept of moving the Wellness Center out of the Viking Union to the Student Health Center or the Wade King Recreation Center,
- Ethnic Student Center: lacks club spaces, offices, study/computer lab elements, storage for organizations, conference room (up to 20 people) for ESC staff, adjacent to larger conference room for ESC clubs access, and open floor plan with work stations.
- Outdoor Center is not movable from its current location,
- Potential to relocate Underground Café closer to student activity and food service upstairs; could be on the “main street” of the Viking Union to promote liveliness after hours when dining shuts down.

Utilization and Benchmarking Review: 1:00 PM – 1:45 PM

Discussion of both topics (in order from discussion):

- Overview of benchmarking suggests the WWU VU is under area by approx. 30,000-40,000sf
- Discussion of whether theater square footage is accurate. B&D to verify.
- Square footage inventory list: some slight inaccuracy may be present with number of computers at workstations.
- Discussion of whether bookstore square footage should be added into the analysis or excluded. Preference was expressed to exclude.
- Confirm what is included in the “Group 13: Special/Misc. Components” section.
- Next round of utilization studies will include the following:
 - Meeting room and ballroom user breakdown,
 - Analysis of peaks/valleys in data,
 - Breakdown of AS utilization of meeting rooms,
 - Breakdown of ESC clubs/orgs utilization of meeting rooms,
 - Break out meeting room utilization for the VU into 2-year increment,
 - Break out meeting room utilization by hours,
 - More TBD.

Meeting with Associated Students (AS) Board: 2:30 PM – 3:30 PM

Patrick Eckroth, Belina Seare, Hannah Brock, Emma Palumbo, Abby Ramos, Zachary Dove, Israel Ríos, Sabrina Romano

Opsis and B&D provided an overview of the project scope and schedule. They summarized the workshop process and discussions including the visioning session and building/campus diagram exercises. Following is a summary of the key discussion points and feedback from the AS Board:

- There was interest and support for the possibility of moving student space into the north (level 5 west) meeting room area.
- There was interest and support for reconsidering the student gallery. They need space but not as large and it could be outside the VU. They often display sculpture so wall space alone is not sufficient.
- The 5th floor was described as the “main floor.” There is interest and support for this as possible ESC and student organization location.
- There was interest in considering the long term location of the bookstore. The potential to move student space to the front of the VU and possibly open to the plaza was discussed.
- Discussed creating an information desk in the 6th floor lobby.
- There was support for the idea of moving wellness out of the VU, perhaps to the Wade King Center or another location on campus that is central and convenient. None of the AS Board members had ever used it.
- The idea of an ESC kitchen or kitchenette was discussed. Would it be possible to use Aramark kitchen space for student events? The 5th floor catering kitchen?
- Space for studying and tutoring important in ESC.

Meeting with Facilities Management Staff: 3:30 PM – 4:30 PM

Sandy Fugami, Josh Kavulla, Gerry Vermeulen, Greg Hough, Rod Koenig

- Mechanical – There is a plenum return above the ceiling of the level 4 and 5 student and administration areas.
- There have been comfort issues on the east side of level 5 near room 519. Poor ventilation.
- There is not a deferred maintenance list for the VU.
- There are plans for a HVAC controls upgrade in the future.
- The VU has good electrical distribution. However, there is no further capacity on level 6 in the vendor’s row area. The raceway for telecom is getting full.
- Cat 6 is the campus standard for cabling. Most of the VU is Cat 5.
- Most of the existing windows are single pane and therefore not efficient.
- The lack of gender neutral restrooms is an issue in the building and should be addressed in the overall VU planning. Two, two stall gender neutral restrooms have been recently created on the fourth floor.
- Mass notification – The VU has a voice system but not the amber light system.
- Emergency responder radio coverage to be confirmed
- Smoke detectors appear to be code minimum and close to end of life.
- The emergency generator is maxed out and cannot accept any additional loads.
- The building HVAC units are healthy.
- The 5th floor student life and gallery areas are on the bookstore HVAC system with 1 thermostat. This is not a good scenario.
- An abatement survey may be required once the scope of work is known.

Next Steps and Schedule Coordination: 4:30 PM – 5:00 PM

Four possible locations for the ESC were discussed including the Radio Station on the 8th floor and also the MPR, neither one of these options are deemed worth pursuing based on the isolation of the 8th floor and costly infrastructure of the radio station and the MPR is the only flat floor multi-purpose room on campus. The Steering Committee identified 2 possible locations for the ESC that should be studied. These include the 5th floor west facing meeting rooms and the VU administrative suite and adjoining space as necessary on the 5th floor.

The Steering Committee reviewed next steps, including dates for the remaining workshops. The schedule for the remainder of Phase 1 is as follows:

Date TBD (late August): Steering Committee/design team online gotomeeting

September 21-24: **Workshop #2** (One full day within this date range)

September 22: *First day of classes*

September 29: *ESC Open House*

Date TBD: Steering Committee/design team online goto meeting prior to WS-2

October 8-11: *ACUI Regional Conference at OSU (many of this group will be there)*

October 16-18: *ESC Retreat (off campus)*

October 21-23: **Workshop #3** (One full day within this date range)

Workshop #2 Planning:

Design team to begin diagramming adjacencies and grouping programs internal vs. external
Groups to meet with during WS-2 include: ESC, Resource and Outreach Programs (ROP), and AS Productions (ASP) who run the gallery. The workshop should also include an open charrette for all administration staff.

Workshop #3 Planning:

The ESC Presidents Council (presidents of each of the 16 ESC clubs) should be included in the workshop. There should also be an open session for all ESC students.

Attachments:

B&D visioning and utilization/benchmarking slides
Opsi campus and building drawings with mark-ups.

END OF MINUTES