



News

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Philadelphia University to break ground on academic building to support the innovative curriculum of the College of Design, Engineering and Commerce on Friday, June 10

The 38,500 square-foot facility will provide flexible space to facilitate transdisciplinary, project-based learning and collaborative problem-solving

PHILADELPHIA, June 10, 2011— Philadelphia University will break ground June 10 on a \$20 million academic building designed to support the innovative curriculum of the College of Design, Engineering and Commerce, which stresses interdisciplinary, project-based learning and collaborative problem-solving.

“The College of Design, Engineering and Commerce is unique and this striking new building will support and enhance the powerful academic experience,” Spinelli said. “Students gain expertise in their disciplines and a fluency in the transdisciplinary ways of the 21st-century work world on a much larger scale than what we’ve seen in higher education to date.”

To meet the needs of students, faculty and industry partners, the technology-rich building will include flexible space for studios, seminars, conference meetings and team projects. This will allow teaching and work space to be reconfigurable as projects and curricula evolve. The 38,500 square-foot building, which will be built to LEED standards, also will include a large two-story forum space for design exhibits, presentations, large lectures and social events.

The College of Design, Engineering and Commerce offers an integrated curriculum that retains the core learning of each discipline while forging new collaborations among the fields of design, engineering and business. By bringing these disciplines together, the College pushes students to think beyond the boundaries of existing disciplines and focus on market-driven innovation through teamwork, collaboration and connections with industry partners.

A committee of faculty members and deans, led by the provost's office, worked with the architect to design the space to meet the program's unique needs. The building, situated on the main campus quad, is scheduled to open for the spring 2013 semester.

The new building, with a distinctive metallic shell for climate control, will be funded with \$10 million in cash, including an anonymous gift of \$5 million already in hand, and \$10 million raised from bonds. The architect is Shepley Bulfinch Richardson & Abbot of Boston, the firm that designed Philadelphia University's award-winning Paul J. Gutman Library and The Kanbar Campus Center.

Philadelphia University, founded in 1884, is a private university with 3,500 students enrolled in more than 60 undergraduate and graduate programs. As the model for professional university education, the University prepares students to be leaders in their professions in an active, collaborative and real-world learning environment infused with the liberal arts. Philadelphia University includes the innovative College of Design, Engineering and Commerce; the College of Architecture and the Built Environment; and the College of Science, Health and the Liberal Arts. For more information, go to www.PhilaU.edu.