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University of Dayton

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CROTTY BUSINESS CENTER PROVIDES LATEST TECHNOLOGY, LAPTOP REQUIREMENT COMPLEMENTS NEW FACILITY AT UD

DAYTON, Ohio — With eight new classrooms, 400 data outlets, wireless capability, technology fixtures and flexible seating, the newly renovated Miriam Hall at the University of Dayton is equipped to graduate business students who have mastered the technology and techniques they will use in the business world.

And a laptop requirement beginning in fall 2002 will allow students to make the most of the renovated facility.

The L. William Crotty Business Center, located on the first floor, includes eight classrooms and four team laboratories as well as a new two-and-a-half story glass-walled atrium entrance that will serve as a meeting and gathering place for students and professors. The three-year, $10 million project was completed in time for fall classes.

“Essentially, our students will be using technology throughout their careers, and having these tools and techniques in their collegiate program will give them a leg up in getting a good start,” said Sam Gould, dean of the School of Business Administration.

In keeping with the University’s emphasis on providing a technology-enhanced learning environment, first-year students majoring in business will be required to select either the $1,650 UD Notebook (Tangent Shuttle 1.1 GHz) or $2,250 UD Power Notebook (Tangent Shuttle 1.5 GHz) among the options provided by the University. The requirement will begin with first-year students in fall 2002.

“We predict that, after graduation, they will be computing on the run,” Gould said. “Mobility is what the future holds, and we want our students to be prepared for that. So, after lengthy discussion, we’ve decided to require our students to work on laptops.”

Faculty members are excited about the technology they can work with in the new classrooms. Custom podiums provide Internet and VCR connections as well as projectors and ELMOs that allow hard-copy materials to be displayed on the dual screens that flank each podium. Videoconferencing wiring has been installed in the classrooms, and a portable system

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for long-distance conferencing is available.

"The depth is just enormous," said Randy Sparks, associate professor of management and marketing. "I have all but eliminated textbooks in a couple of my classes. The Web offers you a way of creating materials suited to your own instructional model. It's customized so that you're not stuck in someone else's framework."

Technology is changing teaching, he said.

"Having this kind of technology gives our faculty very powerful tools for bringing real-life business applications into the classroom. It used to be you would focus on the theoretical in class and the students would work on the application of it outside of class. Now we're reversing that to some degree so that the material we cover is being best presented in other ways. You can deliver a lot of class material on the Web or by e-mail, for example, and use the class time for interaction and hands-on projects. Students can participate in exercises that used to be presented as demonstrations they would just watch.

"Even a tiny bit of animation in a PowerPoint presentation can really make a difference in helping a student understand material," Sparks said.

Senior Jeffrey Rombach appreciates the emphasis on technology. "I grew up on technology and it has made our world what it is today. It is only natural to integrate it into the way in which I learn," Rombach said. "UD's facilities are state of the art, easy to use and give a complete learning enhancement. I can make quality presentations in the classrooms, get information when it happens and when I need it, and even make integral financial models to supplement my finance background."

Bill and Marilyn Crotty donated a lead gift of $1 million to make the renovation project feasible. The chair of Van Dyne Crotty Inc. met his wife at the University, but that's only one of the motivations for the gift.

"There are lots of reasons for our gift, but it boils down to a long-term love affair with the University of Dayton," Bill Crotty said. "There were so many things that we learned here that set the stage for solid success in life. This gives us an opportunity to repay a most wonderful experience in our lives, without which the two of us wouldn't be together. Beyond that, we consider this a significant investment in the future of the University of Dayton and the Miami Valley at large."

The Crottys were joined by six local corporations and 34 individuals to provide more than $4.5 million in support for the renovations project.

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