

Bruner Hall



Photo by: Brad Norton, Kearney Hub

THE NEW Foucault Pendulum reflects visitors at the grand opening of the Bruner Hall of Science Complex Friday. Visitors could tour the building and see the new classroom and labs. The pendulum, the only one of its kind in Nebraska, demonstrates the earth's rotation.

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By SARA GIBONEY Hub Staff Writer | 0 comments

KEARNEY - Classes at the Bruner Hall of Science at the University of Nebraska at Kearney this semester have been devoid of the sounds of construction, which have been pulsing through the building for the past year and a half.

Almost 150 people gathered outside Bruner Hall Friday for a dedication and ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of the \$14.5 million renovation.

"It's just one more indicator of how good our campus is and what we can achieve if we put our minds to it. Someday we're going to study the science of wind and how to control wind," Chancellor Doug Kristensen joked during the ceremony, which took place outside of Bruner Hall during the early afternoon 35 to 45 mph winds.

The project included renovating about half of the 87,500 square-foot building to state-of-the-art classrooms, laboratories and research space and building a 26,000-square-foot addition with new laboratories, classrooms, a herbarium and a new planetarium.

The planetarium is the only part of the project that is unfinished. It is expected to be complete in early November.

"The quality of the leadership, the dedication of your faculty, the remarkable opportunities that you offer to students, and certainly the relationships that you have, that you've fostered with the Kearney community are further evidence that UNK is not standing still," said Regent Bob Whitehouse of Papillion.

Bob Rycek, dean of the College of Natural and Social Sciences, emphasized that Bruner Hall remained open for classes during construction.

The construction process took a year and a half and was completed a semester ahead of schedule.

"There's a large group of team members that must be recognized. This group is the faculty and staff who worked in Bruner during the construction," said Director of Facilities Management and Planning Lee McQueen. "Remember, this building was always functional. This faculty held classes and labs continually during the construction period. They dealt with noise, broken water pipes, dust, noise, interruptions, broken water pipes, multiple office and lab moves, and noise."

The project also included a 31-foot by 14-foot brick mural that was installed on the west side of the building. "On the Shoulders of Giants" was designed and constructed by Jay Tschetter and Tom Meyers from Images in Brick in Denton. They installed the 2,650 bricks in August.

The art deco-style piece is made up of four quadrants with each of the sciences - physics, chemistry, biology and health - represented.

"As you look at the walls of the building behind us, they're like any other walls of any other building. They're straight; they're tall; most of them are made of bricks," Kristensen said. "The true difference isn't the bricks and the mortar, it's what goes on inside that building. The tradition of teaching, of learning, of understanding."

After the dedication and ribbon cutting, attendees took guided tours of the building.

"Today, we have a science building that's worthy of the quality of the faculty and the students who have made the programs inside this building hallmarks of excellence," Kristensen said.

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Bruner Hall facts

The following tabulation of square footages for Bruner Hall:

Total gross square footage in Bruner Hall and Mary Morse Lecture Hall before beginning demolition and construction - 82,667

Total gross square footage in Bruner Hall and new addition after completion of construction - 94,420

Total gross square footage in new addition - 30,265

Total gross square footage in Bruner Hall - 64,155

Total gross square footage in Bruner Hall renovated under this project - 51,524

Square footage by department after completion:

Total net square footage dedicated to health sciences - 1,914

Total net square footage dedicated to biology - 24,783

Total net square footage dedicated to physics and physical sciences - 13,330

Total net square footage dedicated to chemistry - 13,285

Total net square footage of non-departmental space (classrooms, student study space, etc.) - 11,728

Materials used during construction

Electrical - 85,000 feet of conduit, 300,000 feet of electrical wire, 1,500 receptacles

Fire safety - 335 fire sprinkler heads, 3,600 feet of pipe

Bricks - 90,000

Concrete - 2,400 cubic yards between foundations and flatwork

Plaster - exterior soffits and the dome, approximately 12 cubic yards of plaster.

Heating and cooling - 4,000 feet of ductwork, 20,000 feet of pipe

Drywall - 275,000 square feet.

Phone cable - 300,000 feet