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West Campus

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West Campus

Located at 5959 Grand Avenue in West Des Moines, Iowa, the DMACC West Campus was designed with the varying needs of today's students in mind. The campus environment is one that brings people and technology together with the purpose of creating effective learning solutions.

Most jobs in the future will require education beyond high school. West Campus offers two-year degrees in arts and science and technical education. DMACC West Campus technology programs and certificates will equip students with the technology and knowledge they need to succeed in the ever-changing workplace while arts and science (AA and AS) degrees prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions.

Technology Partners

DMACC West Campus has partnered with a number of technology-solution providers who rank among the best in their respective areas of expertise. Through these partnerships, the campus is able to provide not only the latest in technology, but also is able to stay current and even ahead of the rapid changes occurring every day in technology. For some partners, the campus serves as a regional training site for technology solutions as they become available.

Before West Campus

The enrollment base at Valley High School had an impact on the startup enrollment at the West Campus. West Des Moines Valley High evening college credit courses got started as a result of several staff at DMACC. Simpson College offered classes and the West Des Moines Valley Adult Education Director wanted DMACC to supplement Simpson's offerings.

Winston Black was originally assigned to West Des Moines Valley. Because of his other responsibilities, it seemed a good fit for the West Des Moines Valley evening classes to become a part of the Off Campus Credit function. The Off Campus Credit office was already offering courses at Ames, Perry, Newton, Indianola, and other schools, so the addition of West Des Moines Valley was a simple addition.

The Off Campus Credit program was able to expand for the following reasons:

DMACC offered Microsoft products such as Word and Access to the DMACC staff, applying those products within the design for Off Campus Credit growth. The College had an excellent resource person, Rod Bergren, who was always available to help design databases and reports. A team designed Access data bases and reports for part-time faculty to acquire text books and maintain schedules.

The part-time faculty data base enabled DMACC to manage a sizable listing of potential part-time faculty. As DMACC expanded to West Des Moines Valley, staff was available to teach the courses.

The textbook data base allowed DMACC to order complimentary text books for all new faculty, and for existing faculty who needed a new edition. The text books for West Des Moines Valley were sold through the Urban Campus.

Scheduling was simplified. West Des Moines also had a huge Adult Education program which had to be merged with DMACC'S offerings.

The transition for West Des Moines was a little "bumpy" because the buildings were not completed on time. The plan was to open the West Campus book store early so that the DMACC students at Valley could become acquainted with the new facility while attending

Valley. The problem occurred when the bookstore did not open on time and the books had to be delivered to the Valley High School and sold to individual students.

West Lakes Center for Professional Development

DMACC's West Lakes Center for Professional Development operated at 6000 Westtown Parkway from 1997 through 2000. The space consisted of two large computer labs and three large classrooms.

Center Director MD Isley was assisted by an Advisory Board made up of business and information technology professionals from key companies in the West Des Moines area and offered a variety of continuing education courses, credit courses and professional training programs that were designed to serve the employees and residents working or living in the area. The majority of courses were information technology related.

The Center was heavily utilized during the years of 1998 and 1999 to provide accelerated COBOL programming education to area employers and employees in preparation for the looming "Y2K" computer programming crisis that never came to fruition.

Serving as an "early" presence in West Des Moines, the Center provided support and planning space for the developing DMACC West Campus.

Dr. Joseph Borgen, President of DMACC and Dr. Kim Linduska, Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs, wanted the campus to offer something different to DMACC students. Dr. Anthony Paustian was employed two years before the campus opened with a background in marketing, technology, leadership and education. Soon after his employment, Dr. Paustian began to assemble a team to plan for a unique campus.

The West Campus team conceived of the campus as an "educational mall" with the purpose of creating a dynamic, stimulating, interactive learning experience—a 24/7 learning community that attracted and retained students. The designers believed that the campus should serve students whose changing needs the campus would anticipate into the new millennium.

Designing the West Campus

Once technology was fully implemented and tested at the West Campus, the plan was to conduct follow-up analysis to determine whether or not the outcomes were positive. If the technology was determined to be positive (help DMACC be strategically competitive), an administrative plan for training, implementation, and analysis would be created and submitted to central administration for approval.

The Synerg.e® Center

The concept of synergy formed the basis for the Synerg.e® Center and the West Campus. Synergy is defined as when the "whole is greater than the sum of its parts." By partnering with a number of local and regional companies, worldwide suppliers of new and emerging technologies, and academic leaders at all levels, the result was intended to be something new and exciting...something that changed people's perceptions about the context of education and training.

Programs

Initial programs at West Campus focused on the areas of Telecommunications/Telephony, Programming, Software Applications, Computer Networking, Internet 2 Technologies (including E-Commerce), Business Administration, and Liberal Arts. The primary intent was to reach and serve new students who previously had not attended DMACC.

Facilities

Phase I of the West Campus was to consist of the creation of an approximately 50,000 square foot building that included a 128-seat theater style auditorium, four flexible lab rooms, 11 dedicated labs, a large commons area, a contemporary coffee shop, traditional administrative offices, and rooms dedicated to corporate training (for Synerg.e® partners and the public). The facility was designed to accommodate 1,000 students and customers at any one time. Plans were in place to expand the institution to approximately double the size of the initial phase within the first 8 to 10 years, following completion of the first phase.

Preparing to Open the Campus—a timeline

August 2000 - Jay Nickelson was hired as a Telecommunications Instructor.

January 2001 - Charles Pytleski (Networking Instructor), Chad Dittmer (Programming and Internet Technology Instructor), and Galen Briggs (Telecommunications Instructor) were hired.

February 2001 - Discussions begin pertaining to the telephone and data network infrastructure for West Campus.

March 2001 - Order for a new phone system using Siemens Rolm remote for West Campus placed on hold--began exploring alternatives to using the ICN for telecommunications services at the West Campus.

March 2001 - Several meetings took place regarding data, telephone, and desktop.

April 2001 - Nortel Networks, Siemens/Norstan, Marconi, and Cisco were approached to bid the new campus infrastructure. A converged voice and data network was desired.

May 2001 -A voice-over IP network (converged) would be installed.

Summer 2001 -The faculty of the telecommunications program wrote a textbook for their first-term students to be used on handheld PocketPCs. Chad had completed months of research and generally tech playing with handhelds and wireless networks. Telecommunications students would receive an iPaq PocketPC and utilize it for their classes.

October 2001 -Moved in. Compaq PCs had no floppy or CD drives--a step toward thin client. All the monitors were flat screens, and the majority of classrooms had projectors, white boards, and Smart carts. Some classrooms had Smart boards. Instructors had access to VCRs and overhead projectors. Shortly after moving in, West Campus had WiFi. The iPaq handheld initiative was started.

Summer 2003 - Cisco multipoint video was installed.

Winter 2006 - Fiber connection to West Des Moines started.

Although classes officially began in August of 2001, the DMACC West Campus opened its doors for classes on October 1, 2001. The initial focus of the campus class offerings was to concentrate on computer science/data processing, electronics and telecommunications. Liberal arts class offerings were very limited as a result. Over time, demand for liberal arts and business administration offerings grew, and these programs now comprise the majority of West Campus offerings. Due to the bursting of the Dot Com bubble in 2002 and a subsequent decrease in demand for technology courses, adjustments were made to the faculty with the elimination of courses and positions. In the years since, technology programming at West has dramatically increased along with a matching increase in course offerings and faculty.

Celebrate! Innovation Exhibition

Innovation has always been a core value of the West Campus since its beginning. Created in 2008 and designed to inspire students through an interactive environment, the Celebrate! Innovation Exhibition stresses the importance of creative thinking by surrounding students, staff and faculty with numerous examples of innovative thinking that have formed the narrative of American imagination. Through the use of tangible exhibits and artifacts, video, and larger-than-life photos and images, the campus shows how a diverse group of inspired people from varying backgrounds chose to actively contribute to society by adding value to everyday life. These visual stimulators have been incorporated into classroom instruction and student assignments to provide a unique learning experience.

The Celebrate! Innovation Exhibition was listed by the state of Iowa's department of tourism in 2012 as a destination spot for visitors, and hundreds of people from the community come to campus each year to visit the exhibition.

ciWeek (Celebrate! Innovation Week)

In 2010, Celebrate! Innovation Week (ciWeek) was created and now occurs annually during the first week of March. The week provides students and the community opportunities to engage with people (some famous, all inspired) who have dreamed, created, and accomplished. With more than 14 keynote presentations from people all over the nation and globe, it's a thought-provoking and interactive week, where students listen, absorb, and engage without the stress of the regular class routine (classes are suspended for two days to allow students' undivided attention). The week is also simulcast in HD to all DMACC locations, so students across the entire district can both participate and engage as well.

Created August 2015 in celebration of DMACC's 50th Anniversary.