

March 4, 2011

Dear UW-Eau Claire students and employees,

Monday, March 7, marks the beginning of the long-awaited and much-anticipated construction of UW-Eau Claire's new student center. This is an important occasion for our University as it represents the culmination of a 10-year effort by students to create a modern facility that will serve as the center for student life at UW-Eau Claire for many years to come. I want to recognize the persistence of student leaders, past and present, whose determination resulted in the translation of their vision for a new student center into reality. I would also like to thank the Davies Center Redevelopment Committee, chaired by Vice Chancellor Beth Hellwig, for the countless hours devoted to planning for this project.

While we are celebrating construction of the student center, we also recognize it will cause considerable disruption. Parking, as well as vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian traffic patterns will be altered. There will be heavy equipment on campus, deliveries of building supplies, and loud noise and vibrations associated with foundation and other work.

With this in mind, be sure you frequently check the Construction News website, <http://www.uwec.edu/news/more/construction.htm>, which will have regularly updated information about the building project.

Please take special note of the changes to parking included in this news release about the project, <http://www.uwec.edu/newsreleases/11/feb/0225StudentCenterConstruction.htm>, and announcements on the Parking and Transportation Services website, <http://www.uwec.edu/parking>.

It is extremely important that you pay attention to your surroundings while entering and exiting the construction area — safety is a top priority and your cooperation is essential.

The new student center is the first of three projects that will total nearly \$100 million and represent the largest undertaking of new buildings on our campus in more than 40 years.

Plans for the new \$3.8 million Children's Center are being finalized, with construction expected to begin in late spring. Preliminary plans for the new \$44.5 million education building recently underwent a peer review at the Division of State Facilities and we are proceeding with full design. The current timeline for the beginning of construction of the education building is spring 2012.

Some may wonder why, with all of the current budget uncertainty, we are proceeding with major building projects at this time. The answer is twofold. First, we need to upgrade our facilities in order to best serve our students — this is a competitive issue for UW-Eau Claire and we, through our Centennial Plan, are committed to the continuous improvement of our campus facilities. Second, the capital budget that funds construction is totally separate from our operating budget. Building projects are bonded and repaid over a 20-year period. We would realize no savings to our operating budget were these projects not to go forward. (In other words, no building, no money for a building.)

Construction projects are both invigorating and disruptive. My many experiences with campus construction, however, have all resulted in tremendous delight and pride in the finished project, no matter how intrusive the construction phase may be.

Thank you in advance for your tolerance and cooperation.

Chancellor Brian Levin-Stankevich, Ph.D.