STEM LEARNING IN A VERNACULAR SETTING

The College of Engineering, Technology & Aeronautics provides state-of-the-art amenities while paying homage to the rural landscape of the area.

Designed as a place for students to design, create, and mentor one another, the 67,000 GSF state-of-the-art academic building is home to four CDIO (Conceive, Design, Implement, Operate) hubs where students can work on projects from conception through operation, turning them into real-world solutions and products.

The building also features teaching labs, flexible classrooms, and a computer lab. A café and array of collaboration spaces will foster interaction and provide a “home” for the building occupants of this new Engineering department. The flexible teaching labs and CDIO hubs are paired with more ‘static’ support spaces like maker space and IDEA Lab, housing equipment like 3D printers, force testers and a scanning electron microscope. This allows for maximum flexibility so space can evolve as curriculum changes. Services fed overhead, movable casework and movable partitions further allow spaces in the building to transform and adapt to the evolving programmatic needs.

SNHU hopes to connect with underserved populations in New Hampshire and greater New England and seeks to bring more women into the engineering field. Their goal is to train engineers to be ready to work and reenergize local industry. Students will learn from faculty members who have helped build interplanetary probes, served in the military, worked for defense contractors, designed video games, founded companies, and more.

CETA was conceived as a teaching tool with visible structural elements, ductwork, and piping systems. The teaching laboratories expose the structure and MEP systems referencing industrial mill buildings of nearby Manchester, New Hampshire.

The design hubs are a catalyst for new ways of curriculum delivery that encourage competency-driven, project-based, team-based, and hands-on work. The community spaces throughout the building provide relaxed and welcoming collaborative environments.

The IDE building’s presence on SNHU’s campus is a signal of what is to come. The design not only satisfies our needs of today but its capacity for the future.

Angela Foss
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