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The Eastgate Center, a recent PSU purchase, will expand PSU's services in downtown Harrisburg when it opens this spring.

Photo by John Rudy

PSH Eastgate Center Expected to Open

John Rudy
Capital Times Staff

The Pennsylvania State University's board of trustees approved the \$7 million purchase of the Eastgate Office Building in center-city Harrisburg to expand PSU's current downtown services, and classes are expected to begin there in the Spring '91 semester.

"Each Penn State Harrisburg division head is currently looking at Spring semester offerings to determine which, if any, of their courses should be made available at the Eastgate Center," said Dr. James South, associate provost for administrative operations. "Selection of undergraduate and graduate work will be up to the various division heads."

The staffing proposal calls for the facility to be open weekdays from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. "I can foresee some demand for 7 a.m. classes for workers who want to attend before they go to their jobs," said South. "I can also see a noontime class opportunity."

"I would hope that this is an opportunity to do some creative things, particularly over time," South added. "It is only after our faculty and other folks see the facility, and begin to think in terms of how we might make use of it, that we will find its true potential."

The Eastgate Center, as PSU has named it, is located at 1010 N. Seventh St. The three-story, 56,000-square-foot facility is situated on a 2.5 acre plot north of the Capitol Complex. The first level contains 145 off-street parking spaces, while the second and third floors provide offices and classroom facilities.

Initially, PSH will occupy 11,000 square feet of the second floor. The remainder of the second floor is currently being leased as office space to the Pennsylvania Securities and Exchange Commission, and the third floor is leased to the U.S. Postal Service, South said.

The 45,000 square feet currently being leased is available if needed for further PSH expansion. Also, if future needs demand it, the first level, currently used for parking, is constructed in such a way that it could be enclosed to provide even more usable interior space, South said.

"PSH will occupy Eastgate Center in late December or early January when we

relocate some offices there," said South. "We anticipate having some academic activity for the Spring semester, as well as some continuing education activity."

The final floor plan for the PSH area has not yet been set. South and his staff are talking with the building's architect to determine the most functional layout. Initial proposals showed provisions for a reception area and offices, a library facility, a micro-computer center, a study lounge, an interactive classroom with audio-visual components, and several other classrooms.

The library will not be a full-service facility due to space limitations, but will provide information through CD ROMs, LIAS access, some reference material and FAX services, said South.

The micro-computer center will be initially stocked with IBM equipment, and a link to Penn State's mainframe is planned.

"What we do [for computer equipment] in the long term," said South, "will stem from what kind of academic activities are occurring at the facility."

"One thing we found at Penn State's Downtown Center is that the bulk of the course work activity there has been in Public Affairs," said South. "That was partially the result of faculty leadership in offering courses, but it has also been a reflection of the location of the building, close to the Capitol Complex."

"The location of the new site was carefully considered," said South. The success of the Downtown Center indicated the desire of those working in or near the Capitol Complex to have such a facility near their workplace. The need for adequate parking, another consideration in an urban location, was also met with plenty of on-street parking available near the center, South said.

Future development in the area immediately surrounding Eastgate Center would place the facility in the heart of the new activity. Of particular interest is the proposed Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency building to be erected nearby, which could add 1,000 workers and potential students to the local population.

Work Study Budget Hit Hard

T.J. Brightman
Capital Times Staff

Lack of student participation in the Federal Work Study Program has forced many campus operations to restructure budgets and reduce some student services.

James D. South, associate provost for administrative operations, said campus operations that depend largely on student work study like Police Services, the Engineering lab, and recreational activities in the Capital Union Building have been hardest hit. These operations have fewer students working for them because fewer students enrolled in the Federal Work Study Program.

The CUB has had to cut two and a half hours each day Monday through Thursday because work-study students run the building in the evening.

Duane Crider, campus athletic director, said, "We have had to fill in with wage payroll to compensate for the lack of work-study, which has forced us to adjust our budget and program." Crider said the CUB needs approximately 15 people to run effectively. Last year seven to 10 work-study students worked for him. This fall he has had to work with three to five.

"Financial Aid has been really good in finding us a few more students, but the numbers are still low," he said. To make up for the loss of work-study students, Crider has been forced to hire people on a wage-payroll basis which has put a dent in his annual budget.

Under the Federal Work Study Program, students who meet certain

income eligibility requirements work on campus. Family income, spousal support and assets are considered before a student is granted work-study. The federal program pays 80 percent of their hourly wages. With fewer students enrolled in the program, campus operations must pay all of a student's salary out of their own budget. With their budgets strained, they have been forced to cut student personnel.

Police Services was forced to do without four students to take on police related jobs. This time last year, Police Chief Charles Alesky said he had eight students enrolled in the Federal Work Study Program. This semester he has five students, and by spring will have four.

Police Services has had to reorganize the campus escort service. The escort service no longer operates on a "call basis," but more like a shuttle bus pickup, Alesky said. Students have to be at a certain campus location at a particular time to take advantage of the service.

Out of the 120 students who were awarded Federal Work study this semester, only about 60 accepted and are currently working on campus.

Associate director of student affairs Don R. Holtzman said students working off-campus can earn more than the \$4 an hour work study pays.

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