

Communication building reopens

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WILLIMANTIC — The biggest change to the Eastern Connecticut State University campus this fall has been the opening of the newly renovated Communication Building.

For the 14 months, the building remained shuttered while under construction, but reopened in August with a modernized design and a number of improvements to efficiency and technology.

Originally constructed in the early 1970s, the building's extensive renovations include new state-of-the-art facilities for television production, sound recording, audio production and video editing.

"It is as important to refresh our existing facilities as it is to build new ones," said Eastern President Elsa Núñez. "In using such state-of-the-art technology, students in our communication and new media studies majors can better prepare for careers in the media world of the 21st century."

All of the classrooms have been upgraded with new equipment. The television studio and radio station have been revamped and three new computer labs were constructed.

"These new media production spaces provide unique opportunities for communication majors to practice and hone the skills that they learn in class," said communication professor Andrew Utterback. "The faculty are thrilled to be teaching in such a modern, up-to-date space."

"The physical environment has a powerful effect on students' ability to learn," said communication professor Edmond Chibeau. "This new building is an example of Eastern's dedication to giving students an ergonomically designed state-of-the-art learning environment."

Subtler improvements to the building include efficiencies in sustainability. The renovations follow high-performance building standards set by the state, including utilizing recyclable materials for a portion of the construction, as well as

materials sourced within 500 miles of the work site. Improvements have also been made to water conservation, energy conservation and insulation.

One of the building's most distinct changes is a glass-encased facade on the north end. This ground-level area was once an outdoor concrete tunnel, but now is a vibrant foyer furnished with contemporary furniture.



The Communication Building at Eastern Connecticut University recently reopened after 14 months of refurbishments, including state-of-the-art facilities and a glass-encased facade on the north end. Contributed photo