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For immediate release

Odessa College reviews Facility Master Plan

ODESSA (Aug. 12, 2010) – The Odessa College Board of Trustees has reviewed a 20-year facility master plan for the college and will consider its adoption at its meeting next Tuesday.

The plan, developed by college staff with assistance from the SHW Group of Plano, Texas, spans the entire campus and recommends new facilities, add-ons, upgrades and renovations for the 65-year-old Odessa College Campus. The plan is meant to guide the college in any changes to the facility, allowing for optimization of space and student use.

Using OC's current and projected enrollments and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's Space Projection Model, the SHW Group determined that the campus has a deficit of over 75,000 net assignable square feet (NASF). This plan would add approximately 88,000 new NASF, remove around 42,000 of substandard space through demolition of old buildings, and renovate several existing buildings to make more efficient use of space. The plan in its entirety calls for the future construction of 7 new buildings, demolition of 5 old buildings, add-ons to 1 building, and renovations to 10 buildings.

According to Board President Walter Smith, the architectural firm was given numerous guidelines in developing the plan. "First and foremost we wanted to modify the campus to improve student flow and ease of access. Currently, a student enrolled in a program would find their classes spread out over the entire campus. The plan would call for programs to have classrooms grouped near each other, often in the same building, allowing students to spend more time in their studies and improving the efficiency of both student learning and campus operations.

Other guidelines in the development included the space to add classes and programs to respond to community needs for workforce training, the centralization of the arts, music and theater programs to act as a cultural hub and space to bring the Adult Basic Education programs to the main campus. The plan also calls for renovating current facilities to modernize them and open the classroom spaces to passersby. "The concept is to take the mystery out of the classroom experience and allow those who are walking the campus to view the learning

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taking place in our classrooms,” says Virginia Chisum, vice-president for business affairs at Odessa College. “In a real sense,” she said, “it’s Education-on-Display.”

Chisum has managed the process with the architectural firm over the last year. “Our core premise in the development was for our instructional facilities to mirror the work environments that students encounter in the workplace. We also need to provide more efficient access – students’ access to their classes, student organizations’ access to meeting spaces, adult basic education students’ access to higher education, community access to art and music, and the public’s access to the classroom.”

The college has been working on its facilities plans over the last five years. In 2005, the college developed a conceptual master plan, looking at growth and future needs. College architect of record, Johnson Seefeldt Architects, managed that process. In 2008, SHW did a condition assessment of the facilities to identify maintenance issues that needed to be addressed. The newly completed and adopted facility master plan will be the colleges’ roadmap for all future construction and renovation.