Falcon Center for Health, Education and Wellness
UW-River Falls
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ’s)

Q: What’s the schedule for the project?
A: The project schedule is being revised by the architect team at this time. However, the first major milestone in the design process is the acceptance of a concept plan, which is scheduled for February, 2013. The design process itself will begin in October, 2012.

Q: Why did the project name change from The Health, Human Performance and Recreation Center to the Falcon Center for Health, Education and Wellness?
A: Chancellor Van Galen felt that the project name was not inclusive of all primary users of the building nor of the various activities within the complex. While “HHP” was an easy acronym to remember with relevant on-campus meaning, there was little relevance off-campus. The new project name will assist us as we promote the project to donors and legislatures.

Q: Who is the architect?
A: The architect/engineer team is led by Ayres Associates, based primarily from their Eau Claire, Wisconsin office, in association with Hastings & Chivetta, a design firm from St. Louis, Missouri.

Q: How much will this building cost?
A: The construction budget for this project is $48,496,000. The total project cost, which includes “soft costs” such as design, supervision, contingency (unforeseen changes), and equipment, is $63,500,000.

Q: Who is paying for the project?
A: The State of Wisconsin is paying for a majority of this project - $50 million. The remainder of the funding comes from student fees, parking fees, and $2,056,000 comes from gifts through the UW-River Falls Foundation. Thank you to all for funding and supporting this vital campus project.

Q: Will I have a chance to comment on the design?
A: Everyone will have a variety of opportunities to comment on the design. During the design process, public meetings will be held. The campus will also host a website with information for the general public. Links will be provided for submitting comments electronically.

Q: Who will be operating the building? Who decides who gets priority use of the various rooms?
A: A formal decision on the operational model is expected in Fall 2012. Work then begins on developing the policies and procedures that will govern use of the building when it actually opens for use. A representative subset of individuals from Academics, Athletics, Recreation, and Facilities have been working the past couple of years on developing procedures for like areas in Karges and
Nelson that can serve as a test for what’s to come in the new Falcon Center (space usage, priority matrixes, etc.).

Q: What is in the project? What is being built?
A: The project replaces two main campus buildings: Karges Center, which houses the H&HP department, the gym, classrooms, and support facilities; and, the Emogene Nelson Building, which houses the strength and conditioning center as well as a classroom and fitness studio. Specifically, the project will construct a large gym, an auxiliary gym, fitness center, multi-purpose activity studios, locker rooms, offices, classrooms, an exercise physiology lab, jumping events space for Knowles, and spectator seating in Knowles. Site work includes 720 stalls of parking plus relocation of athletic fields as necessary to accommodate new building space and realigned and expanded parking.

Q: What’s the difference between a fitness center and strength and conditioning center?
A: The Fitness Center is a health, recreational, and social facility geared towards exercise, sports, and other physical activities. A successful facility will accommodate both the serious athlete and the casual recreational user. This facility should foster a safe, secure, and accessible environment.

Activities include organized group instructional programs such as spinning classes, yoga, and martial arts; organized and impromptu team sports; and individual fitness opportunities such as cardiovascular training, weight training, and swimming. The heart of the facility typically includes the following components:

Cardiovascular Equipment
Free weights and weight machines
Stretching/warm up/cool-down spaces
Indoor running track

The strength and conditioning center typically consists of student-athletes who are working towards improvement in the following areas:

Mechanics of Safe and Effective Exercise
• Plyometrics
• Speed and Agility
• Power
• Strength
• Developing the Core
• Balance and Coordination
• Cooling Down

The S&C Center is staffed by Strength and Conditioning Professionals certified and trained in improving athletic performance.

Q: Will we have two centers?
A: This decision has not been formalized, but the stakeholder interviews should provide a more clear direction as to what direction the Falcon Center will take. There are advantages and disadvantages associated with either concept.
Q: Are these separate or adjacent?
A: It is advisable for the Fitness Center to have adjacencies to other Recreation related spaces (IE. Multi-purpose rooms, running track, locker rooms, etc.) This decision whether these facilities are separate or adjacent has not yet been made.

Q: Aren’t we going to build a pool?
A: A pool is not a part of this formal first step in design and construction. The recently completed Master Plan which has a 20 year scope notes it as a possible second step. The design of the new Falcon Center is to take into consideration the possibility of one being added in the future. The current bonding authority of $63M for step one simply does not include enough additional funding to support the construction of a pool at this time.

Q: Why are Karges and Nelson being demolished?
A: Karges Center, constructed in 1959, and the Nelson Building, constructed in 1963, are functionally obsolete and in poor overall condition. Retrofitting these two buildings for other university purposes is not economically feasible.

Q: Why didn’t you consider moving Ramer Field closer to the new building to share restrooms and locker rooms?
A: The university did consider relocating Ramer Field closer to new building areas; however, the timing and cost of such a move made that option very problematic.

Q: Will Hunt Arena and the Knowles Center be remodeled as well?
A: Hunt Arena will receive new bleacher seating, plus the concessions area and offices will be remodeled. The locker/office area on the east side of Knowles will also be remodeled.

Q: Are you going to make improvements to existing facilities?
A: Yes, several notable improvements will be made both to the interior and exterior facilities. Knowles will receive several improvements that will generally facilitate better traffic flow and use of the facility. Hunt will likely see major improvements to the HVAC and bleacher systems. Form, finish, and function should generally be improved in all of the facilities. More specific information will be available as initial concepts are brought forward in the design process.

Q: Will Knowles have spectator seating?
A: It has been an issue since the facility was constructed in 1986 that additional space is desirable to effectively circulate the events hosted in the facility. The design team will look at cost effective ways to improve circulation and provide additional space for placing additional seating solutions on the outside of the track circumference during events.

Q: What will happen with the climbing wall? Is it being replaced?
A: Much discussion has been had with regard to the existing climbing wall at Knowles Center. Most constituents agree that it would be devastating to demolish the existing natural limestone wall located...
at the north end of the Knowles Center. It is also very apparent that climbing walls have evolved into very dynamic creations over the past quarter century. The decision to construct a new wall has not been made at this time, however it is advisable to explore the possibility of a new bouldering area with removable handholds and also constructing a new style climbing wall on a smaller scale, that will offer a unique architectural component in a highly trafficked area. A four sided pillar style climbing wall could be a nice compliment to the dated natural stone wall. It would also be desirable to locate Kinni Outdoor Adventures in close proximity to a new climbing wall to capitalize on the Outdoors patron and assist with oversight and programming.

Q: Is this building going to be a “green” building?
A: Modern design and construction methods yield buildings that are much more sustainable (green) than those constructed even ten years ago. The project is anticipated to receive a LEED-Silver rating from the US Green Building Council.

Q: Will the building have a green (vegetated) roof?
A: No, the project will not have a vegetated roof.

Q: Will the building produce more power than it consumes by installing solar energy systems?
A: No, the building will not produce more power than it consumes. However, the roof is being designed to accommodate solar panels in the future when the cost becomes more economical. A roof fully populated with solar panels cannot provide enough electrical energy for the building, so ground-mounted solar options for future installation will be explored.

Q: Will the building have a rainwater recycling system like the University Center?
A: The cost of such a system makes this uneconomical for this building type.

Q: What happened to the idea of a separate biomechanics lab?
A: The pre-design plan included a human performance lab that included space for biomechanics as well as exercise science. Although the possibility of a separate biomechanics lab was discussed last year, a decision was made by the Chancellor’s Cabinet not to pursue this option. The new building will have a multi-use, human performance lab.

Q: I heard that the dance program moved to the College of Arts and Sciences. Is this project still going to have a dance studio?
A: The dance program now is housed within the Department of Communication Studies and Theatre Arts. Because of this, it is unlikely the new building will have the dance-only studio that was part of the pre-design plan. The fitness studio will be designed for dance as well as other fitness activities. It will have a sprung floor and mirrors.

Q: What about recreation program office space? Will that be in Knowles?
A: Recreational Programming Space to house the Intramural, Sport Club, Outdoor Recreation, and Fitness components was not fully addressed during pre-design. This is a very important area that will
need to be flushed out during the design phase. Recreation serves over 60% of the student body and should be prominently represented in the design of the Falcon Center.

Q: Are we going to have a spinning room?
A: Albeit a fun and exciting concept, a spinning room with risers, specialized paint and sound and lighting schemes, are extremely inflexible and one dimensional. The design team has committed to building flexible multi-purpose space in the Falcon Center which is easily changed for multiple activities. Spinning will be alive and well in the new facility, but not in the form of a dedicated spinning room.

Q: How many racquetball courts will the building have?
A: We do not yet know how many racquetball courts will be part of the new building. However, the number likely will be less than what was in the pre-design plan. The demand for racquetball is not what it used to be.

Q: Will there be a walking track?
A: The addition of a walking track, in addition to the track in Knowles, has been discussed. While not currently in the scope of work, the design team and UWRF project team will look for opportunities to offer walking in corridors, concourses or mezzanines as the design develops.

Q: What about the athletic fields? Where will they be moved to?
A: Preliminary design layouts suggest relocating at least the softball field to land east of Ramer Field. Additional grass turf fields will be relocated east of Ramer Field as needed.

Q: Are the soccer fields being moved?
A: The varsity soccer field currently located south of Hunt Arena may need to be relocated to accommodate parking lot redesign; however, the intramural soccer fields should remain unaffected.

Q: Are the tennis courts being moved?
A: The current thought is to leave the tennis courts where they are. However, if the land is needed for building construction, then the tennis courts will be relocated.

Q: Is the softball field being moved?
A: Most likely the softball field will need to be moved to land east of Ramer Field.

Q: Will relocated fields have a year to grow before we play on them?
A: The University has requested relocating athletic fields a year in advance of other construction in order to give replacement turf time to establish itself. It is unknown at this time if this will be feasible.

Q: Are we getting artificial turf?
A: Artificial turf is a resource that is highly desired with the new facility due in part to the loss of existing fields, reduced labor and equipment to maintain, and the multifunctional applications that can be performed on it. The existing program statement does include artificial turf grass, but it has not
been determined where and how much will be installed. There is a strong possibility of installing one
of the turf fields on the exiting Ramer Field sight and a second field more likely located within the
existing IM Complex.

Q: Will there be more parking?
A: The Falcon Center site will receive more parking. Currently there are 400 spaces serving the
complex. When finished, the site will provide at least 720 stalls of parking.

Q: Where can I get more information about the project?
A: The best place to obtain current information is at the project website:
http://www.uwrf.edu/FalconCenter/