

The Commons to bring new multipurpose space to students

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The Tulane University Commons is currently under construction and slated to open its doors in 2019. Consisting of three stories and boasting 77,000 square-foot of area, the Commons will include multipurpose meeting places and a larger dining space to accommodate Tulane's growing student body.

Connected to the Lavin-Bernick Center for University Life by a second-floor walkway, the first two floors of the new facility will comprise a dining hall to replace the one currently located in Bruff Commons. The dining area will offer multiple dining options, seating for 1,100 people and extensive views of the LBC Quadrangle and the surrounding landscape.

"We have needed a new dining hall for several years," Lisa Norris, director of Dining and Auxiliary Services, said. "Bruff can only seat 440 diners, and we do around 6,500 transactions per day. The new dining facilities in the Commons will better accommodate our student population and their needs."

Besides serving as a place to eat, the dining hall will provide patrons with open viewing of their food preparation to facilitate student-staff interaction.

"There are a few behind-the-scenes additions that might not be readily noticeable to students, including an on-site butcher shop and bake shop," Norris said. "These two features will allow Dining Services to design internship programs with the local and national culinary schools, which should take us to the next level in our culinary offerings."

Norris assures students that many of the popular dining stations offered at Bruff will also be offered at the new dining hall. She said some of these stations will even be duplicated to reduce the extensive lines students currently encounter.

Additionally, new stations will be featured in the Commons. For instance, a Test Kitchen will be provided in the dining hall plan, where students will be able to learn about food preparation and New Orleans' food culture from local chefs.

"The feature that I think will most excite students will be the

chef's table/demonstration cooking station," Norris said. "This will allow us to bring in guest chefs from the community as well as showcase our own culinary staff."

Another goal of the Commons is to provide student groups with more opportunities to set up and take part in extracurricular programs, thereby relieving strain on the LBC to meet the demands of students or groups looking for space to conduct events.

The topmost level of the Commons will be occupied by the Newcomb College Institute and will feature offices, study spaces, two classrooms, and an event space for films and presentations large enough to contain 75-100 people. From the third floor, students will be met with views of downtown New Orleans, Howard-Tilton Memorial Library and Newcomb Place.

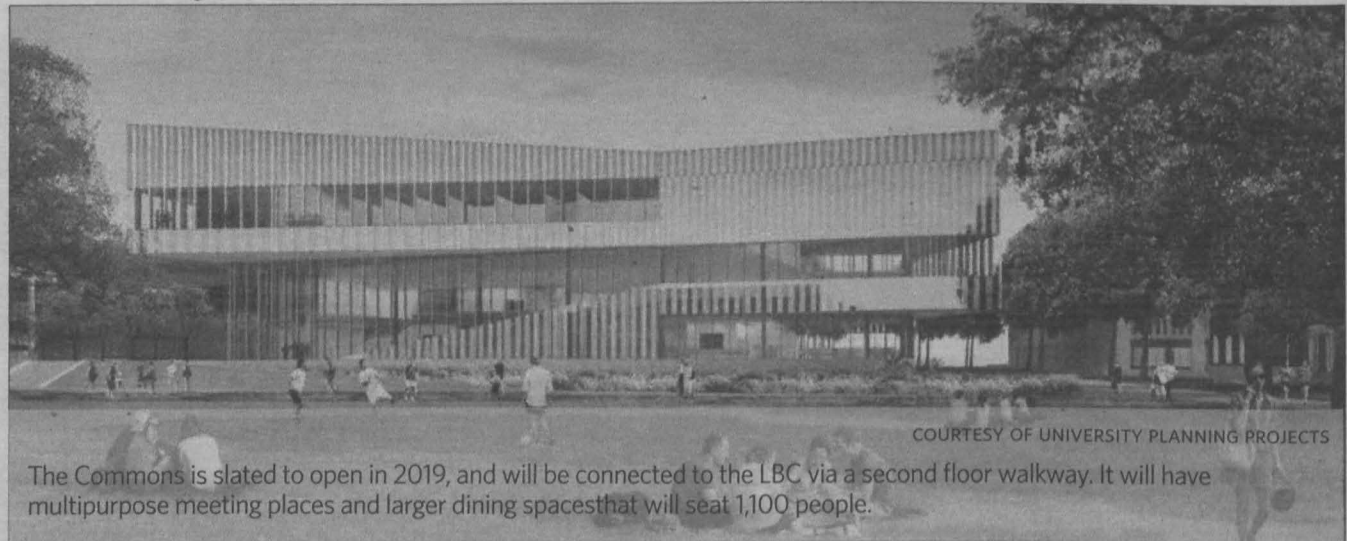
The third floor will also house a library and archives with a 32-seat reading room where special artifacts can be displayed, as well as an open-air courtyard, all of which will be visible from the second floor dining area.

With no need for the dining space currently in existence, plans have been made to demolish Bruff Commons to create a more cohesive and engaged housing plan. This also means the other services located within Bruff Commons, such as McAlister Market and Mail Services, will have to be relocated.

Though it is unclear where Tulane's well-known marketplace will move, it is certain the mailroom will not be located in the new Commons building. Instead, it will most likely be housed in a temporary location until a permanent home can be found.

"I think, at least during the transition, it's going to make things a little bit complicated because it is going to be kind of a longer process," junior Cameron Cooper, a mailroom worker, said.

The highly anticipated addition to Tulane's campus is expected to cost \$55 million dollars. Funding for the Commons is expected to come from Tulane's fundraising initiative, Only the Audacious.



COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY PLANNING PROJECTS

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Biomedical engineering expert and TED Senior Fellow Nina Tandon is at the cutting edge of science, where sci-fi meets reality. She is the CEO and co-founder of EpiBone, the world's first company growing living human bones for skeletal reconstruction, and studies the new frontier of biotech: homes, textiles, and videogames made of cells.

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