

COLLEGE COMES CLOSER

CAL STATE L.A.'S NEW DOWNTOWN CAMPUS OFFERS STATE-OF-THE-ART CONVENIENCE

BY PAUL ROGERS



California State University, Los Angeles (Cal State L.A.) has been serving Angelenos as the city's public university for nearly 70 years. With the opening of its new Downtown L.A. campus in January, it is now more comprehensive and convenient than ever.

"Our mission is to provide high-quality university teaching in the heart of Los Angeles," said Cal State L.A. President William A. Covino. "We will bring the resources of Cal State L.A. to students downtown, where they work and live."

The creation of the new facility aligns with Cal State L.A.'s mission as a public university committed to engagement, service, and the overall public good.

"The opening of a Downtown campus allows us to better serve the higher

education needs of those living and working in L.A.," said Dr. Eric Bullard, Dean of Cal State L.A.'s College of Professional and Global Education.

"It also signals to the community that Cal State L.A. is committed to serving the needs of the local-area workforce and workplaces by providing training and degree opportunities for individuals, and corporate education for businesses, non-profits, and governmental agencies."

Established in 1947 (as Los Angeles State College of Applied Arts and Sciences), Cal State L.A. has an enrollment of nearly 28,000 students served by more than 1,000 academic staff. It offers 129 types of Bachelor's degrees, 112 different Master's degrees, three Doctoral degrees (Ph.D. in special education, Doctor of Education, and Doctor of Nursing Practice), and 22 teaching credentials.

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Cal State LA DTLA CAMPUS.22 courtesy of Cal State LA

Based at a 175-acre urban campus in the University Hills district of eastern Los Angeles, Cal State L.A. was ranked at #24 in Time magazine's top 100 colleges and universities in 2014, and last year at number 8 nationally in Washington Monthly's College Guide for top Master's Universities.

Under Covino's leadership, Cal State L.A. worked for two years to identify and secure an appropriate location for a Downtown Los Angeles (DTLA) campus. The result is a 22,000-square-foot, 6th-floor facility at West Eighth Street and South Grand Avenue – on the edge of L.A.'s Financial District and at the heart of the Downtown's residential development boom. Indeed, the recent revitalization of Downtown L.A. provided part of the impetus for the opening of the new site.

"We also recognize that many individuals are unable to access higher education because of a variety of factors, including family and work commitments, as well as urban congestion and traffic," Bullard explained. "The Downtown campus is only 5 miles from our main [University Hills] campus; however, depending on traffic, it could take upward of 45 minutes to travel to our main-campus location."

So the DTLA campus is a case of Cal State L.A. coming to Angelenos, rather than obliging them to travel, endure traffic, and secure parking in order to further their education. The new facility, which makes Cal State L.A. the only public university offering degree programs in DTLA, includes state-of-the-art classrooms, computer labs, collaboration rooms, and lounges.

"Many of our classrooms feature videoconferencing capabilities, digital lecture capture, and smart boards. This technology enables students and faculty to seamlessly collaborate and share ideas," said Bullard. "We also offer students several collaboration rooms – spaces that enable them to share their computer desktops, collaborate on assignments and projects, and to videoconference with students and faculty across the globe."

In addition to undergraduate and graduate degree programs, Cal State L.A.'s DTLA campus offers certificate programs, public seminars, and personal enrichment courses. Furthermore, the facility provides invaluable educational space for local businesses, non-profits, and governmental agencies. For example, it has already hosted several meetings for Cal State L.A.'s partners, such as the new student orientation for the incoming 2016 Southern California Leadership Network's class for Leadership L.A.

"The Downtown campus is geared toward serving non-traditional students, those who are working full-time, those seeking career advancement, or those in career transition," said Bullard. "Campus programming also is aimed at providing lifelong learning opportunities for Angelenos, such as non-credit courses in the History of Los Angeles, Conversational Mandarin, and Screenwriting."

Several of the programs and courses offered at Cal State L.A.'s Downtown campus incorporate elements specific to a major urban environment like Los Angeles, including sustainability and diversity.

"We are working with our faculty to develop content that will address

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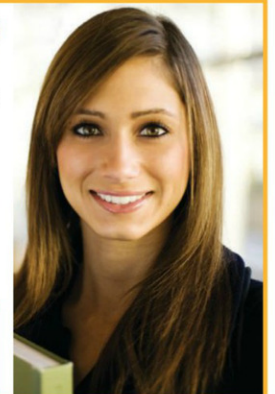
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urban sustainability in certificate and degree programs. These efforts are being undertaken by faculty who work in our campus Center for Urban Sustainability and Energy,” said Bullard.

“Additionally, it is important for us to recognize and focus on diversity. Fostering a climate of understanding is critical to ensuring the future success of Los Angeles and Angelenos. Cal State L.A. is a beacon of diversity, representing many cultures, backgrounds, and viewpoints. As such, we feel it part of our mission to create safe and unbiased environments to facilitate dialogue amongst these unique individuals and cultures.”

Cal State L.A. is also a Hispanic-serving institution (HSI), meaning that it participates in a federal program designed to assist colleges and universities that attempt to assist first-generation, majority low-income Hispanic students.

To keep its programs relevant and timely, Cal State L.A. works with local area partners, its alumni network, and college and curriculum advisory councils to ensure that its curricula fulfill the current needs of an ever-evolving global economy.

Although Cal State L.A.’s Downtown campus only opened its doors on January 25 (a formal grand opening is imminent), there are already plans afoot for its enhancement and possible expansion.

“Over the next several months and during the years ahead, we will be adding new certificate, bachelor’s degree completion, and master’s programs that meet the needs of the local-area,” Bullard revealed.

“Based on our projected growth, we will very likely expand our footprint within the current facility. As part of our 10-year lease, Cal State L.A. has the option of securing an additional 44,000 square feet of classroom and administrative office space at 801 South Grand Avenue.”

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