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Cajun Field May Have 9,000 New Student Side Seats

(Editor's Note: This is the second of two parts on USL's plans for future development.)

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Advertiser State Editor

Baton Rouge - When students flock into Cajun Field for a football game in 1990, there will be 9,000 additional seats on their side of the stadium.

Over on the campus, students will be attending classes in a newly renovated and expanded communications complex, workers will be finishing up the renovation of F.G. Mouton Hall and work will be underway on the renovation of several residence halls. At the USL farm in Cade, agriculture students will be performing experiments in newly constructed labs.

These are some of the university's five-year plans as listed in its capital outlay budget request approved last week by the Board of Trustees for State Colleges and Universities.

A New Computer

Other projects expected to be completed by 1990 are installation of a new computer system; renovation of Hamilton Hall to house agriculture and home economics; construction of a new industrial arts building; a new facility to house operations and maintenance; and new classrooms and offices for business administration, computer science and engineering.

Completion of the students' side of Cajun Field has been a goal of the university since the facility was started in 1970. It has been in the long-range plans since then and funds will be sought for the work during the 1986 legislative session. USL is asking for $525,000 in 1986 to get started and another $5.5 million in 1987 to complete the work.

All the foundation work and support already are in place. That was taken care of in the original construction in 1970.

Increase Seating

The addition will increase seating from 24,000 to 33,000, which is a need based on projected attendance as a NCAA Division I-A school.

Officials estimate it will take about a year to complete the work once funds are allocated. In all, the project will cost $6 million.

Students enrolled in communications, theater, public relations and communicative disorders classes can look forward to improved facilities.

The departments of communications and communicative disorders are now housed in Burke Hall, which is "over crowded, inefficient and academically insufficient," the budget request said.

Enrollment in both departments is expected to increase rapidly and more room is needed. Each semester, about 300 enrollment requests for communication-related courses are turned down because of lack of space.

One At A Time

The $4 million construction project will be divided over three years starting in 1986. It will involve the addition of 40,000 square feet to Burke Hall and renovation of 10,000 square feet of existing space.

Included will be offices, classrooms, television labs, stages, a photo darkroom, a radar station and therapy room.

The re-establishment of agriculture laboratories at the USL farm in Cade also is included in the plans. The experiments will serve

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sugar cane, rice, soy bean, crawfish, dairy and vegetable farmers, as well as thoroughbred horse breeders in surrounding parishes.

Cost of setting up the lab at USL new farm near Cade is estimated at $4.2 million, to be split between 1987 and 1988.

Land for the lab already has been purchased.

Depends On Legislature

The request for funds to renovate F.G. Mouton Hall is dependent upon the Legislature approving funds for constructing a new business, computer science and engineering building. If that project is approved, $3.6 million will be sought for the Mouton renovation in 1987 and 1988.

The building, which is now used for business administration classrooms, will be continued to be used as classroom space.

Also included in the five-year plan is the renovation of Evangeline, Buchanan, Harris and Randolph dormitories. The work includes lowering the ceiling and installing plumbing, heating, airconditioning and ventilation. Two new air conditioning chillers will looped to Bonin Hall.

The air conditioning for the older dorms was proposed as far back as 1974. “Plumbing and heating in these facilities has deteriorated to the point of being both unsafe and ineffective,” the budget request says.

The improvements are expected to cost $2.1 million and are to be requested in 1988 and 1989.