



PRESS RELEASE

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Photos available

Executive Learning Classroom at the Haas School of Business, University of California, Berkeley
Architects: Goring & Straja Architects, Emeryville, CA [www.gasarchitects.com]
Multimedia/audiovisual, acoustics: Shen Milsom & Wilke/Paoletti, San Francisco; Ben Shemuel, project manager
Size: 2,600 square feet
Completion: September 2003

Classroom Leverages Knowledge at the Haas School of Business

Shen Milsom & Wilke designs sophisticated technology for B-school distance education.

The Haas School of Business educates a range of students--from Fortune 100 executives to undergraduates--seeking business-related degrees. To improve upon its already well-respected curriculum, the school recently added a 75-seat distance-learning classroom. The classroom allows the school to leverage its faculty and expertise and extend its business education to students within the UC system and around the world.

Another use of the classroom is the expansion of the Young Entrepreneurs at Haas (YEAH) program, which teaches underserved middle school and high school students in the San Francisco Bay Area about business, economics, and entrepreneurship, and offers college preparation skills.

Made by combining two existing classrooms, the new classroom includes a sound system and microphones that provide clear voice reproduction to distant class participants. Two 120-inch screens and a high-resolution video projection system display crisp, clear images of the instructors' materials as well as far-end class participants.

A digital annotation tablet allows instructors to whiteboard and to highlight computer content. Images of the whiteboard content are simultaneously displayed on the local screens and transmitted to distant participants. An in-ceiling document camera transmits hard copy and transparencies. Tracking cameras automatically transmit images of students and instructors.

A control room, adjacent to the lectern, allows technicians to control the AV system for productions of greater complexity. Cameras and microphones automatically select the speaking student via the automatic mixers, working in conjunction with the control system. The instructor camera is aimed through the use of sensors concealed beneath the carpeting. The control system is Web-enabled; technicians can monitor and control the AV system from various locations, both on- or off-site.

The university was concerned about potential theft or vandalism to the student microphones. Shen Milsom & Wilke provided an enclosure design that protects these devices, making it difficult for unauthorized persons to remove or damage them.

Finally, Shen Milsom & Wilke's acoustics consultant worked with the architect to choose materials that would eliminate distracting echoes--a particular concern given the semicircular layout of the room and large proportion of hard surfaces. These materials also maximize the attractiveness of the space and create a desirable on-camera appearance.

Shen Milsom & Wilke [www.smwinc.com], an international technology consulting practice founded in 1986, offers comprehensive services in the areas of multimedia/audiovisual, information technology/telecommunications, building security, and acoustics. The firm has offices in New York, Princeton, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Houston, Denver, San Francisco, Las Vegas, London, Dubai, and Hong Kong, and a staff of more than 140 professionals. Shen Milsom & Wilke was named one of the 100 fastest growing A/E/P firms in the nation by Zweig White & Associates for the years 2001, 2002, and 2003.