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Clark College students linger in the foyer of the school's new Clark Center, which opened Tuesday on the Washington State University Vancouver campus. The state-of-the-art facility will house Clark's nursing studies program, and could eventually serve 800 students and faculty. The center also boasts physics and chemistry labs, classrooms and faculty office space.

CLARK CENTER DEBUTS AT WSUV

By **HOWARD BUCK**
Columbian staff writer

Tuesday was opening day in the spanking-new, \$19.8 million Clark Center at Washington State University Vancouver's campus in Salmon Creek, but the principal actors in Room 206 were lifeless, dead to the world.

Not for much longer: In a few days, the mannequins in the building's spacious nursing lab should spring to life.

Ultrarealistic and computer controlled, the human stand-ins will breathe, throb with a pulse, allow

New building houses nursing program, much more

students to draw "blood" and inject medications. A female version can even give birth to an infant simulator.

Sensors will let instructors track students' pokes and probes to see if training protocols are followed. If that weren't enough, video cameras will spy on every move for the benefit of teachers and classmates.

The nursing lab is easily the shining star of Clark College's long-awaited, bold presence on the WSUV campus. Mimicking a func-

tioning hospital with its separate emergency room, operating room and birthing suites, it will serve all 240 Clark nursing students, who began their winter quarter on Tuesday.

But every new physics and chemistry lab, classroom and faculty office in the building is equally state of the art, putting smiles on lots of faces.

"It's a great building. We're all so excited to get it going," said Robin Terjeson, who helped guide

lost students and instructors early Tuesday.

Clark's dean for mathematics, physical sciences and engineering, who also taught chemistry at Clark for 30 years, Terjeson helped design the building from scratch. Seeing an early favorable response has been no less gratifying.

Once slated to hold a comprehensive engineering and science institute linking WSUV, Clark and Lower Columbia College students, the Clark Center's role has shifted

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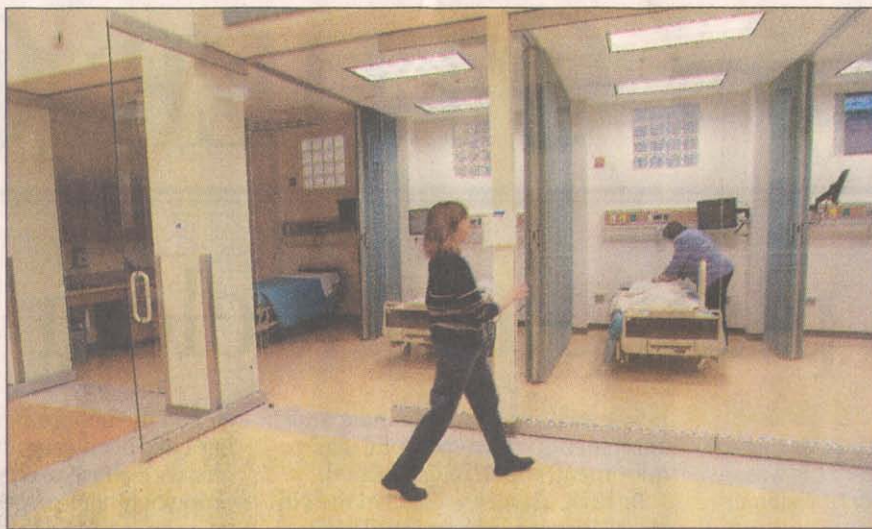
a bit. It will house Clark's nursing program, previously scattered in classrooms and labs across the school's Central Park campus in Vancouver. Besides several science labs, there are more classrooms for lower-division English, history, psychology and Spanish courses being taken by Clark students who intend to complete their four-year degree at WSUV.

This winter, about 400 to 500 students will use Clark Center; more than 800 students should eventually call it home. Also featuring a sandwich shop, an exercise room and stunning views of Mount St. Helens and Mount Hood, the three-story facility has space for all.

"It's beautiful. It's big. Everything is new," said Melissa Bland, who is tackling nursing studies after two years of prerequisite courses at Clark's downtown Vancouver campus.

Classmate Danielle Coates admired well-appointed classrooms, peering in to see new computers and lab equipment. "It's awesome," she said. It's a far cry from Clark, where 40 students often packed into one classroom, she added.

Orchards residents Bland and Coates enjoyed a much shorter commute on Tuesday — even if WSUV's parking fees run a bit higher. They'll also like taking exams in the build-



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ing's own testing center instead of scampering across campus, as they did before.

Toni Fulkerson, testing center coordinator, used to make do with just 17 computers "in a little cubbyhole down in Gaiser Hall" in Vancouver, she said. Now, a wide room with 40 flat-screen monitors can handle the long series of nursing exams, including paper-and-pencil tests, that can push her total to 1,200 tests per quarter.

Physics instructor Peggy Hartsell is tickled with her new classroom and office: At last, plenty of whiteboard (today's version of chalkboard) on which to write equations; and a solid maple office door.

Last year, she shared cubicle space with six other instructors, which made writing her exams quite the challenge, she said.

"A door! A door is so nice," said Hartsell.

And what physics instructor could resist mounting a few "The Far Side" comic strips by the door frame? "First cartoons in the building," she boasted.

Built at the north end of WSUV's expanding thicket of rust-orange brick and green-metal-roofed buildings, next to the Engineering/Life Sciences Building, the Clark Center will get more company before long.

Wooden stakes in the grass just north mark the site of a new Student Services Building, where construction should soon begin. Due to open in 2007, the WSUV building will hold advising, counseling and registration offices, quite convenient to Clark Center users.

When the 2007 Washington

Instructors B.J. Brunner, left, and Cindy Meyers — both registered nurses — set up the nursing lab at Clark College's new Clark Center building on the Washington State University Vancouver campus. The lab simulates a hospital wing.

Legislature convenes, WSUV will seek construction dollars for its next classroom building, planned farther south on its Mount Hood-oriented corridor. At a cost of \$28 million to \$30 million, it would house many of the 200 freshman and sophomore students WSUV has won permission to enroll as four-year students, starting this fall. They will add to the equivalent of 1,960 full-time students WSUV serves today.

WSUV officials also will try in 2007 to win design money for a new applied technologies-electrical engineering building. That building would rise on the north campus corridor aligned with Mount St. Helens.

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