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Christina Wikner uses an extension bar to tighten a connector plate bolt to the main beam. BRIAN HENDRICKSON/Emerald

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Design: Experience benefits environment too

Continued from Page 1
ing architecture and landscape architecture students together, and we're restoring the bridge and stream way."

The goal of the studio is to provide students with experience in taking a project from design through completion. And the students are loving their time outside.

"This is a completely new experience," said Mark Serhus, also a fifth-year architecture student. "In a design-build, you can deal with the problems as they come up because you are both the designer and the contractor. And there is a definite design-build movement in the field right now."

Kristina Koltavary, a second-year graduate student, said "it's fun to see the design materialize. It's a great learning experience — to apply what I've been doing on paper. I have some previous construction experience, but the teachers are encouraging us to do stuff we haven't done before, which is great!"

The design-build project gives students a more marketable set of skills, said Will Sturges, co-teacher and licensed architect for the class.

"The project is giving the students some familiarity with tools, so it won't be this big mystery when they go to a construction site in the future," Sturges said. "And the students are gaining confidence working with the methods and materials of construction."

"The purpose of the project is to improve pedestrian safety across the millrace, and to improve the environmental condition of the millrace," said Stan Jones, landscape architecture professor and co-teacher of the class. "My goal is to have the students see a connection between the things they design and what gets built."

"Which will make the students think about design in a much more holistic way," he said. "It has opened their eyes to the lessons of construction."

The project was offered to the design-build class by the University Physical Plant, the public works department for the campus, when the plant discovered that the existing bridge was unsafe for pedestrians. So, the plant decided to build another bridge for people only, and to rebuild the nearby stream bank because the high amount of duck feeding along the millrace had



Using a trowel, Jake Freauff smooths the corners on a new sidewalk that will connect the bridge to the existing walkways and crosswalk. BRIAN HENDRICKSON/Emerald

caused erosion.

"This project is a microcosm of all the real work and problems of a 'real' construction site," said George Hecht, director of the Physical Plant. "The students are professionals, and they are working like demons making the project come to life. When the bridge is done, it will become a keynote area on campus."

The students also believe that the bridge they are creating will be a monument to Eugene.

"We're getting to build something for the school and the community," said Erich Mele, a third-year architecture student.

Hecht said the University saved from \$50,000 to \$100,000 using the students as a work force instead of hiring an outside team of designers, contractors and laborers.

"The University made the most of their resources," co-teacher Sturges said.

Spring term 1995, Sturges taught a seminar with 50 students, where the footbridge was designed.

Students in the summer class, taught by Jones and Sturges, have

maintained a rigorous schedule, developing the remaining designs for the project in a little over a week.

On the first day of summer session, the students were divided into 10 groups of three and were told to brainstorm ideas for the area. On the second and third days, the groups presented their plans to their peers. On the fourth day, the students took the 10 designs and came up with a consensus design, using the best ideas from each of the 10 plans. Midway through the second week, the students began doing site work, excavation and layout.

Since the second week, the students have excavated trenches, built tresses for the bridge, poured concrete and built reed rolls, which are the foundation of a new stream bank.

Also, access at the site will be improved through the construction of retaining walls and pedestrian pathways, which will be enhanced by Oregon-native plants.

The target completion date is Aug. 4, if the weather permits, and the students are on schedule.

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