

Butcher demolition begins

Isabel Ayala
Copy Editor

First proposed in the 2014 Campus Master Plan, the demolition of the Butcher Education Center will be completed this year. The project was out for bid during the Fall of 2023, which Midland Wrecking won, according to Director of Media Relations and Internal Communications Gwen Larson. The contract with the Kansas City-based company was secured for \$688,122.

“One of the first steps that needs to happen is work inside to safely remove asbestos materials,” Larson said. Before the start of the semester, fencing was put up around the

building and material was beginning to be removed from inside.

Another thing that will have to happen before the full demolition is the addition of a boiler in Visser Hall.

“[The campus heating system] is a steam system,” explained Larson, “and we’ve got lines under campus to connect buildings.” With the removal of Butcher there would be lines connecting Visser Hall to Cremer Hall; therefore, a boiler will be added to Visser directly. The major demolition will occur afterward.

According to Larson, this will begin around late February. It is anticipated that the sidewalk south of Butcher and along 15th

Ave will be blocked for truck traffic. 15th Ave. will not be closed, nor will the sidewalks or parking lot along Morse Drive.

For safety reasons, it is recommended that anyone who needs to cross Merchant St. going to and from classes use the sidewalk adjacent to Cremer Hall, and then cross 15th Ave. before using the Merchant St. crosswalk.

Larson confirmed that the plan for the cleared area is still green space. Landscaping for this will be handled by campus facilities. The project will likely be completed before the end of the school year.



PHOTO BY MADDIE CARR |
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(Above) A “danger” sign hangs on the fence surrounding Butcher Education Center as demolition of the building begins. (Left) Demolition debris lays in the grass of Butcher Education Center’s former playground area on Jan. 31. Playground equipment still remains in the former space.

Intercultural Center to be built in Memorial Union

Kierra Koeber
Staff Writer

Emporia State is in the process of constructing a new intercultural center to be located in the Memorial Union, a project that has been ongoing since Aug. of 2021.

The center will include a student-staffed welcome center where students can learn about resources, such as student organizations and scholarships, and a conference room to be

used as a meeting space for diversity training staff and recognized student organizations. There will also be an interfaith space where students can pray or meditate and where the director and coordinators of the center will be located. In addition, there will be a lounge open to all students that will also house an intercultural library that can be converted into an event space.

The current diversity lounge is not frequently utilized by

students because it is not always unlocked and openly accessible during the Memorial Union’s hours of operation.

“My previous position before coming to ESU was running an intercultural center at a small college outside of Philadelphia,” Senior Diversity Officer and Assistant Dean Nyk Robertson said. “I saw the impact it had on students to have a space that felt like their own where they could connect with other people who had similar experi-

ences, and that also had institutional support behind it.”

Robertson said the absence of an intercultural center “felt like a big miss” for ESU and they think it’s important that the intercultural center is visible so all students, both current and prospective, so they know that ESU supports them.

“My hope with the center is for students to find a space they feel that they belong in, that they can connect with people who have similar experi-

ences as they do but also where people across differences can connect with each other,” they said.

Corky’s Cupboard has been moved to the basement of the Memorial Union to help make room for the intercultural center. The change of its location gives the cupboard access to a loading dock for faster unloading of donations. No university functions are being displaced for the project.