



Photo by Trevor Metcalfe- Editor and Chief

Air quality tests led to the discovery of mold in the Humanities Lecture Hall, which is now closed. Classes have been moved to Rhoades/Robinson room 125.

Lecture Hall under renovation following mold discovery

Shané Simhoni

ssimhoni@unca.edu - Staff Writer

Roof repairs and a musty smell spurred a long overdue cleaning and renovation of the Humanities Lecture Hall, one of UNC Asheville's most distinct larger spaces, according to university officials.

"Back in the middle of 2011, somewhere in there, we started getting a lot of complaints of odor issues in the Humanities Lecture Hall," said **David Todd, the director of facilities management and planning at UNCA**. "Other than the few leaks coming into the building that we had contained, we couldn't find anything, couldn't see anything."

After the repairs on the roof last summer, as well as extensive cleaning, the odor persisted, said Todd, an Asheville

native.

"We had an indoor air quality assessment done," Todd said. "They ran their test, and the results of the test came back and indicated that there was evidence of mold in the plaster material applied to the ceiling, inside of the seat cushions, in the carpet and in the HVAC ductwork."

The tests indicated the mold count in the ambient air totaled less than one-third of the amount in the outside air. However, Carmichael Hall showed no signs of mold after some minor renovations and cleaning, according to the industrial hygienists conducting the tests.

"We had them take core samples out of the ceiling material, we had them actually cut up a section of the carpet, we had them remove a seat cushion and we had them run inspec-

tion tools down to the ductwork and put out what they call spore traps," Todd said.

UNCA viewed the situation in the Humanities Lecture Hall as a priority and decided to take action, according to Todd.

"Extensive air quality test reports have shown no imminent health risks in the building," **Provost Jane Fernandes** said in an email announcement in October. "Out of an abundance of caution, I have decided to relocate classes to other spaces on campus."

UNCA has only four large areas available for lectures: Lipinsky Auditorium, Rhoades/Robinson Hall room 125, Karpen Hall room 38 and the Humanities Lecture Hall, according to **Patricia McClellan**, the assistant provost for academic administration.

"I am writing to make cer-

tain that you are aware that the Monday lecture for Humanities 124 classes has been moved from HLH 139 to Rhoades/Robinson (RRO) 125. This change is effective Monday, October 15, and will continue for the remainder of the semester," said McClellan in an email sent to students last fall.

Rhoades/Robinson room 125 has approximately half the amount of seats as the Humanities Lecture Hall, resulting in some humanities sections being moved to different rooms and night classes ending as late as 9:30 p.m., according to UNCA data.

"It seemed more precautionary than reactionary," said **Joseph Baker**, a sophomore who attended the humanities lectures last semester. "It was just a little bit more cramped, but everyone still attended the

lectures."

In addition to sections of Humanities 124, 214, 324 and 414, the closing of the Humanities Lecture Hall affected some art lectures, which relocated to a significantly smaller room in Karpen.

"It was of concern to me, because for the fall, I'm over at the art department, and the art department was holding its large first-year classes there," said **Gwen Ashburn, the dean of humanities and professor at UNCA**. "I certainly understood the decision."

The Humanities Lecture Hall, built in 1966, gives the university character, said Ashburn, a literature professor.

"I'm glad we are renovating it again. It's a funny-looking little building. It looks like

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