

## Landmark redesign

Architectural Studies students help revitalize the historic Lyceum Theatre



Proposal for lobby renovation by design student Constance Fitzgerald.

**E**ACH SEMESTER IN HIS STUDIO IV CLASS, Architectural Studies assistant professor Newton D'Souza searches for projects to give his interior design students a taste of what to expect when they enter the "real world." D'Souza found such a project last year when Arrow Rock's Lyceum Theatre began looking for designs to reinvigorate the 19th-century building's lobby and bar.

D'Souza's students brainstormed designs in line with the theatre's ultimate goal — a revamped lobby and bar area that attracts a younger crowd and increases revenue, but still maintains the character of the historic theatre's landmark architecture. D'Souza's 16 students traveled to the theatre for a field study, discussed the goals of the project in class, drafted their own redesign proposals and met with theatre management for a critique midway through

the semester.

At the end of the 2013 spring semester, D'Souza's students presented the full Lyceum Theatre Board of Directors 16 redesign proposals, using the department's Immersive Visualization Lab (iLab). With the lab's panoramic screen and 3D visualization technology, students guided Lyceum Board members through their virtual design proposals using animated walk-throughs.

"The whole process shows students what it's really like to go from inception, to concept boards to finished design proposals," D'Souza said. "The goal wasn't to have the Board choose between the multiple proposals we presented them but to give them a broad range of ideas and possibilities."

Meanwhile, D'Souza says, students gained experience communicating and conveying their ideas to non-designers — one of the most challenging



Field visit to Lyceum Theatre by Dr. D'Souza and his students.

steps in the design process, he says.

While the Lyceum Theatre Board has yet to determine a final re-design concept, the students' work will undoubtedly contribute to the final product, says Bea Smith, dean emerita of the College of Human Environmental Sciences and a

Lyceum Theatre Board member. "The students' work has informed the lobby invigoration process by presenting an array of provocative and thoughtful design concepts," Smith said. "Their thoughtful renderings and insightful observations stimulated the thinking of Lyceum board members."