

# UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS DENTON, TEXAS

## PROJECT PROFILE



SOUNDLOK® SOUND-ISOLATION ROOMS

***“The students love the VAE technology. They particularly enjoy being able to record themselves and track progress over the course of the semester or year. Music professors were also eager to listen to their students’ recordings and offer feedback”***

– Penny Gustafson,  
Assistant Director of Housing and  
Business Operations at UNT



SOUNDLOK® SOUND-ISOLATION ROOMS

## CHALLENGE

Students were using 45-year-old, practice rooms at Bruce Hall that had served students well for decades but were no longer providing the sound isolation required in music rooms.

## WENGER SOLUTION

Install 13 Wenger SoundLok® Sound-Isolation Rooms with new, updated Virtual Acoustic Environment (VAE®) technology.

## BENEFITS

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- Easy-to-access rooms in the basement of Bruce Hall, which houses musicians
- Superior sound isolation, keeping noise on the inside so as not to disturb other residents
- Built-in absorption and diffusion, enabling the musician to hear the best possible sound
- VAE technology, which allows the musician to learn how to adapt to performing in nine different performance spaces
- Ability to upload or download accompaniments, to simulate practicing with others in the band or choir
- Record and playback functionality, which gives musicians immediate feedback and allows them to track their progress over a semester or year
- Ability for music professors to listen to their students' recordings and offer feedback

## HIGHLIGHTS

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The University of North Texas (UNT) College of Music has the largest enrollment for public university music programs in the U.S. and is one of the world's most respected comprehensive music schools. Its Bruce Hall dormitory is home to the Music & Jazz Living Learning Communities and cultivates a rich, creative environment for all its residents. Since 1964, 100 UNT College of Music alumni have worked on projects nominated for Grammy Awards, and an incredible 53 of those have won the prestigious award.

One of the secrets to student success is supplying them with the equipment necessary to succeed. First-rate practice rooms with advanced acoustical technology fall into that category. To make sure students could get the most out of their practice time, the school partnered with Wenger to install brand new Wenger SoundLok® Sound-Isolation Rooms with the latest Virtual Acoustic Environment (VAE®) technology in Bruce Hall, home to hundreds of student musicians.

### **Remove and Refurbish**

UNT was one of the first schools in the country to install Wenger sound isolation practice rooms. For 45 years, those rooms served thousands of students well. But the rooms were in need of repairs. The college was interested in learning about new features and new technology that new rooms could provide.

"The design had changed significantly over the years, so we couldn't make repairs in a cost-effective way," explains Neal Jorgenson of Wenger Corporation. "The fans also weren't working very well anymore, so it was uncomfortable for the students in the rooms. UNT agreed to install new rooms to give the musicians a much better place to play."

Records indicated the old rooms had been used 6,700 times in the 2016-2017 academic year alone. It was no wonder they needed replacing.

The process began with a site visit so that Jorgenson could see the existing practice rooms. Right away, he noticed a big problem.

"There were some 9-foot high beams in the rooms that we needed to tear out," Jorgenson says. "We need at least ten feet of height, so we drew up the plans, got some feedback from UNT, and had to vet everything through the fire marshal. Then we began tearing out the old rooms and making room for the new."

### **Install and Instruct**

Jorgenson's team installed 13 Wenger SoundLok® Sound-Isolation Rooms with built-in VAE technology.

VAE technology offers more realistic acoustical simulations, creating the sensation of being enveloped by the sound. This innovative approach enables musicians to hear themselves in various performance venues, from a large recital hall to a cathedral to a small auditorium. VAE allows the musicians to record and play back their practice sessions, helping them adapt and improve their performance. Those recordings can also be downloaded to other devices for sharing or performing accompaniments.

The sound isolation rooms are quieter than any other on the market. They're also strategically located in the basement of Bruce Hall, allowing its residents to practice at any time of day without disturbing anyone nearby.

VAE technology also allows teachers to follow the assessment strategy recommended in the National Standards for Music Education, and increase their ability to evaluate the progress of more students in less time.

"The students were very excited to explore this technology," explains Penny Gustafson, Assistant Director of Housing and Business Operations at UNT. "Given the creative drive of our typical music majors, we were confident that these rooms would be beneficial."

The final step was for a team of acoustical equipment experts to show the students and teachers how to use the system to maximize its benefits.

### **New Rooms, Clear Sound**

The new rooms were a big hit.

"The students love the VAE technology," Gustafson says. "They particularly enjoy being able to record themselves and track progress over the course of the semester or year. Music professors were also eager to listen to their students' recordings and offer feedback."

Gustafson says students have also found the spaces useful for recording podcasts, music for personal projects, or sound clips for film. The rooms are used an average of 500 hours each week. Because of their popularity, UNT had to implement a one-hour limit per person to give all residents an opportunity to use the rooms.

The practice rooms are also used as a recruiting tool, providing a major draw for prospective freshmen music majors and their families when considering their options for undergraduate music studies.

Throughout the process, Gustafson appreciated the customer service Jorgenson provided.

"Neal has been extremely informative, patient, and supportive," Gustafson says. "When we hit bumps in the road with project management, we called on him to intervene, and he always took care of us."

### **Long List of Wenger Products**

The SoundLok practice rooms join other Wenger Corporation products elsewhere on campus. The auditorium boasts a beautiful Diva® Full Stage Acoustical Shell to help both performers on stage and audience members hear the best possible sound. The rooms also contain StageTek® seated risers, as well as musician and cello chairs and Wenger's Classic 50® Music Stands.

On the athletics side, GearBoss® lockers give the basketball, soccer, and track teams first-rate rooms to gear up for the game and wind down after.

Wenger Corporation's hallmark with all of its brands is to build quality, durable, lasting products that stand the test of time.

SoundLok rooms that lasted 45 years prove the point. And now, the new and improved rooms will serve thousands of future students for many more years to come.



SOUNDLOK® SOUND-ISOLATION ROOMS





SOUNDLOK® SOUND-ISOLATION ROOMS

## PRODUCT LIST

Wenger SoundLok® Sound Isolation Rooms with VAE® Technology, StageTek® Seated Risers, UltraStor® Instrument Storage Cabinets, Classic 50® Music Stands, Nota® ConBrio® and Musician Chairs.

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