

Research Summary

The purpose of this research is to provide a basis for our five main goals toward creating a successful educational space. The first goal is to accommodate online and traditional courses and to facilitate activities that occur during normal class times. Such activities require learning spaces that provide convenient access to internet and electronic devices. This educational space also needs furnishings that are flexible and able to be adapted to suit the need of various pedagogies and the integration of technology. We also want to create a safe and comfortable environment to promote education and creativity. Our fourth goal is to keep students, staff and visitors focused and engaged. In the end, this educational space should last or endure over time.

By providing a space that integrates current and future technology, students will be able to expand their learning process. It is also a key for creating new learning activities and styles. Students and teachers are now able to interact with one another in ways that was once never thought possible. Information is in abundance and students can access it almost anywhere with an electronic device. Technological advances constantly shape the design of the physical learning environment. Therefore, a safe and a creative environment must integrate current and future technology.

With designing a flexible lecture space, we need to step away from the traditional formal lecture hall and step into modern learning spaces which need to be able to be changed to suit the needs of the students and professors. According to Weaver (2006), “the key principle of flexibility was born in the context of providing an integrated learning environment capable of supporting the modern student experience,” (p.112). By this philosophy flexibility also refers to the ability to adapt to students who receive knowledge from one of the three ways: visually, aurally and kinesthetically.

Another goal for creating this educational space is to make sure students and teachers are engaged and excited in the space. The elements that will have direct influence on attention are: noise, color, lighting and temperature. Unwanted sound level can distract students and cause them to lose their focus. Color and light are another psychological factor that has a profound impact on one’s attention. For example, light colors have calming effects, while bright colors keep students awake. Researchers have also found that schools using full-spectrum lighting have a higher success in academic achievement (Veltri et al., 2006; Lei, 2010, p.131).

In the end, this educational space will last and endure over time. All the material and finish designs will last longer than what have traditionally been. In addition to being enduring, the design needs to respect the historical setting while still relating to the design of the architecture of the building. By developing a layout plan that will work to accommodate thirty students, we aim to create a space that will be enjoyed and used by everyone. By implementing the principles of design: rhythm, balance and scale (interior design, 2012), the space will come together to form a long lasting and effective environment.

References

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