

Informal Group on Learning Spaces – Meeting Notes
Feb 9, 2012
18 attendees
Leslie Hammersmith

Agenda 2/9/12:

1. Introductions
2. Review proposed agenda and approve discussion topics for the semester
3. General Discussion
4. Participant Updates

Spring 2012 Topic Schedule:

- Feb 9: Re-Introductions and Setting Topics
- Feb 23: Doris Reeser and her student Al Ochsner will present information they compiled about general assignment classroom components from peer institutions and give an overview of the \$60M Instructional Space Improvement.
- March 8: “Learning Spaces of the Future” Discussion
- March 22: SDRP tour and discussion of Participatory Design Process In Planning Learning Spaces
- April 5: The UGLY Tour
- April 19: Reflection and Review of Big 10 Best Practices
- May 3: Special Lincoln Hall tour

(Dates to remember: June 7 = IT Pro Forum)

Group Project This Semester:

“Big 10 Best Practices”

This semester our group will start a collection of photos and information from peer institutions to improve our understanding of how other institutions manage spaces, including building an understanding of what “average” spaces at other institutions look like and comparing the differences between departmentally-owned and general assignment classrooms at other campuses.

- Each person participating in this project will submit 2 photos from a campus and explain the spaces shown in the picture.
- We will use a Flickr group to manage this collection. More information to come later.

Preparing for the UGLY Tour

Leslie Hammersmith will set up a submission process for participants to submit candidates to be placed on the UGLY Tour. The group will vote on which places to visit. More information to come in March.

General Discussion:

Why are department spaces better than general assignment spaces?

General answers volunteered by participants:

Money

Scope

Dept spaces built to meet specific needs of a department,

General Assignment spaces need to meet needs from many different uses, needs.

Answer provided by Doris Reeser (F&S):

It comes down to it that departments can focus their resources, while general assignment classroom projects are about doing things in a broad way that usually take a huge initiative and lots of planning.

Balancing capacity with flexibility.

How much flexibility is enough?

The preferences for flexibility and how much flexibility are going to change from discipline to discipline. In an environment where there is tremendous pressure to increase enrollment, the trend toward increased flexibility may conflict with other priorities. It takes more space per person to create an effective flexible learning space and many administrators and space planners do not want to lose the seats.

“One of the biggest misconceptions is that the Lincoln Hall building is going to be flush with new space, but that is not true. Beg, borrowed and stealing to move people to temp spaces, and these uses are moving back to Lincoln Hall.”

Capacity issue (with pressure to increase enrollment while also adding flexibility) – what does it look like 5 years out?

Registrar: Capacity is only an issue if we don't use our space right. Standardized meeting patterns and time allotments help to manage the space better and free up uses.

What are the incentives to get depts. to maximize standardized times – priority scheduling (if use space well, get priority, if not, then moved to the bottom of the pile.)

Started with large lecture space, and now smaller classrooms moving into the standardized meeting patterns.

English Atrium – upcoming project for renovation. Would be nice to spruce up the CITES lab there.

Not just classrooms, but the spaces around the classrooms, the labs, etc.

When redesigning spaces, we usually work with architects, and it depends a lot on how in tune the architects are with learning spaces. How do others do this?

-LAS does the same kind of process.

(Gorski, Stefano)

The questions that the architects ask are really helpful for depts. to understand what they want to do and how that comes out in the space. Architects also bring lots of examples of other spaces and engage the faculty in the design process. The architects are not afraid to put ideas out there and get shot down. In the end, faculty are happy because they are engaged in developing the plans.

Updates from Participants

- Vet Med Library had a very large library footprint – they moved – now redesigning these spaces.
- Redid atrium for student public spaces
- Several lecture halls slated for renovation soon
- Small groups and large lectures

- Official word that Chem Annex is being renovated (teaching labs, chem learning center, lecture classrooms)

- CS dept taking 0216 Siebel (instructional lab) and turn into a 100-seat classroom. Labs being shifted to smaller spaces. Will happen before fall 2012.

- Provost CIC group was at Indiana – Peter saw a café operated by the CTE. 5 diff kinds of seating, screens, printers,
- Watching students use this space and see where they gravitate and how it is used – it's a pilot space –people being surveilled while using this space.