the case for space
A strategic learning tool
let’s start with a few questions…
Space impacts behavior
Environment behavior theory

Crowding

Territoriality

Situational behavior
Proxemic Zones

Intimate
Personal
Social
Public
Proxemic Zones

**Intimate**

Personal

Social

Public

15-45cm
Proxemic Zones

Intimate
Personal
Social
Public

45-135 cm
Proxemic Zones

Intimate
Personal
Social
Public

1,20 – 3,70m
Proxemic Zones

Intimate
Personal
Social
Public

>3.70m
Academy of Neuroscience for Architecture

“Promote and advance knowledge that links neuroscience research to a growing understanding of human responses to the built environment.”
Education is under growing pressure
Demands for change

Improve graduation rates
Improve learning outcomes
Develop 21st century skills
Cost & access
Global competitiveness
Student expectations
Engaging experiences
Support my learning style
Relevant to me
Return on investment
Behaviors are changing
Learning-centered
New pedagogies
Project-based learning
Peer-to-peer learning
Online learning
Blended learning
Multi-modal learning
So...are spaces changing too?
Behavioral conditioning
Permission to act differently
Design Thinking
Design Thinking
The “transformation of existing conditions into preferred ones.”
DESIGN THINKING

EMPATHIZE  DEFINE  IDEATE  PROTOTYPE  TEST
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“In this, you’re stuck.”
solution: multi-modal learning environments
Post-occupancy research
Can the “intentional design” of space and furniture support increased student engagement?
Engagement ➔ Success
metrics

collaboration - emphasis
attention/focus - time span
active involvement - engagement
flexibility of learning methods
repeated exposure through variety
immediate feedback - instructor
relation to real-life application
learn best (meaning)

bodily movement
enriching environment - aesthetics
safe environment - wellbeing
enriching experience - belonging
Traditional environments

New environments
Results
Space and furniture make a difference

students

faculty

activities | solutions
---|---
standard (old) | current (new)

activities | solutions
---|---
standard (old) | current (new)
Student survey results

- ability to be creative
- increase in motivation to attend class
- ability to achieve a higher grade
- engagement in class
Space impacts behavior…
...and new behaviors are needed to support better learning
How might you leverage your learning spaces as a strategic tool to improve student success?