

Educational Interiors

More Than an Educated Guess

By Daniel Jiménez, Associate IIDA

INTRODUCTION

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- I am a project designer with Legat Architects in Chicago, Illinois where I have had worked for several years designing spaces for universities and junior colleges. I have an Architectural degree from Texas A&M University, and have recently completed a two year study in Interior Design from Harrington College of Design in Chicago. This has given me the opportunity to work on designing the projects from both a student and educator's perspective.

Objectives of Discussion

- Designing educational interiors is a fluid process that involves strategic collaboration with multiple parties, often over several years. This discussion will encompass:
 - Trends: The first part of the discussion will be an evaluation of current trends, emerging styles, and the cost implication of these factors.
 - Techniques: Second in this presentation are techniques for presenting design ideas to the various groups involved in the design process.
 - Future: Finally, we will wrap up with a conversation on how the future of higher education design is evolving, and how to prepare yourself and your business for these changes.

TRENDS

Explore the current and future trends in higher education design and their cost implications.

Higher Education Defined

- Who is going to school?
 - Broad category. Age ranges from recent high school graduates to a growing number of adults either attending college for the first time, or returning for another degree. Both educators and students are realizing the impact of successful interior design and how it is affecting the staffs' work environment and the students' performance.
- What are they studying?
 - Business Administration and Management/Commerce
 - Psychology
 - Nursing
 - Biology/Biological Sciences
 - Education
 - English Language and Literature
 - Economics
 - Communications Studies/Speech Communication and Rhetoric
 - Political Science and Government
 - Computer and Information Sciences
- When are they attending?
 - Day and night. Full-time as well as a large increase in part-time students.
- Where are they attending?
 - Universities, local colleges, community colleges, and online.
- How are they learning?
 - Professors are not only teaching theory, but are increasing their focus on practical aspects of their area of study.
 - Technology for research, problem solving, and presentations.
 - Collaborative efforts now have higher performing students teaching their peers.
 - Self Directed Learning.

- Why are they there?
 - Professional requirements, changing careers, continuing education, personal reasons.

Current Trends in Higher Education

- Overall Trends
 - Building Trends
 - Smaller footprints
 - Increase in multi-function spaces
 - Finishes and Materials
 - Color Theory
 - Building Standards
 - Professional aesthetics applied throughout environment
 - Furnishings
 - Standardizing
 - End User Requirements
 - Technology
 - Overview of technology and its application in higher education
 - Sustainability
 - Building Design
 - College Green Maintenance Initiatives
- Classrooms
 - There is still a strong trend to traditional classroom settings with rows of desks and teachers being at the front of the class.
 - Current technology is being integrated through smart boards, A/V equipment.
 - Small changes yield a large impact through finish updates and new furniture.
- Labs
 - Science labs are evolving from mock equipment to using actual professional standard equipment that gives students practical experience.
- Libraries
 - Libraries are evolving from book storage, to computing centers that provide multimedia formats for research.
- Administrative
 - Offices are shrinking, though there is still a strong trend to maintain private offices and a sense of hierarchy.
 - Corporate grade finishes and materials are being used to convey a higher-end feel that helps retain staff, as well as creates an aesthetic that draws in new talent from the private sector.
- Auxiliary Spaces
 - Dining, Common areas, Student Study zones are being designed to accommodate a high volume of students that not only provide a comfortable environment, but also use materials and finishes that can withstand constant use and reconfiguration.

Future Trends in Higher Education

- Overall Trends
 - Building Trends
 - Increase in multi-function spaces
 - Smaller, flexible spaces
 - Open Plan
 - Finishes and Materials
 - Color Theory
 - Building Standards
 - Furnishings
 - Increased Standardization
 - Flexibility

- End User Requirements
 - Technology
 - Overview of latest trends in technology and its future application in higher education
 - Sustainability
 - Building Design
 - College Green Maintenance Initiatives
- Classrooms
 - Multiple configuration classrooms will grow in popularity. Basic components that are capable of being reconfigured to work in a traditional setting, or group collaboration, where interactive learning brings a new dynamic to the classroom experience.
 - Classrooms are being shared by multiple teachers, storage requirements evolving.
- Labs
 - Science labs will continue to evolve to be a mirror image of the professional environment.
- Libraries
 - Libraries will become information storage centers where a computer or student's notebook/tablet will call up the data.
 - Staff will be expert resource managers as well as guides in helping students filter through all the data to find exactly what they need.
 - Group study areas will increase and have all the latest technology to aid in collaborative learning.
- Administrative
 - Offices will continue to shrink in size and the traditional hierarchy of the corner office will be limited to college leadership.
 - Smaller offices, shared conference rooms for departments
 - Shared work spaces and touch-down stations will provide workspace for teaching staff and some internal administrative employees.
 - Staff is being trained to perform multiple roles rather than being experts in only one area.
- Auxiliary Spaces
 - Dining
 - Larger universities will outsource their entire dining program by leasing to operators and chain restaurants.
 - Smaller schools will evolve their menus to reduce preparation time and will offer more prepackaged goods.
 - Common Areas
 - Grander common areas.
 - Tutoring
 - Private and group configurations.
 - Specialty Offices
 - Students with disabilities, multi-cultural, counseling.
 - Community Meeting Rooms
 - Can function as classrooms during day and become destination point for community activities in the evening.
 - Bookstores
 - Smaller colleges will be shrinking bookstores and be combining them to offer more retail product, while book purchasing will continue to move to online sites.
 - Larger universities can rely on branding sales to students and alumni during sporting event and reunion weekends, and therefore will evolve to mimic a retail chain that combines a book, clothing and electronics store complete with coffee shops.
- Security
 - Safety and security will become even more important. Surveillance cameras, panic buttons, design of multiple exits, and safe zones should be factored in to the design of the environment.
- Graphics and Wayfinding
 - Sophisticated graphics and wayfinding are being integrated into the design of all spaces.

Cost Implications

- Building Footprints Shrinking
 - Construction costs are rising, so even though building size is shrinking, the cost will either stay the same or continue to rise.
- Standardization
 - Everything from building components to furniture are being standardized to streamline costs and help develop a consistent image and brand for the school.
- Government and State Purchasing Contracts
 - Several companies are offering state purchasing contracts or government pricing to eliminate the bidding process while providing the best possible cost and service to educational facilities.
- Bidding
 - Bidding out encourages healthy competition. The key to a successful bid process is working closely with the school's purchasing team to clearly spell out expectations from bidders.

TECHNIQUES

Get the best techniques for presenting your designs to user groups, governing boards and governmental agencies.

Presenting Designs to User Groups

- What needs to be communicated to user groups?
- How can you communicate your ideas?
 - Techniques
 - Asking the right questions of the user groups
 - Plans
 - Hand Renderings
 - SketchUp
 - Product Information Sheets
- The more your client understands in the beginning, the more time and money you will save in the end!

Presenting Designs to Governing Boards and Governmental Agencies

- What needs to be communicated to governing boards and governmental agencies?
- Building and Interior Design Campaign
 - Strong graphic communication of the building project along with factual support of:
 - Master Planning – The Big Picture
 - Colleges are looking to designers and architects to help them in understanding their current campus, and how to smartly expand their scope.
 - What programs are being offered?
 - What programs will the school want to offer in the future?
 - What is the condition of the existing campus and what resources do we have?
 - Programming – Focusing the Big Picture
 - Current Needs vs. Future Growth
 - How much space is needed for the school's expansion?
 - Cost – How Much Financial Investment is Needed For the Big Picture
 - Current cost and future factors.
 - Because of the duration of this project type, always factor in inflation costs as well as increases in construction, materials, and FF&E.

FUTURE

Find out how to prepare yourself and your business for what's ahead, and learn to make decisions with a better understanding of how all these issues impact cost.

Prepare Yourself

- Become an expert in your field
 - Publish and present your research to your peers and your clients.
 - Become an adjunct professor or enroll in a class to gain perspective. Relate these experiences to your clients.

- Join advocacy and professional groups that focus on higher education.

Prepare Your Business

- What sets your business apart
- Recruiting and retaining staff
- Client Management
 - Happy client = happy business
 - Face Time (Not the phone video chat program)
 - Project Managers should develop client maintenance skills and be a client's best resource
 - Have a strong marketing team
- Technology
 - Smart Investment in Technology
 - Cost vs. perceived results
- Collaborate with Expert Consultants
 - Engineers
 - Furniture Dealerships
 - Equipment Dealerships
 - Contractors

Making Decisions with Better Understanding of How All These Issues Impact Cost

- Design Team
 - Project Architect
 - Roles and responsibilities.
 - Project Interior Designer
 - Roles and Responsibilities.
 - Support Staff
 - Consultants (Civil, Structural, MEP, Furniture, Equipment)
- Building Project Collaboration
 - Client/Owner's Representative
 - General Contractor
- Time
 - Time is one of the most important factors for a higher education project.
 - Programming, SD, DD, CD, BN and CA
 - Often times, there is overlap due to the nature of the project and the amount of time each phase takes.
 - Anticipate a school's board meeting schedule, building committee reviews, as well as community relations.
 - Factors to consider for construction time include
 - School schedule
 - Occupancy
 - Phasing

CONCLUSION

Summary

- A client will ultimately look at three factors. Time, cost, and design. Most often a client will forget if a project takes a little longer to complete. Higher costs will eventually be absorbed, and its memory will be forgotten with time. But a client will always be experiencing your design. By understanding design trends, communication techniques, and most importantly listening to your client, all your efforts will result in a successful project.

In Memory of Dennis Kluge

- Dennis Kluge, IIDA was a great friend and mentor to me. I am presenting this in honor of his memory. He was an amazing designer who is greatly missed. I consider myself fortunate to have known such an amazing person.

Q+A