learning SPACES

what do we KNOW about them?

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a working **definition** of learning spaces?

“... **learning space** should be able to **motivate** learners and promote learning as an **activity**, support **collaborative** as well as formal practice, provide a **personalised** and **inclusive** environment, and be **flexible** in the face of changing needs ...”

**Source:** JISC. (2006). “*Designing Spaces For Effective Learning – A Guide To 21st Century Learning Space Design*”
1) to what extent are your teaching and learning strategies determined by the “spaces” you have to work in?

2) does the “learning spaces” influence students engagement?

3) does learning technology enable students to work within new “spaces”?

4) do different “learning spaces” change the relationship between the tutor and the learners?
perspectives on learning spaces ...
physical learning spaces ...

“... being treated to somewhere **special** ...”

“... contributed to heightened anticipation and **increased expectations** from both learners and teachers ...”

“... a better quality environment produces better **quality responses** ...”

“... **flexibility** and fluidity ... **reconfigurable** space .... accommodate further kinds of **learning** ....”

“... **versatility** [of technology] enables a wide range of approaches to learning ...”

“... **atmosphere** is an ephemeral but important aspect of the learning environment ...”

virtual learning spaces...

“... can extend from individuals and groups in the same or adjacent room, through the rest of the institution and its locality to the wider community and the World Wide Web ...”

“... the embedded technology has elaborated rather than determined what happens making [it] an empowering space for students and teachers ...”

“... we should understand virtual space in its widest sense, referring not just to synchronous, highly interactive functions (such as chat, blogs, and wikis) but also to asynchronous functions such as e-mail and discussion threads ...”

cognitive learning spaces ...

“... [space] can support a combination of risk and relaxation, a safe yet creative environment ...”

“... capacity to support the open minded thinking and reflective discussions ... for effective group work ...”

“... to support approaches that need specific ... emotional atmospheres ...”

“... encouraging creative and divergent thinking ...”

“... [with] increasing availability of wireless networking ... [paying] more attention to the social and emotional aspects of learning ...”

social learning spaces ...

“... effective learning takes place as a result of interactions between students themselves ...”

“... create an informal, relaxed, even comforting [environment] ... easier to ask questions ... feeling less judged ... and contribute more ...”

“... willing to share experiences ... new methods and exercises ...”

“... [tutors] interested in establishing positive relationships with their students ...”

“... create knowledge and understanding through paths of personal & group inquiry ...”

what is said about learning spaces?

“the ‘iconic building’ seems to be a feature of every current campus master-planning project.”

“impressive new buildings are, on their own, no guarantee that improved learning will be achieved; although they may be useful in marketing terms, by helping to brand the institution.”

“where university staff members and students are actually asked about the impressive new building in which they are working, their responses tend to fall short of ringing endorsements.”

what is known about learning spaces?

“a high proportion of the literature makes unsupported, or anecdotal, claims about the benefits of new designs or new configurations of existing space.

where they are presented, empirical findings are usually flawed, as they either tend to report changed student attitudes (rather than learning outcomes), or where learning outcomes are reported, they fail to take account of observer effects of various kinds.”

moving **forward** with learning spaces ...

“discussions on student-centred approaches have **naturally centred** on issues of pedagogy ... rather than the physical environment.”

“teaching and learning should **drive design**, rather than vice-versa.”

“more recent thinking on ‘**flexible learning**’ spaces - spaces in which different groups may be undertaking different activities simultaneously and which lend themselves to a variety of uses - has suggested how campus and building design can be used to **facilitate** learning, particularly informal learning ... designs need to provide a variety of spaces in which they can **work** and **socialise** together.”

flexible learning spaces ...

group teaching area where flexible furniture arrangements can accommodate groups of varying sizes

peer-to-peer environments, where informal learning can take place, e.g. in cyber cafes

clusters where student group work can take place, e.g. project spaces

individual work – in quiet areas

wireless enabled laptops and wireless networks means that any enabled space, inside or out can now be used for technology enhanced learning

adjacencies – connection to other people

psychological – provide a sense of belonging, private space, natural light, temperature, furniture
some pedagogic research areas ...

how to **converge** different learning spaces?

how to **design** for the convergence of classroom, informal and virtual learning spaces?

how to **align** “Net Gen” characteristics, learning principles, learning spaces, and IT applications?


... at Shneiderman et al\'s university, they found 4 emerging patterns of teaching/learning when using new technology equipped classrooms:

1) enhanced lecture sessions (such as, discussions based on students\’ using voting tools or looking up examples)

2) active individual learning and reporting (students find/create resources and share with the rest of the class)

3) small-group collaborative learning & reporting

4) entire-class brainstorming, using Web 2.0 tools

what new patterns of teaching/learning could/will emerge at CCCU as tutors make use of Augustine House?

some **pedagogic research areas** ...

what can we expect in terms of the implementation of new technologies in higher education?

“... information literacies, including searching, retrieving, critically evaluating information from a range of appropriate sources and also attributing it – **represent a significant and growing deficit area**.”

“... deployment is in no way systematic and the drive is principally bottom up, coming from the professional interest and enthusiasm of individual members of staff. ”

“... students are looking for traditional approaches, notably personal contact, in a modern setting, i.e. web-supported.”

**what will our experience be with Augustine House?**

Source: CLEX. (2009). ”*Higher Education in a Web 2.0 World*” . JISC.
some pedagogic research areas

what sorts of support are needed for students and instructors?

some institutional research areas ...

“Spatial Impact” – Take on board the views and experiences of various stakeholders (e.g. Academic staff, Librarians, i-zone, Student Study Support, etc.) on how space has impacted upon them.

“Small things make a big difference” – The apparent connection between day-to-day premise maintenance and learning may need to be drawn to the attention of Institutional Management.

“Good Vibrations?” – A better understanding of the role of space in the dynamics of creating more productive HE communities and its connections with learning and research.

some **institutional** research areas ...

“Recipes for success” – More consideration needs to be given to learning space design needs and the role that such spaces can play and the effective design ingredients for them require further study.

“Evaluating the Ideas Factory” – An “architecture of complexity” is said to encourage new ideas and creativity, but there is little evidence to support this claim. Efforts should be made to conduct evaluations of new learning spaces in order to provide guidance to the learning benefits, and the financial and other costs associated with them.

“Tried and Tested?” – A methodology needs to be created and tested to assess and evaluate the effects of space upon learning.

the **iBorrow** project ...

“... will allow users of a new Library and Learning Centre to borrow a notebook computer as easily as picking a book from a shelf. It will provide a large-scale demonstration of how thin-client notebooks with location-aware technology can enable the University to not only provide no-fuss access to a full range of software and learning resources but also effectively manage the configuration of the facilities within the large flexible learning spaces of its new learning centre. By overlaying location information with additional data it can also provide insights into the way students use electronic and virtual resources at an individual level or within a group context and thus answer the questions that arise when designing new learning spaces.”

some research methodologies ...

... researching the use of learning spaces through:

**ethnographic approaches:** descriptive observation; interviewing; field notes; photographic or video studies

**phenomenographic:** user generated accounts, e.g. blogs; electronic or video diaries

**action research:** theoretical concerns; curriculum development; enhancement

**appreciative enquiry:** focus groups; students as researchers - case studies - ‘telling stories’

**qualitative / quantitative:** large / small scale surveys; questionnaires; in-house observation; tracking engagement; location / context aware

researching **learning** environments ...

however ...

"... if the **curriculum** in higher education is a **set of experiences**, that a student inhabits, experiences that that arise from a student’s interaction with his or her ‘**learning environment’*, then any attempt to trace the influence of one particular thread of experience may well be doomed ...”

learning spaces resources ...

http://www.educause.edu/LearningSpaces


http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/infokits/learning-space-design

http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/infokits/learning-space-design/design-high

http://www.sfc.ac.uk/collaboration/spacesforlearning/spaces_for_learning.aspx

http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/projects/detail/lr_2007_temple
any questions?