

Learning Spaces Collaboratory Roundtable
Spring 2016: Focusing on the Future of Planning Learning Spaces
Boston University

Driving Questions

1. How do we get faculty and students to move throughout the building? How do we get students to stay within it?
2. How can the project accommodate more than just science?
3. What are the “third spaces” needed to encourage collaboration?
4. How do you accommodate for materials and equipment necessary for instruction or research in a flexible classroom or lab?
5. How is shared space operated or maintained in a transdisciplinary space?

The E. Craig Wall Jr. Academic Center answers Davidson College’s vision to re-imagine liberal arts education by creating an environment of learning and discovery that will expose students to the diversity of science and inspire cross-disciplinary research initiatives addressing real world problems. The design makes these activities visible and accessible, blurs boundaries between disciplines, encourages closer interactions between student and faculty, and acts as a campus magnet to engage the broader academic community.

To achieve this vision, the departments of Biology, Chemistry, Psychology, and Environmental Studies have been brought together into two new wings dedicated to teaching and research, with faculty offices and incubator space for cross-disciplinary research initiatives consolidated in the existing Martin Building. An open atrium acts as the nexus and point of entry for the complex, with a stepped forum at its heart, providing space for open study, exhibits, and presentations for use by the broader academic community.

Informal collaboration and gathering spaces along circulation paths are infused throughout the complex, creating academic “neighborhoods”, around which research, seminar, and group study spaces are clustered to create new synergies. The teaching labs are active learning environments, with moveable lab benches, and direct connections between labs and classrooms allowing for a unified teaching space accommodating a variety of teaching styles. Lab-to-lab connections provide the opportunity for team-taught labs and greater potential for interdisciplinary programs.

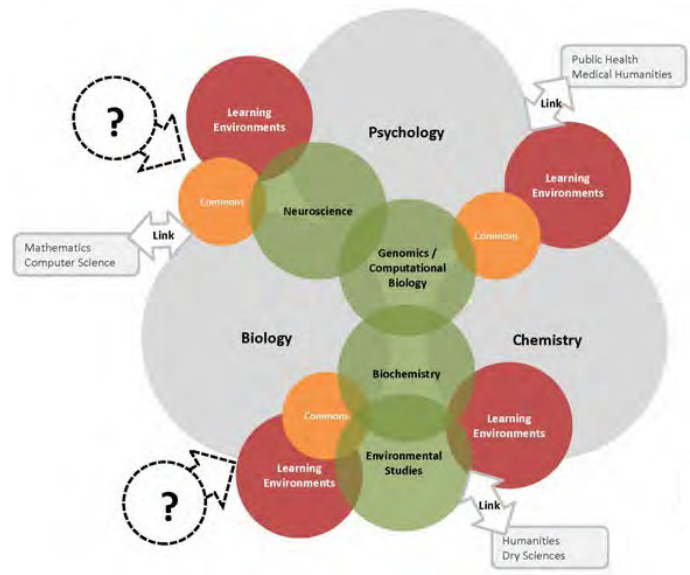
The laboratory prep and support zone runs along the front face of the teaching labs creating an unimpeded zone that is adaptable over time. Direct access to equipment in the prep and support spaces mean the labs are less intensive, raising the efficiency of the budget and flexibility in space use. Not being hard-wired for one particular discipline the loft concept allows labs to be easily reconfigured as the demands of disciplines change.

The five classrooms are a campus resource, allowing for non-science courses and programs to be taught in the new building, exposing a larger community to a variety of disciplines. This discussion will focus on how the initial drivers for the project, specifically those surrounding movement and connectivity, have evolved and manifested throughout the project.

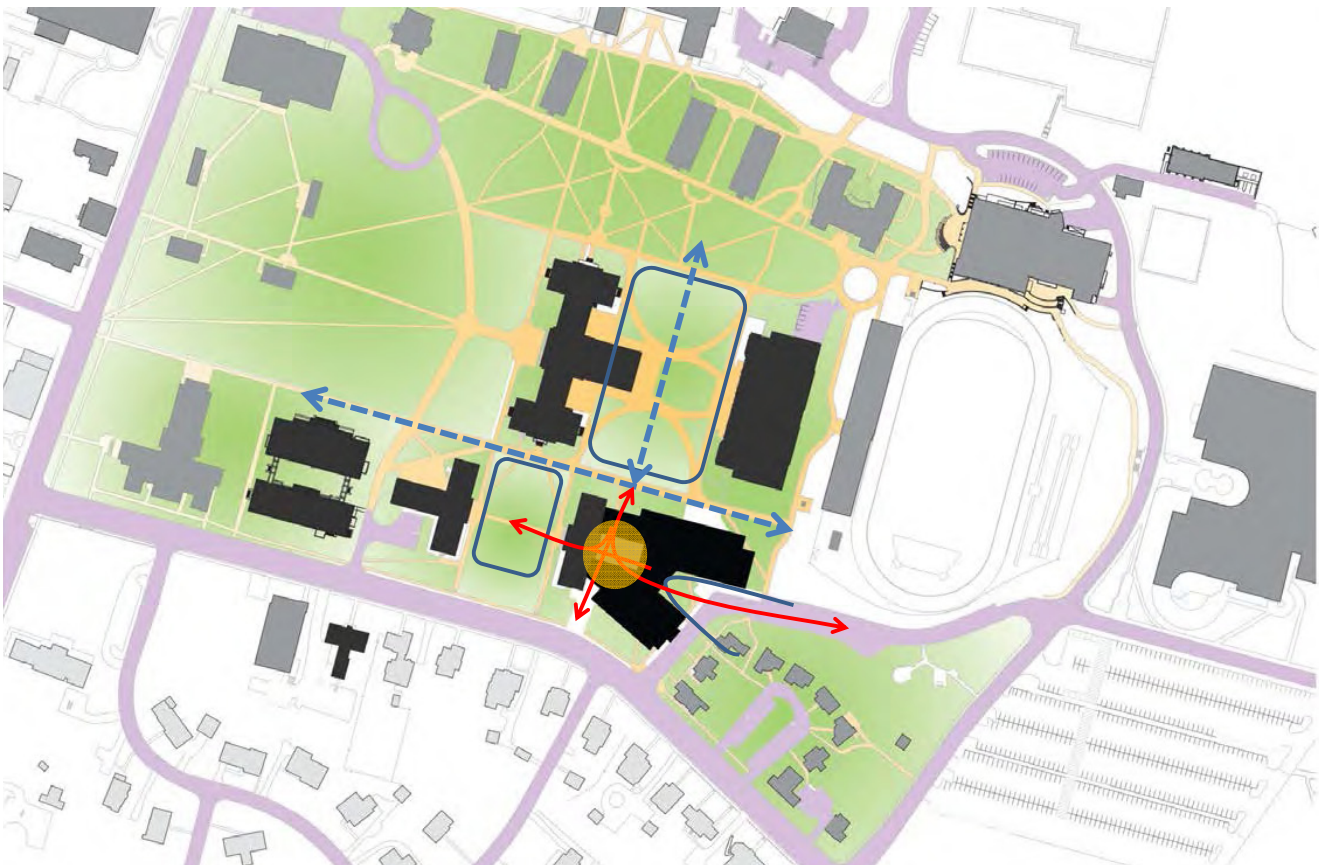




Bringing the Arts into Science



Early diagram of how overlapping resources could begin sharing services

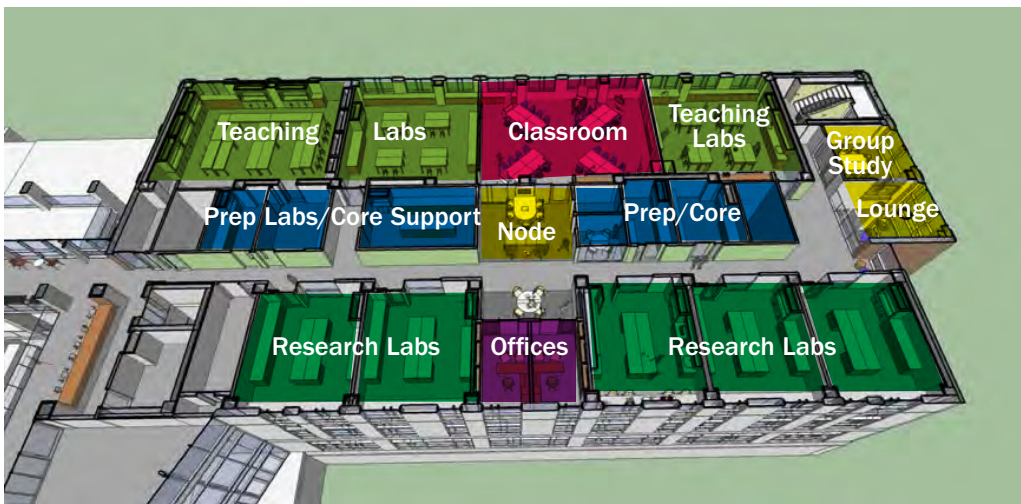


Opportunities for campus movement and connections





Collaboration Space adjacent to Classroom



Program Organization



Classroom/Laboratory Connectivity

