



Healthy Learning

The immediate physical and cultural shift experienced in 2020 has challenged the notion of the traditional on college campus learning experience. We don't yet know the long term effects of a year of virtual learning, but we can expect some form of online learning is here to stay. As we continue to study engagement and outcomes of the virtual learning environment, institutions should pay close attention to space on campus that does not support optimal learning.

Cognitive research shows when we're dissatisfied with the physical environment our executive functioning skills are impacted. Access to natural light, biophilia and exposure to off gassing materials have the biggest impact on our cognitive abilities. Studies at the University of Syracuse show an increase in natural ventilation and a reduction in VOC exposure can improve test performance by 101%.

As Universities and institutions increasingly adopt a hybrid-learning policy on campus learning spaces need to not only facilitate learning but increase student performance. The team at HOK has developed strategies for Healthy Learning Environments at Morgan State University, Emory University and George Washington University. Now more than ever, we realize design needs to consider the long term strategy around student health and wellness.

