

Learning Spaces Still Matter

Michael B. Enzi STEM Undergraduate Laboratory Facility
University of Wyoming
Laramie, Wyoming

As colleges & universities struggle to continue providing hands-on, engaged learning opportunities for students, particularly students in STEM, different combinations of hybrid and virtual pedagogies are being implemented. The relative efficacy of these different methodologies will take time to assess, but anecdotal evidence already indicates that many students are craving the social aspects inherent with in-person on-campus learning opportunities that have been missing for most of 2020. In our work with clients throughout the U.S., we are finding increased interest in providing spaces that are flexible in terms of day-to-day use, adaptable to support long-term changing needs, and with features that enable students in STEM laboratories and classrooms to have the highest quality learning experience.

The Michael B. Enzi STEM Facility at the University of Wyoming offers a wide range of formal and informal spaces providing choices for student and faculty engagement before, during and after class / laboratory periods. The photos below provide visual evidence of the success of these spaces in creating an active and collaborative STEM learning community that is difficult to replicate online.

PROJECT CREDITS

Design Architect:
Anderson Mason Dale Architects

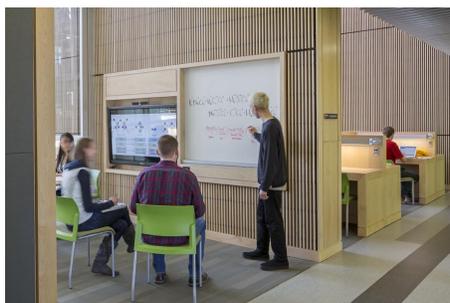
Architect-of-Record:
by Architectural Means

Laboratory Consultant:
Research Facilities Design

Photographer:
Frank Ooms Photography



Ample break-out spaces provide options for both individual study and student interaction / collaboration



Open alcoves with white board and flat panel monitors encourage informal peer learning opportunities



Central atrium forms the 'heart' of the building giving students choices of seating, tables and study amenities



Students teams collaborate in 'hands on' experimental activities in an Organic Chemistry Laboratory



Adjacent visible Lab Support Space gives students the opportunity to use advanced instrumentation in person



Adjacent Computer Room for data analysis with direct visibility / monitoring from the Chemistry Laboratory



Collaborative teams working on Physics experiments adjacent to Computer Room with folding glass wall



Folding glass partition allows student to work back and forth between experimental and computational tasks



'Hands on' experimental teams enjoy working together in-person with appropriate safety protocols

