



blended learning ideabook

every space is a learning space

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A New Era of Education

Technology creates opportunities for new learning models, reshaping education and accelerating the evolution toward more progressive active learning environments. From flipped learning to data analytics, instructors and learners are benefiting from increased use of technology—in and out of the classroom.

A variety of factors are driving this trend.

- Today's tech-savvy generation of students expect to use technology in their learning environments.
- Technology offers opportunities for increased efficiency and effectiveness.
- Students, parents, governments, employers and thought leaders are advocating for a more relevant and meaningful approach to education.
- Recent discoveries from behavioral sciences and neurology are generating deeper understanding of how learning happens best.
- Students want greater flexibility and access to course content.

There is growing awareness that technology has great potential to positively reshape educational experiences. At the same time, both students and teachers agree that face-to-face interactions remain essential for successful learning.

What Is Blended Learning?

Blended learning is a teaching approach that combines online and face-to-face learning, offering a richer and more dynamic approach that pedagogically integrates teacher instruction with web-based, mobile and/or classroom technologies. It extends learning within and beyond the confines of traditional learning environments, and optimizes the spectrum of face-to-face and virtual learning experiences, as well as different types of media.



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Benefits

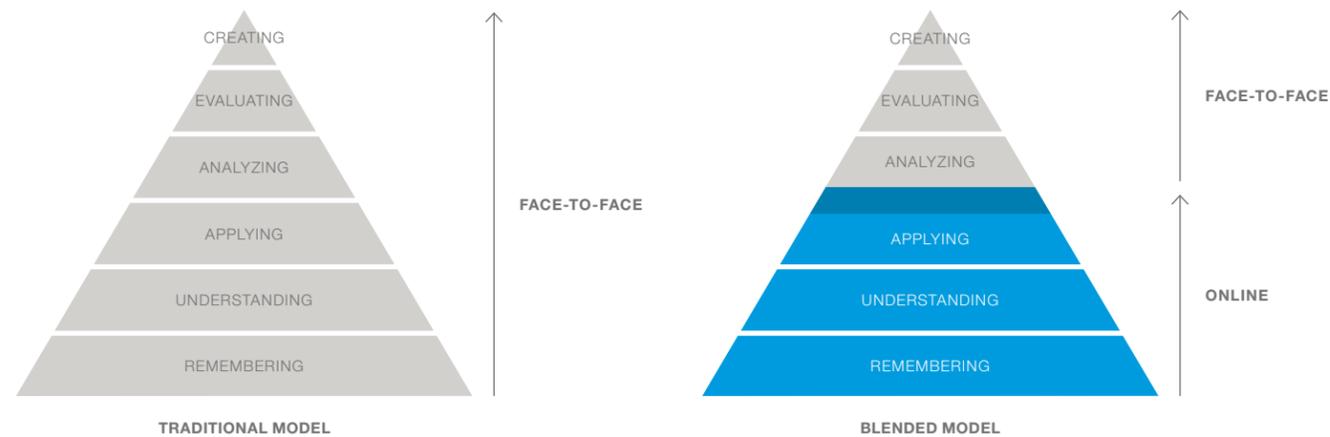
The benefits of blended learning are expansive—impacting teaching and learning strategies at every level of education.

Improving Learning Effectiveness

- Individually tailored content, pace and feedback
- Access to more diverse, outside-the-classroom content and experts
- More frequent feedback and assessments
- Ability to self-pace and review content easily
- More peer-to-peer and group learning

Improving Learning Efficiency

- Higher student/teacher ratio
- Increased use of para-educators
- Optimized real estate through extended learning beyond the classroom
- Faster completion rates

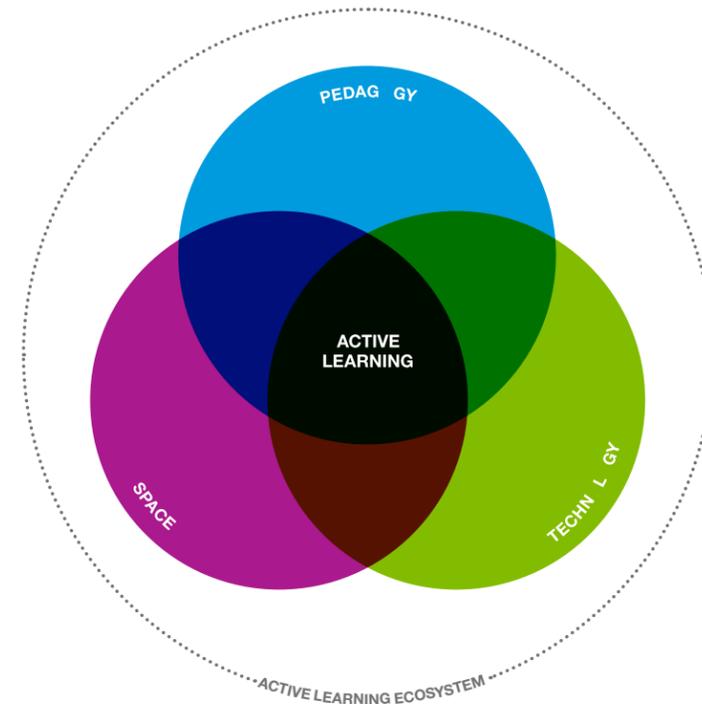


Shift to Higher Order Thinking

Student success in today's world is about acquiring and exhibiting the knowledge, skills and personal development that are necessary to achieve personal and educational goals. It requires a broadened learning focus that emphasizes succeeding in school as well as enjoying a productive, satisfying life after school. Blended learning helps educators make a stronger contribution to student success. Unlike traditional instruction models in which classroom time is spent helping students learn content, in blended learning many aspects of remembering and understanding content shift to online options, freeing teachers to focus on developing higher-value skills: applying, analyzing, evaluating and, ultimately, creating new knowledge.

Active Learning Ecosystem

Blended learning increases active learning opportunities and extends them beyond the classroom. As institutions adopt these learning models, it's important to consider the implications in a holistic way. Change is driven by pedagogy, technology must be carefully integrated and space impacts learning. Because these three dimensions are interrelated, they must be addressed in a cohesive way. Institutions that understand the interdependencies of active learning are best positioned to implement active learning successfully.



Active learning happens at the intersection of space, technology and pedagogy. Change is driven by pedagogy. Technology must be carefully integrated. Space impacts learning.



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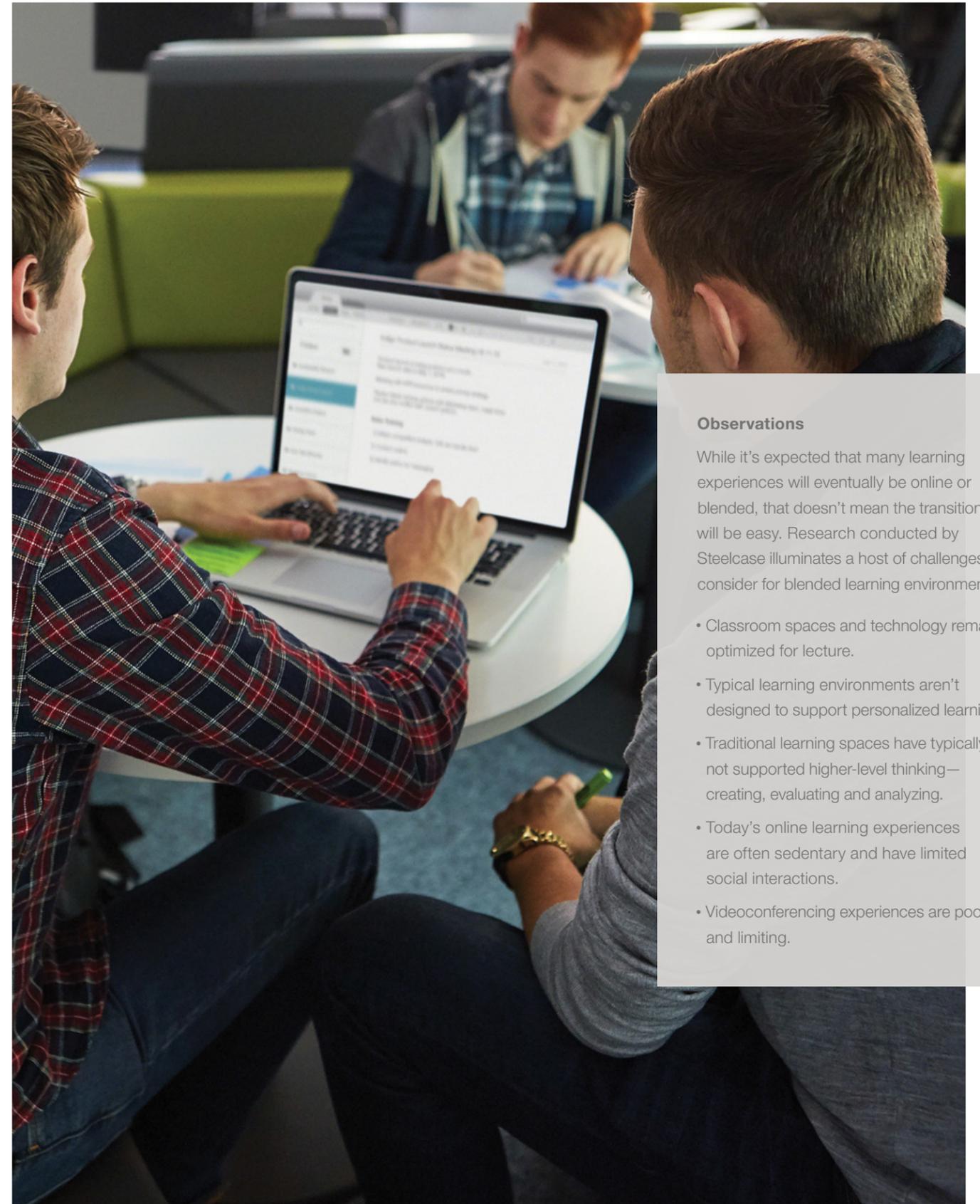
Planning

As blended learning becomes a viable solution for institutions, major shifts take place within the learning landscape. Perceptions of learning and teaching held by both instructors and students must evolve, as must physical learning environments and technology infrastructures. To help institutions navigate these transitions, Steelcase has conducted deep-dive research into blended learning and its implications for learning environments.

Based on our research, which included 60 interviews, 24 observations and school visits, four workshops, and two university collaborations, we believe that blended learning is an accelerating and irreversible trend. Yet traditional teaching practices and environments don't adequately support the array of opportunities that technology-supported learning presents. To align with the emerging behaviors of blended learning, leading institutions must concurrently rethink their strategies for campus planning, professional development and change management.

From these findings, we believe:

- Blended learning is an accelerating trend, transforming education and learning experiences.
- Blended learning enables more active and personalized learning.
- Online interactions will ask physical learning spaces to support higher-level learning.
- Formal and informal spaces are merging, encouraging institutions to rethink campus planning strategies.



Observations

While it's expected that many learning experiences will eventually be online or blended, that doesn't mean the transition will be easy. Research conducted by Steelcase illuminates a host of challenges to consider for blended learning environments.

- Classroom spaces and technology remain optimized for lecture.
- Typical learning environments aren't designed to support personalized learning.
- Traditional learning spaces have typically not supported higher-level thinking—creating, evaluating and analyzing.
- Today's online learning experiences are often sedentary and have limited social interactions.
- Videoconferencing experiences are poor and limiting.

Insights

Based on our research, we have identified six key insights to help educators consider responses to the technology revolution that is underway in learning.

Person-to-person connections remain essential for successful learning.

Despite abundant online instruction and discussion forums, many students still seek face time with their professors and each other as an important component of learning. A 2014 study undertaken by MIT showed that MOOC students learned as well as students in a traditional university course, but not as well as students taught with a blended learning pedagogy.

Technology is supporting richer face-to-face interactions and higher-level cognitive learning.

Much of the information that only teachers possessed in the past is now available to students online, challenging the old model of educators presenting content and students absorbing it. As a result, progressive educators are now leveraging technology to create a higher-impact role for themselves in their classrooms.

Integrating technology into classrooms mandates flexibility and activity-based space planning.

Classrooms designed for a teacher to lecture at the front of the room are being redefined to support self-directed work at computers, as well as collaborative projects. Individual rooms are designed with multiple zones versus a one-type-fits-all setup, and different types of spaces are being created to support a wide range of activities.

Spatial boundaries are loosening.

Flexible spaces are integral to blended learning. Classrooms with mobile furniture, wider hallways to support more activities, cafés with whiteboards, lounges with informal seating and power connections, and spaces with movable furnishings are among the fast-emerging design imperatives for effective educational environments.

Spaces must be designed to capture and stream information.

It's increasingly important that educational institutions invest in video-conferencing capabilities and spaces that meet audio and lighting needs for video content creation. With the right technology, digital and physical presences can complement each other and participate on nearly equal terms.

Pencils and pixels will coexist.

Although technology advancements will continue to revolutionize education, students and teachers haven't abandoned analog materials—and aren't expected to anytime soon. Writing and whiteboards are as useful as ever as quick, easy ways to capture information and activate cognition.



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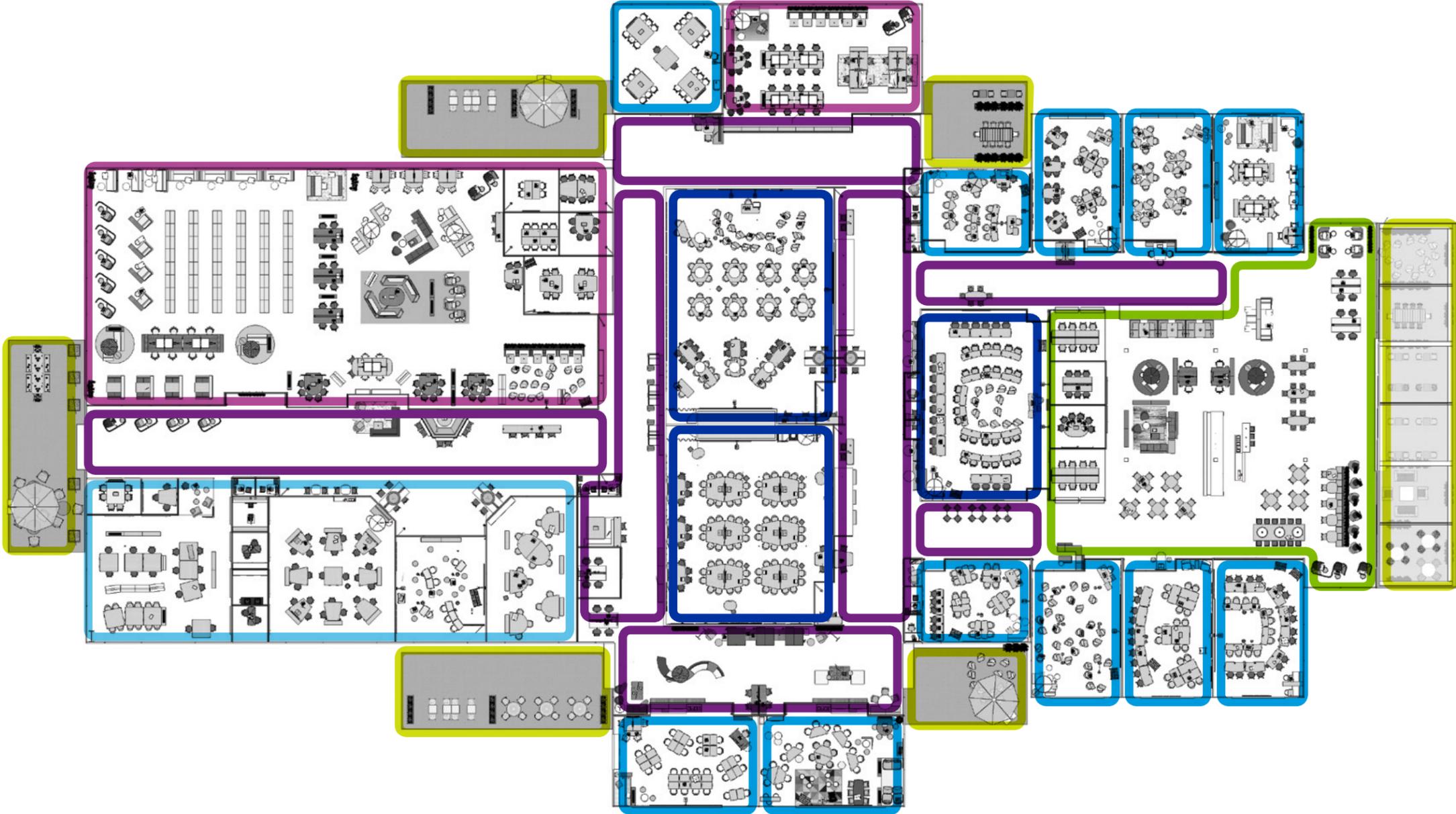
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A Campus-wide Approach

A dynamic and active approach to education, blended learning also inspires a holistic approach to campus planning. It's important to consider every space a valuable tool for learning and to leverage the entire floor plan as a connected system of learning environments, all working together to support student success.

Design Considerations

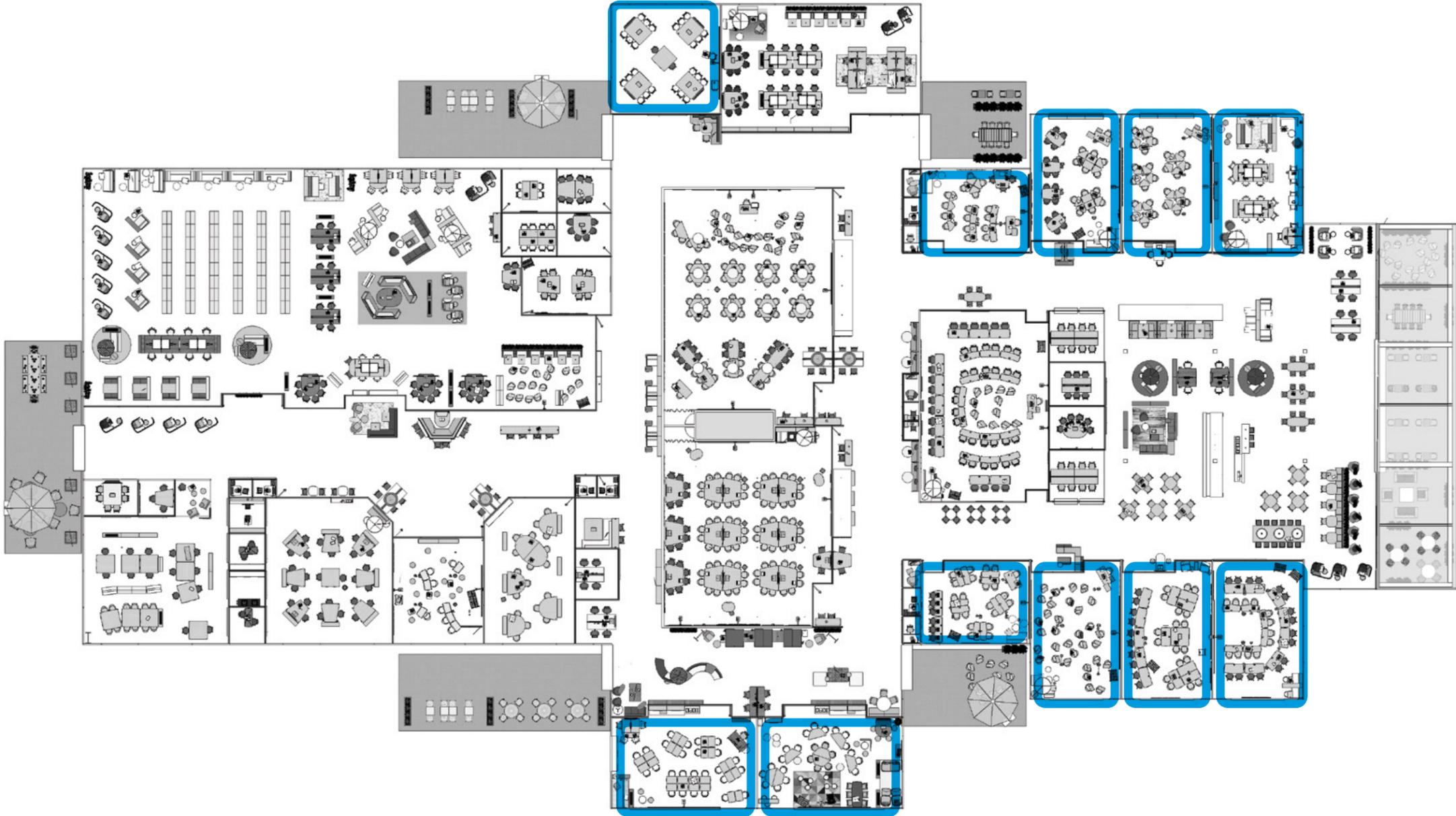
- Design highly flexible spaces that support the new behaviors of learning.
- Consider ways to divide the spaces to support a range of activities.
- Design spaces with video capture and streaming in mind. Consider lighting, acoustics and viewing angle.
- Create spaces for educators to record audio/video in order to create online content.
- Worksurfaces, including tablet arms, are large enough to support both the analog and the digital tools that students use in class.
- Consider the impact of blended learning on both formal and informal learning spaces.
- Incorporate flexible power throughout the plan.



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Classrooms

Blended learning classrooms are designed with multiple learning situations in mind. Both technologies and analog tools are effectively integrated to support a variety of teaching and learning modes, with easy transitions between.





Classrooms
Online Learning Lab



In this self-directed environment for online learning, a variety of seating choices—desk-height, standing-height or lounge-height—encourages students to change their postures to maintain the energy that active learning requires.



With a lounge area immediately adjacent to desk settings, students can use online courseware individually and then assemble to discuss it or work on a team project.



Depending on their task and mindset, students can choose from open or shielded settings to do their work.



Classrooms
Flipped



When lecture-based learning happens on students' time, the classroom can be optimized for group discussions or project-based learning.



Against the back wall, students can access online course material before or after class.



Classrooms
Virtual



Castered tables are arranged in groups around a central media:scape™ table. Along with the swivel seating, they can be moved easily to support different learning modes.



With seating specifically designed for optimal telepresence, students are angled toward the camera. Back-row seating is stool-height to provide for better visibility to the monitors and camera.



Classrooms
Rotational



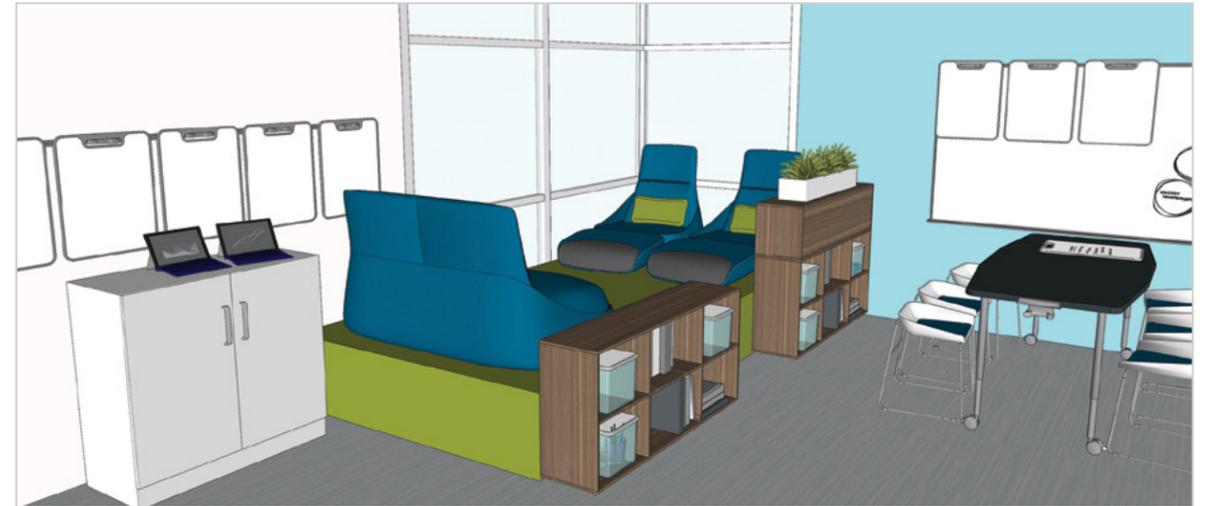
As students rotate among online and offline learning activities, movable furniture ensures groups can form and dissolve with ease.



Swivel seating provides comfort, flexibility and mobility, allowing students to stay connected to peers, content and instructors, and to easily change their focus and transition to different activities.



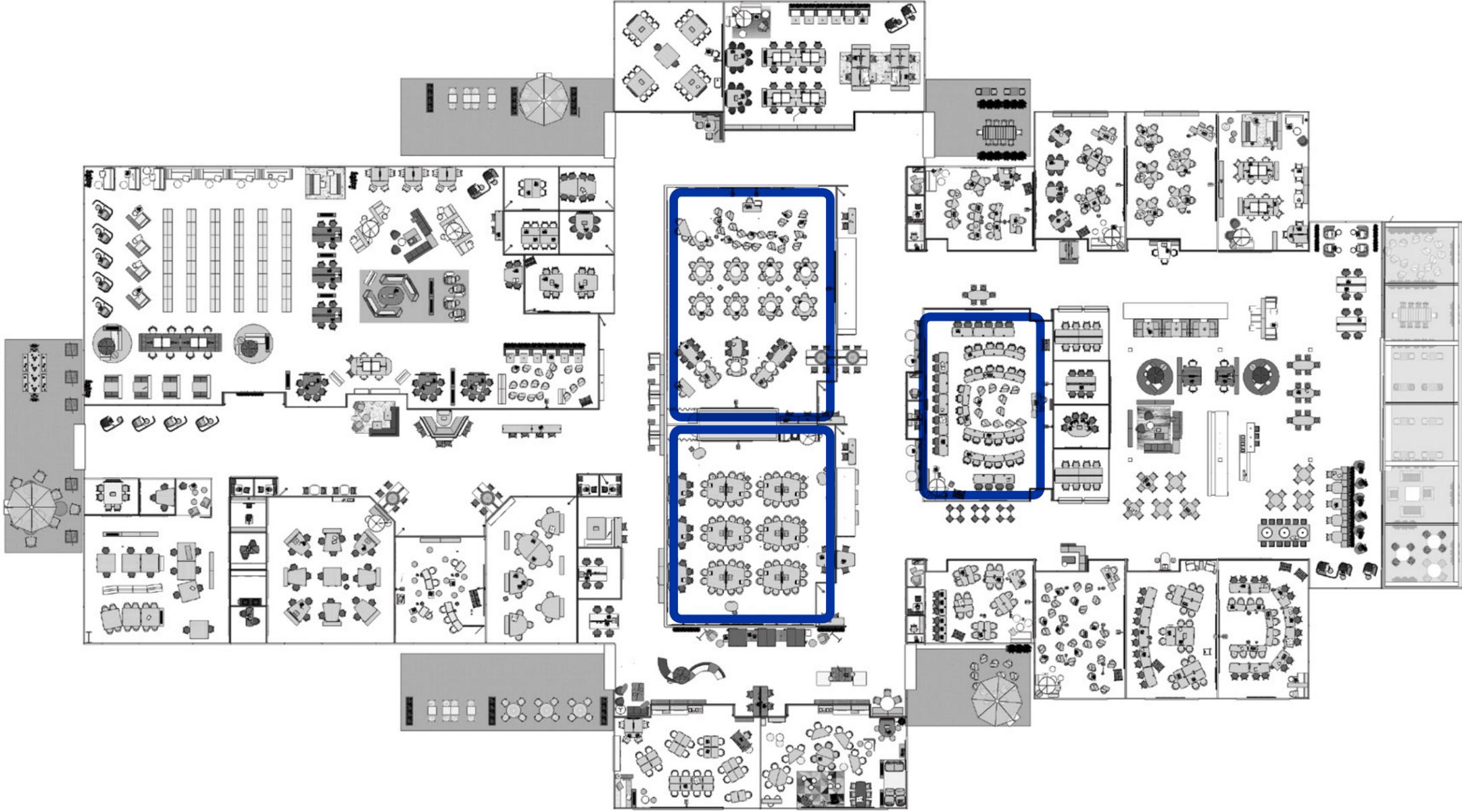
Like being around a campfire, sitting in a circular configuration increases students' sense of connection and engagement.

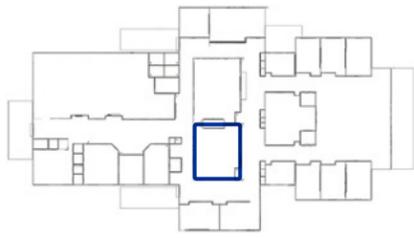


A corner lounge area offers a comfortable, protected place to study or explore ideas, alone or in collaboration with peers. The change in floor height provides students with a change in perspective.

Large Active Learning Classrooms

Large classrooms are standard settings for efficient learning, especially at colleges and universities. In support of a more active approach, today's large classrooms are being reimagined to support technology, multiple modes of learning and healthy movement during class sessions.





Large Active Learning Classrooms Enabled



Distance easily provokes distraction and disengagement. Here, instructors can move throughout the room and address the class from multiple “fronts of the room.” As a result, every student’s seat is a good seat, with clear sight lines to the instructor, content and each other.



Technology is optimized for groups of six, providing students with a small-classroom sense of immediacy and community.



An arrival zone outside the classroom offers students and faculty a place to engage before or after class sessions.

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Large Active Learning Classrooms Multipurpose Room



Flexible furniture ensures an active setting for 60 students. Near the entrance to the Student Commons, it can also be used off-hours for meetings and events.



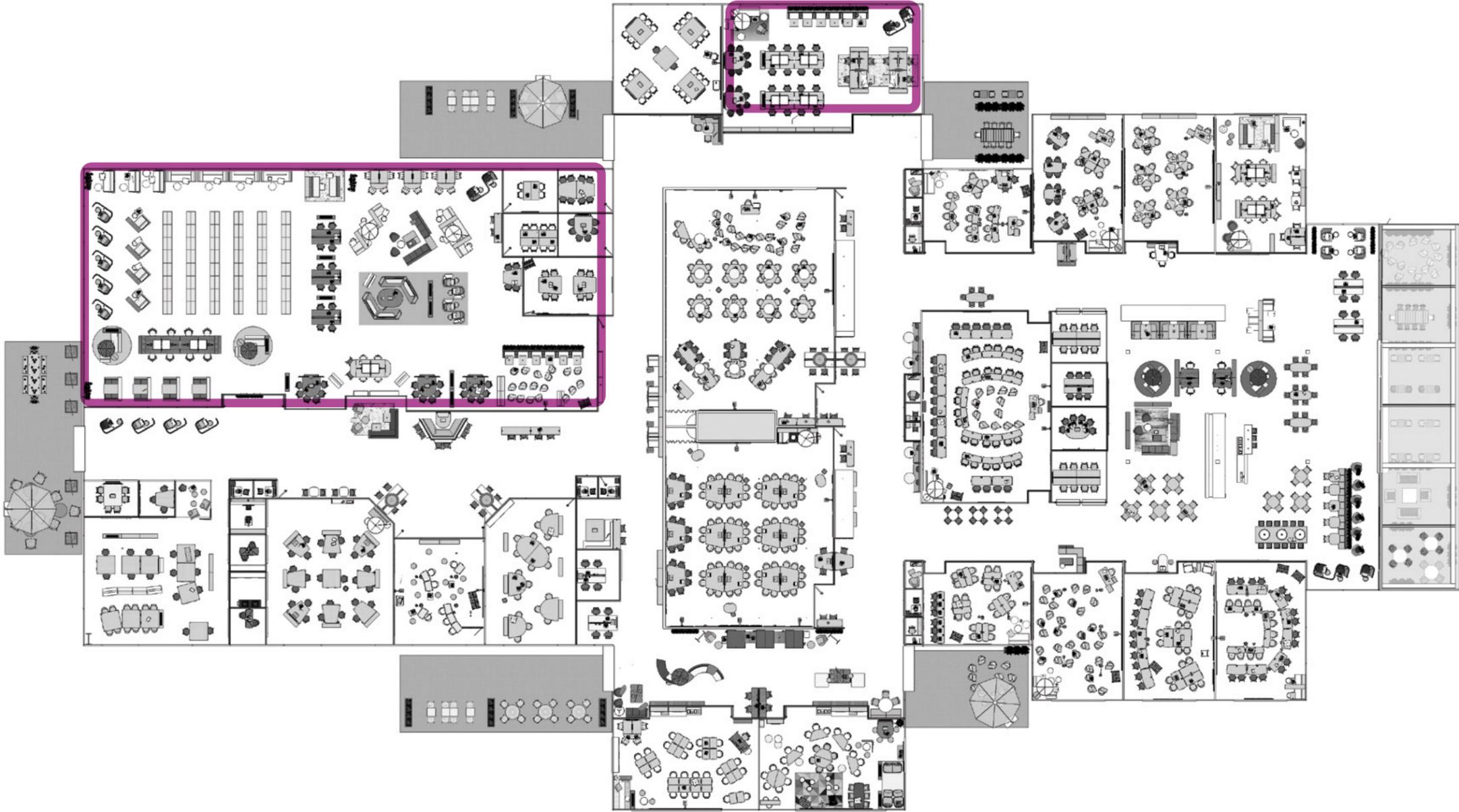
A tiered layout positions stool-height seating in the back and desk-height in front, so everyone can stay visually connected—without the drawbacks of an architecturally tiered floor.



An operable wall easily divides the classroom in half, increasing its versatility.

Learning Commons

The Learning Commons is today's updated version of the library, designed to be a vital learning hub with a range of settings to support collaborative learning as well as focused individual study.





Learning Commons
Media Zone



Without the restrictions of row-by-column seating, teachers can move around freely, making it easy to offer instruction to the whole group or to tutor students individually, regardless of where they happen to be situated.



A variety of learning stations ensures students can work in small groups as well as individually.



Natural light and outdoor vistas allow for moments of reflection, giving students' brains and eyes a break from the intensity of computer-based learning.

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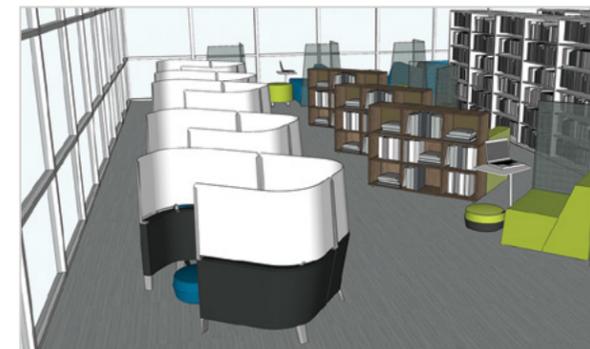
Learning Commons Study Spaces



A variety of open, shielded and fully enclosed settings ensures various levels of visual and acoustical privacy for the changing needs of students.



The librarian is open and accessible to students by being located along a central path at a taller standing-height work space.



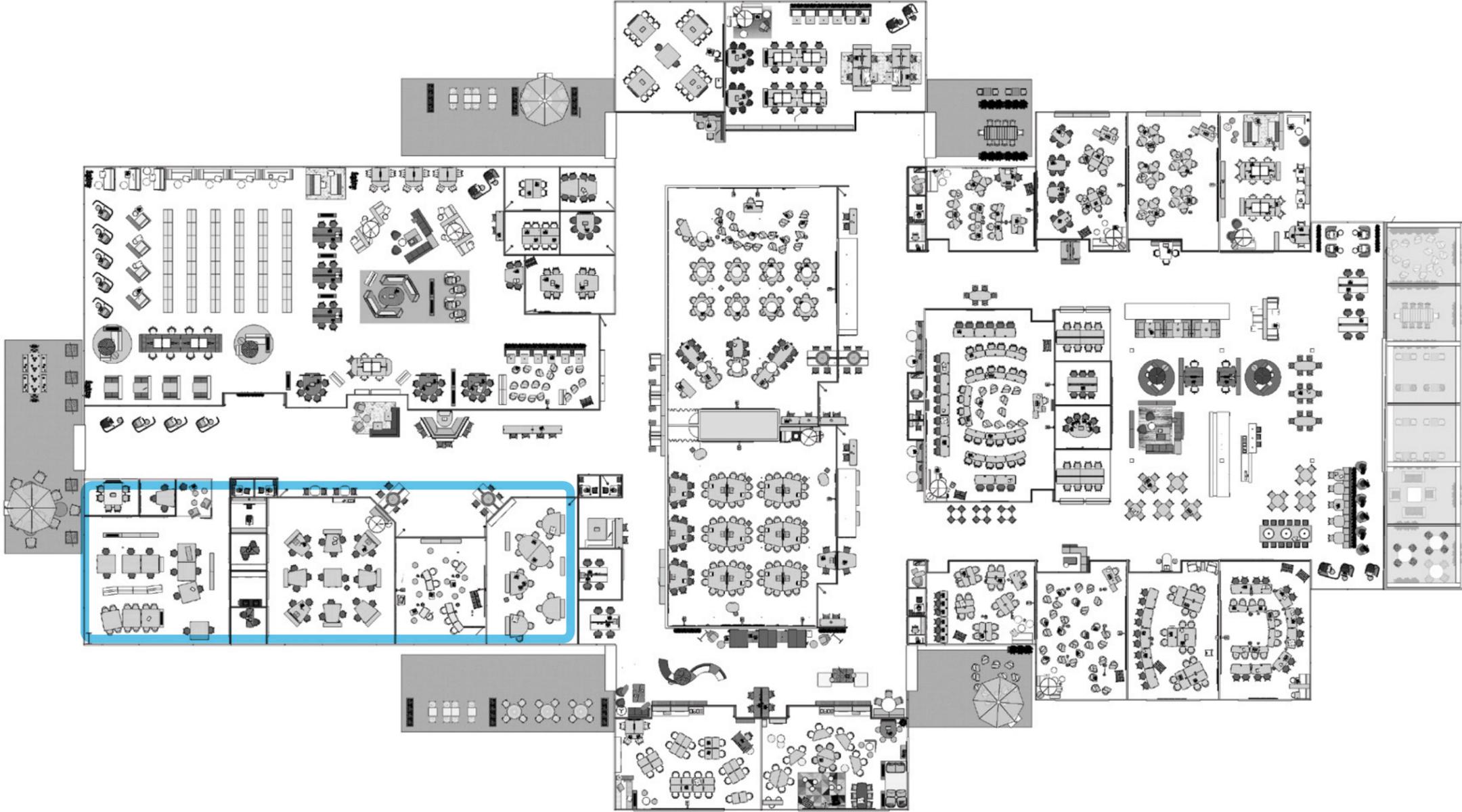
Brody WorkLounges are inviting retreats for deep concentration. For students who prefer more visibility, back-shielded seating provides another option for individual learning.



Informal settings support project work as well as socializing.

Makerspace

Makerspaces are trending rapidly as part of expanding strategies for student success. Along with imparting practical skills, hands-on learning allows students to explore their creativity, develop grit, learn to problem-solve and gain confidence.





Makerspace
Think, Make, Share



This studio setting is designed for digital making. Students can work in collaboration or individually at the maker tables or can go into enclosed enclaves. A niche in the rear with large whiteboards is a breakaway spot for brainstorming and thinking through ideas.



Effective makerspaces support thinking, making and sharing. Here, students can easily move their furniture to see content throughout the space as project teams shrink and grow, and open storage makes materials easy to access.



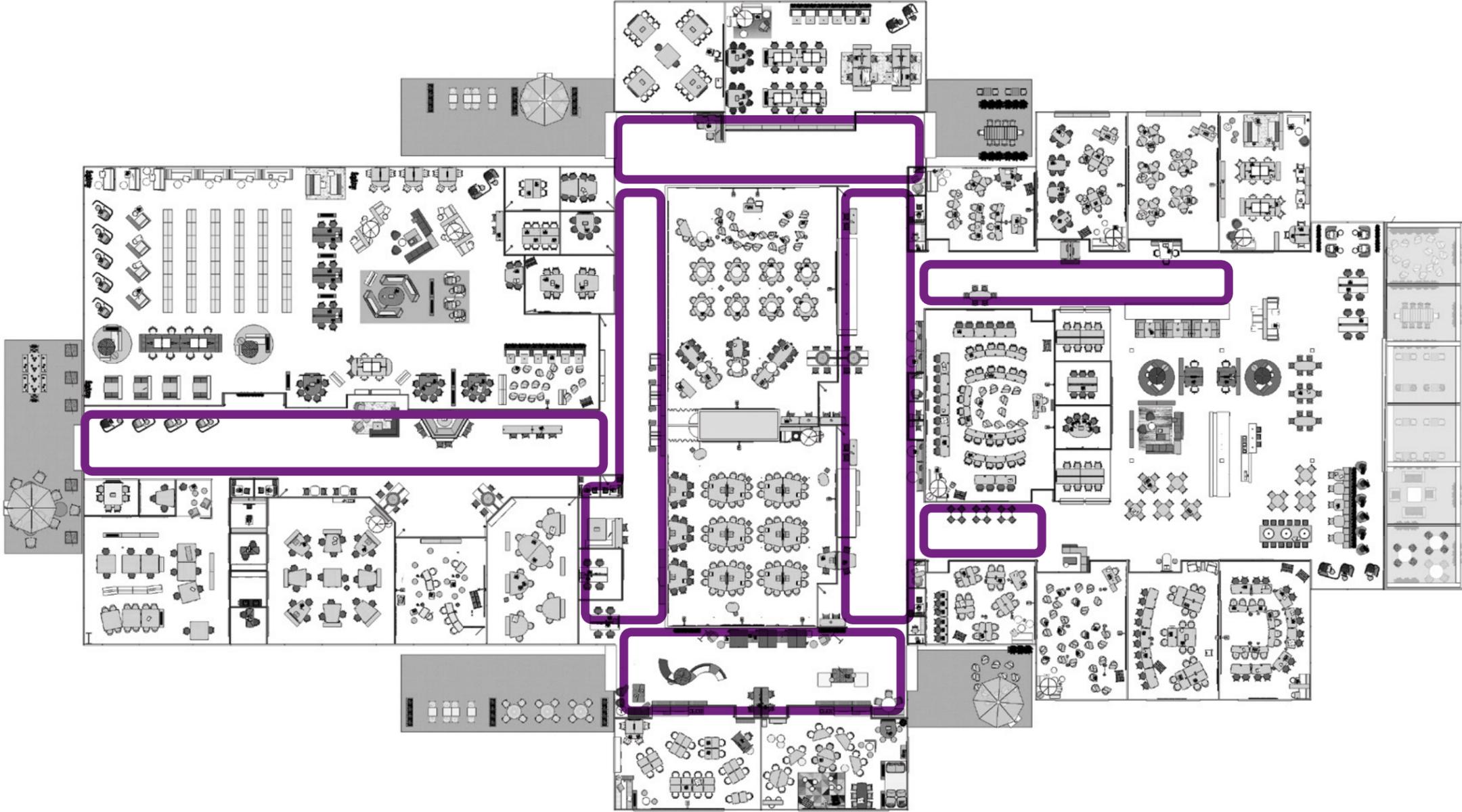
Representing both a formal sharing space and informal sharing spaces, this multipurpose space is very flexible, with the ability to easily change focus from stage to stage, create a “pitch night” fair-like activity, or become a THINK space to capture ideas and inspire creative thinking.

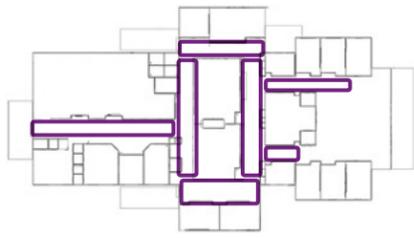


Unlike in a typical classroom, easy-to-move chairs and tables ensure flexible configurations and multiple vantage points.

In-Between Space

More than just transition spaces, lounges, hallways and other ancillary areas can be informal learning spaces for individuals and groups, giving students and teachers more choices and optimizing real estate.





In-Between Space Corridor



A wide corridor is a gathering place for before and after class, encouraging students and teachers to extend discussions and learning. It can also be used for breakouts during class sessions.



Alternating enclosed and shielded settings provide multipurpose settings for students and faculty.



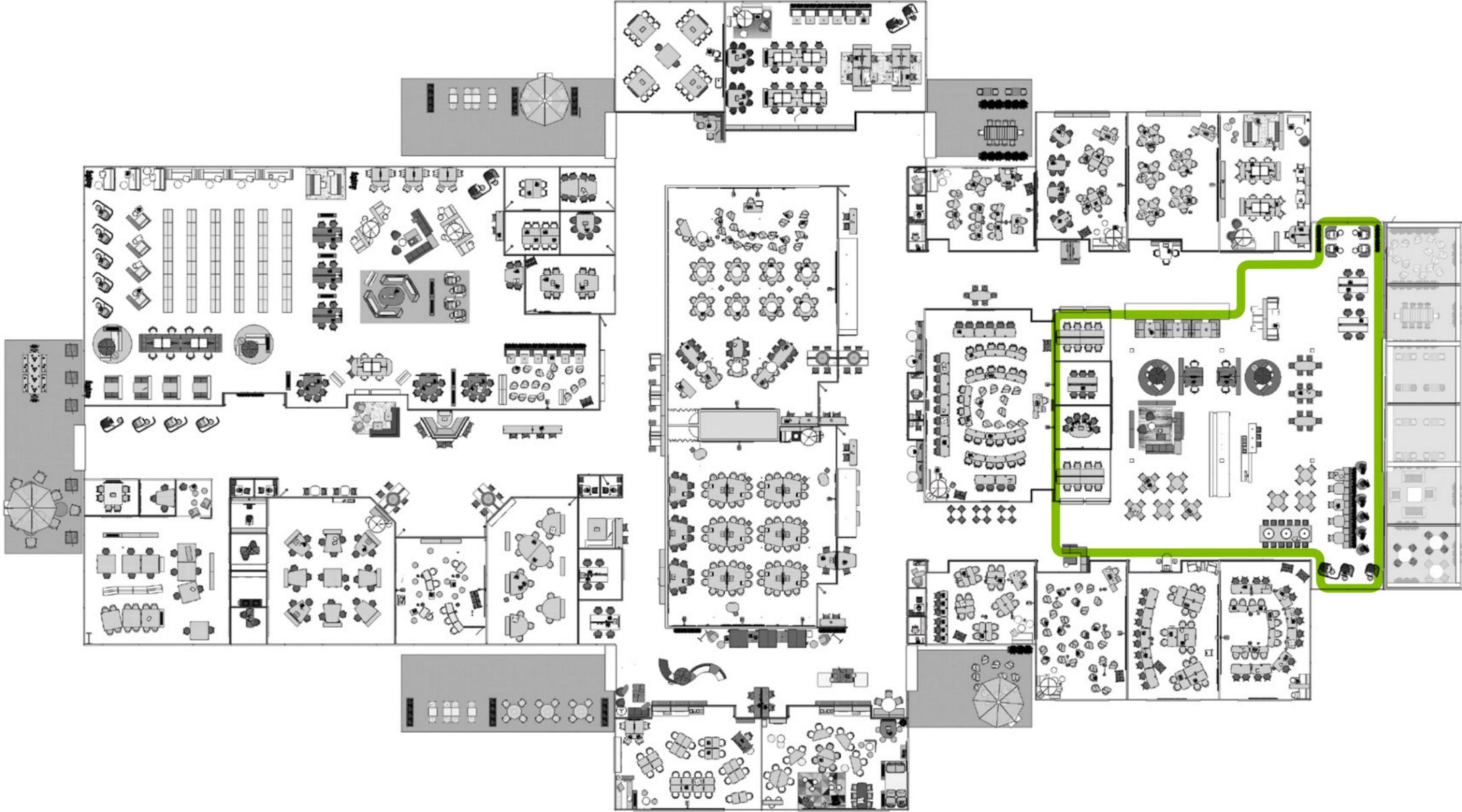
Booths and lounge seating offer alternative settings for studying or socializing.



Small focus rooms and phone booths are mixed into the in-between corridor spaces to provide private spaces.

Student Commons

Today's students want a range of spaces to support the many ways they learn. As a multipurpose environment for relaxing, socializing, discussing ideas or studying alone with others nearby, a Student Commons helps students develop personally and stay engaged in the experience of learning.





Student Commons
Study Spaces



Seating options encourage students to choose where they work best, and a variety of settings encourages students and faculty to interact informally, extending the reach of the classroom.



Seating options encourage students to move around and change postures, a healthy practice for bodies and brains.



Individual settings with screens manage distractions while keeping students connected to the energy of a group setting.



Whether on task or relaxing, students appreciate views to outside and a range of settings to choose from.

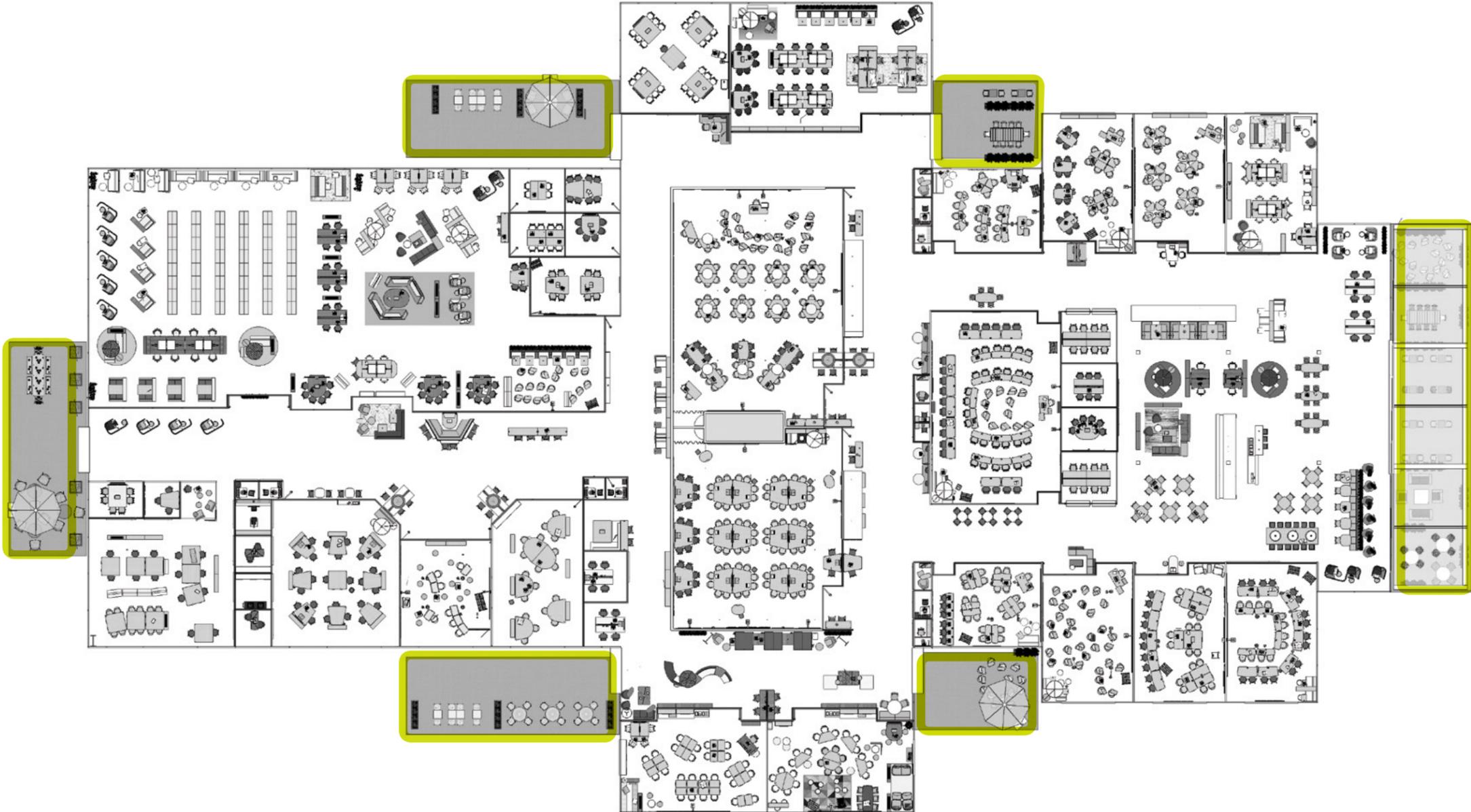
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Outdoor Learning

Though often overlooked, the outdoors can be an effective environment for learning, putting the mind and body in an alert and receptive mode. With supportive worksurfaces and seating, access to power for technologies that require electricity, and shielding from the sun's direct glare and heat, outdoor settings can be stimulating environments for classes, project work and individual study.





Outdoor Learning Study Spaces



Overhangs provide protection from the elements in mild climates, allowing learning to extend outdoors.



Planters define and shield settings, helping manage distractions.



Umbrellas reduce glare on people and their devices so effective technology-enabled and person-to-person learning can occur.





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