**LEARNING SPACES, 2006**

Technology can be used to individualize a student’s experience in a course, improving instruction. Allowing students to progress at their own pace, review material, and take practice quizzes as much as they like, while getting personal help only when desired, is a cost-effective way to improve the learning experience. P.400 (Learning Spaces, 2006)

**CH 14**

**Learning How to See [Diana G. Oblinger, 2006b]**

“We spend a lot of time trying to change people. The thing to do is to change the environment and people will change themselves.” Watson (2006 cited in Oblinger, 2006)

Learning space is a means to an end. Perhaps the focus on learning space will help us know how to see learners and learning more clearly. If we look carefully, active, social, and experiential learning happens continuously on our campuses and in the virtual spaces surrounding us. Ultimately, the goal is to improve learner success. As Buckminster Fuller reportedly said, “Reform the environment. They will reform themselves if the environment is right.”

The Internet has changed notions of place, time, and space.

Space is no longer just physical, however; it includes the virtual. Wireless networks, virtual worlds, mobile devices, and digital learning resources have become part of the environment.

What if you “saw” something different? What if you saw learners rather than lecturers? What if you saw chatter rather than silence and action rather than stillness? What if you saw learning as something social rather than something cerebral? What would be different? Expectations? Learning spaces? Learning? [Can we connect this to Mark’s Personal Communication?]

Historically, learning spaces were designed around teaching or maximizing the number of students in a room. The presumption was that good teaching results in learning—a presumption that focuses on the instructor.

We are learning to put pedagogy first. Ask what learning activities will lead to the desired learning outcomes, not which projection system to install.

According to a Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) guide to designing learning spaces, “Well-designed social spaces are likely to increase students’ motivation and may even have an impact on their ability to learn.” [JISC, 2006 Quoted in Oblinger]

It is possible to build learning environments from both brick-and-mortar and bits-and-bytes that draw students in and elicit a sense of mystery and enchantment (Graetz, 2006).

**JISC LEARNING SPACES**

An educational building is an expensive long-term resource. The design of its individual spaces needs to be:

* Flexible – to accommodate both current and evolving pedagogies
* Future-proofed – to enable space to be re-allocated and reconfigured
* Bold – to look beyond tried and tested technologies and pedagogies
* Creative – to energise and inspire learners and tutors
* Supportive – to develop the potential of all learners
* Enterprising – to make each space capable of supporting different purposes

A 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. The part technology plays in achieving these aims is the focus of this guide.

Embedding technology into learning and teaching spaces is likely to be an evolutionary process rather than a revolutionary one.

Technology will change faster than you imagine. A redesign needs to reflect tomorrow’s technologies rather than rely on today’s.

The 21st century society will need to be ‘a learning society’ in which knowing ‘what’ is less important than knowing ‘how to’. This shift in approach to learning and teaching will require staff who are well prepared for change.

You can’t be sure how these spaces will be used. You are just creating the opportunities for things to happen. [Tom Finnigan, Director of Learner Support, Learning Services, Glasgow Caledonian University]