

# faculty office

## WHAT WE OBSERVED

Faculty offices are set up for private, individual work but often need to function as reception areas, collaboration spaces, storage closets, research centers, etc.

Shared offices are not uncommon, especially for non-tenured faculty. But having to juggle schedules, multiple users and varying workspace needs often results in the offices going unused – or ending up being so crowded that actual work cannot be accomplished.

Faculty members enjoy interacting with peers and sharing ideas and their own lessons learned as a means to develop communities of practice.

Offices are not well-equipped for collaboration – there are few markerboards, projection devices or easily shared screens.

Social spaces lack amenities (copiers, coffee, supplies, etc.) and often go unused by faculty members.

## OFFICE SPACES FACULTY OFFICE

### Multi-purpose Academic Spaces

The typical faculty office was designed in a bygone era as a private inner sanctum and repository for printed material. Amid bookshelves and papers stacked high, instructors hunched over student assignments and research papers. When computers arrived, instructors merely stacked stuff higher to make a little room on an already overcrowded desk.

**A variety of teaching strategies and new technologies are demanding a new approach to the faculty workspace.** Instructors meet frequently with peers and students – who are often carrying tablet computers and other new digital devices – making it necessary to consider tools such as multiple screens. Running out of room in the office, instructors try to hold private conversations standing up or in the hallway outside their office while everyone nearby can listen. It's no way for collaboration or student mentoring to take place. These offices are often situated along the window wall areas of a double-loaded corridor, which means that a wave of hundreds of students moves through the space at every class change.

Inside their offices, instructors have their own ways of organizing information: there are filers, pilers and arrayers. Filers organize information in orderly folders in file drawers. Pilers are just what they sound like: they can practically hide behind towering stacks of materials. Arrayers spread out information across different worksurfaces during the day so nothing is ever out of sight. Faculty members are often hoarders, stashing away information, books and student work for that “just in case” situation.

An instructor's continual process of teaching, researching and learning is now as much a team sport as an individual effort. Consider the design of a group of faculty offices, or neighborhood, around three core activities: concentration, contemplation and collaboration. These may or may not be separate areas of the office but actually fluid zones designed to support a range of activities.

**Concentration.** This area centers on a worksurface with nearby files and shelves geared for the way the instructor stores information. An ergonomic chair supports long hours of concentrated work. There may also be a guest chair for a longer discussion with a colleague or student, as well as a flat screen to display digital content.

**Contemplation.** A high-back adjustable chair with footstool and space divider creates a place for reading and quiet reflection. This area becomes a protected work zone just a few steps from the “front porch” and concentration areas, so the instructor's work-in-progress is protected from visitors. It's a refuge from an increasingly complex and fast-paced workday.

**Collaboration.** Chance meetings to share ideas with colleagues are the lifeblood of an academic. The faculty office entry, or front porch, hosts these collaborative discussions without intruding on an individual's private space. Provide a markerboard, stool or guest chair, small worksurface and flat screen so instructors can share content and engage quickly. This area is also ideal for office hours, when instructors meet with students seeking assistance.

Faculty members still consider a private office and its size a reflection of their status. Institutions can create more versatile, effective and comfortable faculty offices in a smaller footprint by planning spaces with these three essential zones in mind.

## Tips for Faculty Office Communities

Plan a faculty office space as a part of a neighborhood that supports three core activities: concentration, contemplation and collaboration. Faculty need to connect with students, co-create with colleagues on research and curriculum and to feel a part of their academic community.

### I/OWNED

- 1 Rethink private offices for flexibility. Plan a zone for conversations near the door, collaboration further inside and contemplation farthest from the entrance.

### I/SHARED

- 1 Benching worksurfaces or small-footprint workstations provide much needed space for part-time faculty, and their open design allows for more interaction with other faculty.
- 2 An office front porch creates a working buffer zone: a standing-height table hosts impromptu meetings while confidential materials reside inside the concentration and contemplation zones.

### WE/OWNED

- 1 Freestanding furniture systems adapt to the wide variety of faculty office shapes and sizes, with components to provide worksurface, storage, meeting support, privacy, writing surfaces, worktool support and definition for different zones in the office.

- 2 Use this space to foster change and innovation. Project rooms are a great place to try new ideas and fail safely behind the scenes.

- 3 Secondary worksurfaces that are mobile act as a collaboration table, a place to array information, additional storage, etc.

- 4 Faculty members often choose their office furniture, and furniture systems can provide the function, versatility and aesthetics (wood and wood/steel blends) that meet both faculty desires and institutional standards.

### WE/SHARED

- 1 Small huddle rooms located near open-plan workspaces for contingent faculty provide them with private places for phone calls, student conferences, etc.

- 2 A faculty resource area provides a place where faculty can prepare for class and meet with students and peers without traveling far from their private offices. Coffee, copy machines and conversation help draw people to the space.

- 3 An educator needs a writing surface; portable whiteboards are ideal and at times necessary tools for faculty office neighborhoods.

- 4 Provide an intended place for ad hoc meetings and collaboration away from students.



This private office works harder and smarter than ever before by creating specific zones for concentration, contemplation and collaboration. media:scape mobile enhances collaboration among faculty and with students.

# Office Hours

Consider innovative ways to create faculty offices that support the ways educators work today, whether individually or with others.

I/OWNED

Space for work that needs quiet focus, such as research, reading, grading papers, etc. Typically includes a personal desk, storage and a chair suitable for long hours of task work.

I/SHARED

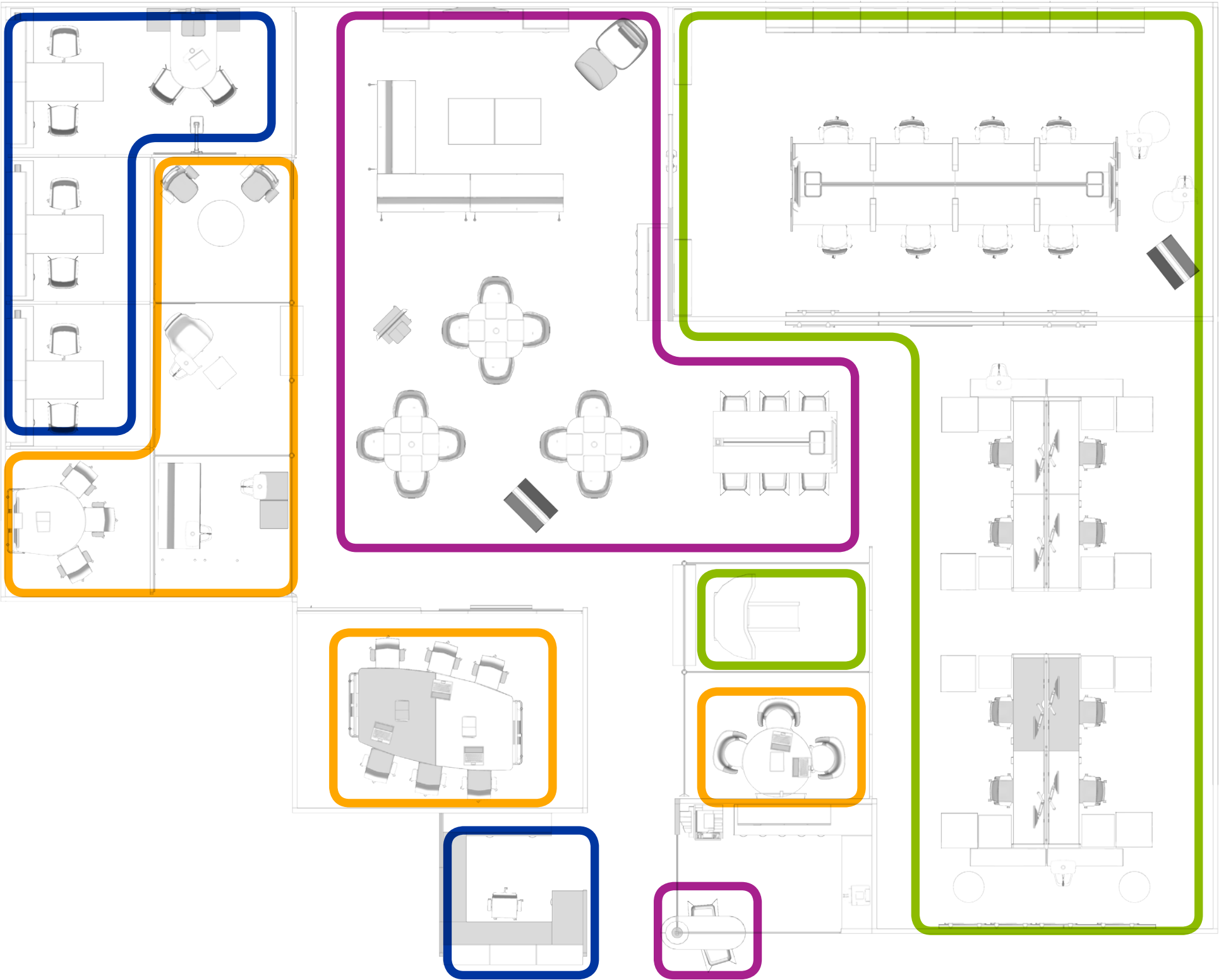
A walkup space that supports individual contemplation. It's a place for individuals without an assigned office to focus or for thoughtful work in a more relaxed setting.

WE/SHARED

A common area designed for collaboration with peers and students. Digital and analog collaborative tools should be provided within these spaces.

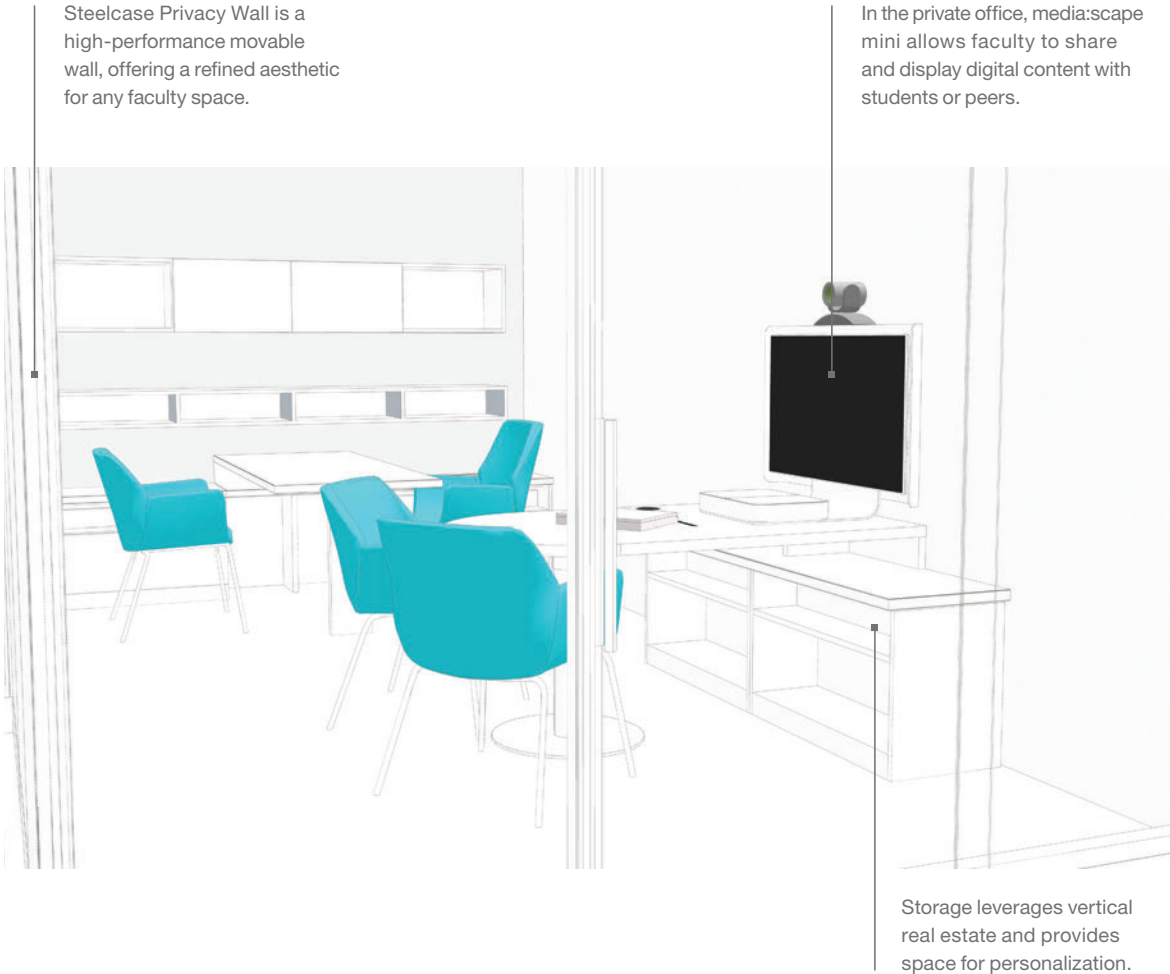
WE/OWNED

Often a front porch area at the entrance to a private office, these spaces welcome others while keeping files, papers and other materials confidential.



Faculty office

This space is a private office for tenured faculty that includes zones designed for concentration, contemplation and collaboration.



FEATURED PRODUCTS

media:scape mini.....	142	Bindu seating
Privacy Wall.....	143	Elective Elements

Focus and collaborate

This space is for those instructors who are in and out of the office, moving between teaching classes and catching up on individual work.

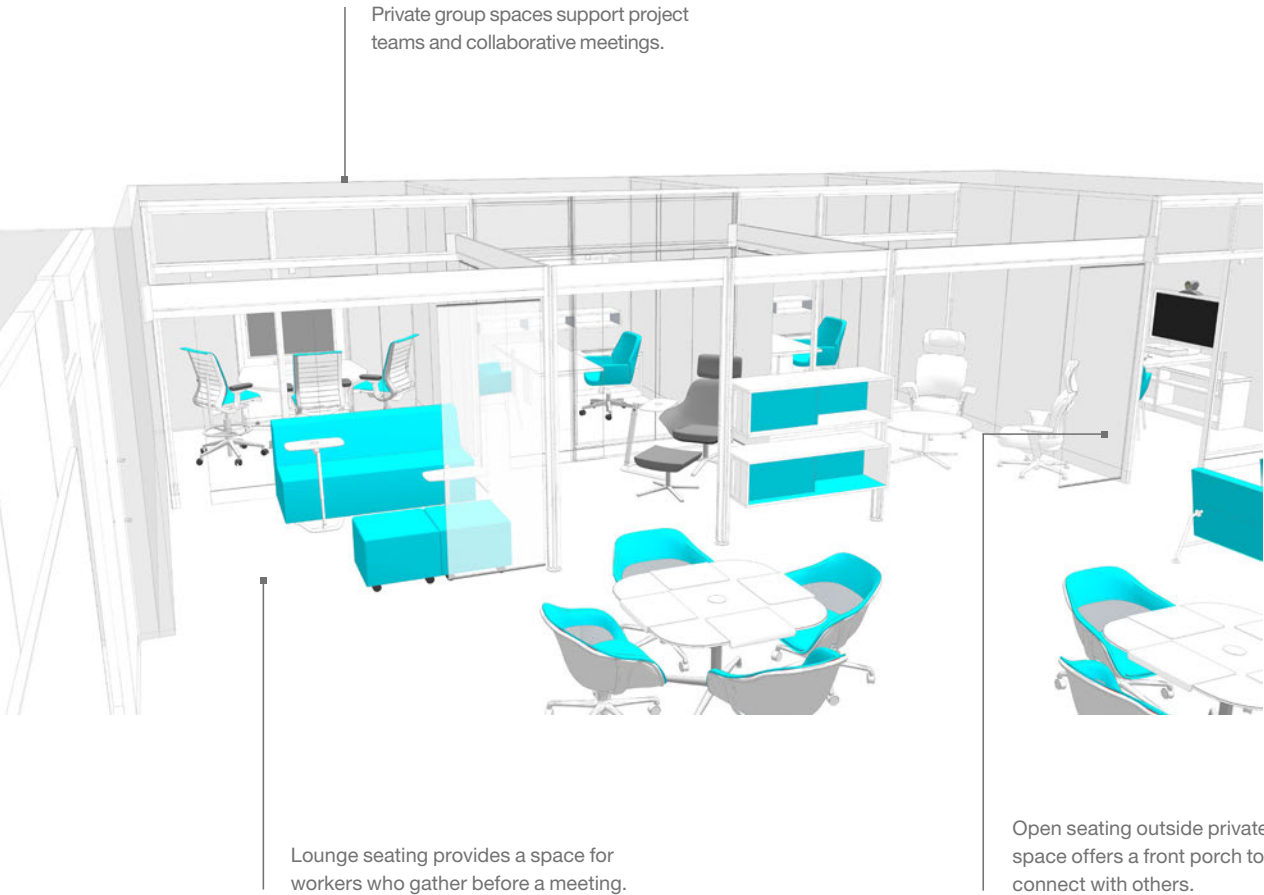


FEATURED PRODUCTS

Think chair .....	134	media:scape .....	141
Jenny lounge.....	136	Duo	
i2i collaborative seating.....	136	Answer system solution	
Walkstation .....	140	Post and Beam	

Private space

While collaboration drives innovation, a balance of privacy is still needed to enhance employee engagement.



PRIVATE/TOGETHER  
PRIVATE/ALONE

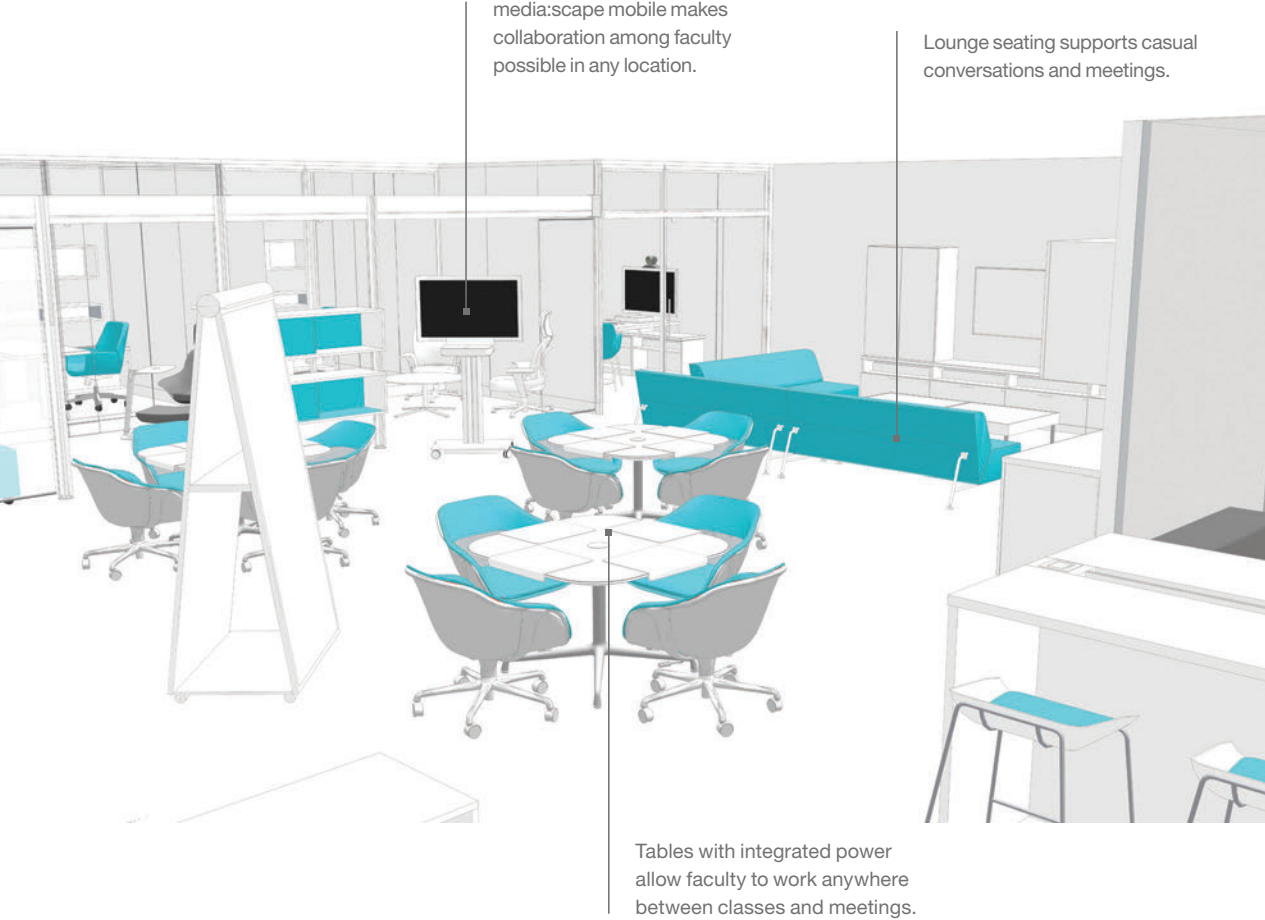


FEATURED PRODUCTS

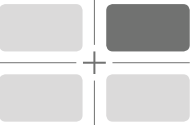
Bob chair .....	135	Freestand.....	139
Campfire Big Lounge.....	135	Privacy wall .....	143
SW_1 .....	137	Alight ottoman Duo	

Faculty connections

This space promotes cross-functional collaboration and connections.



PUBLIC/TOGETHER



FEATURED PRODUCTS

Sidewalk.....	137	EE6
SW_1 .....	137	Post and Beam
media:scape mobile .....	142	Duo

Customer Story  
Mount Royal College  
Calgary, Alberta

At Mount Royal College in Calgary, Alberta, the college's international education department had grown rapidly. Like programs at many colleges and universities, parts of the IE program had sprouted wherever they could find space – in different buildings, even on different campuses. Yet much of their work was cross-functional. “We wanted to create a better work environment that would bring everyone together,” says Lorna Smith, department director. “We needed to remove the silos between groups, and we didn't believe we could do this by using a traditional office model.”

“Traditional workplaces primarily support the formal structure of an organization and its explicit processes – what people say they do,” says Robyn Baxter, Steelcase applied research consultant. “Our methodology allows designers to create workplaces that support the informal networks that allow real work to happen, what people really do.” Working closely with project architects from Kasian Kennedy Architecture and Design, the Steelcase team held a strategic intent workshop with IE leadership.

As the new department took shape, the spaces earned names, both to explain their purposes and to make them destinations.

Reference materials and display technologies are at the Trading Post, which sits beside the Knowledge Gallery, an interactive public area. The central gathering spot is the Information Promenade. Mentoring and coaching nooks are places to meet one-on-one.

Diverse spaces support different needs and workstyles: collaboration and concentration, visibility and privacy, planned and unplanned as well as permanent and temporary.

**“The space is forcing us to work as an entire unit, and it has also helped us realize that we need to function differently,”** says David Wood, manager of the department’s Languages Institute.

The IE space has become a Mount Royal showpiece. “People seem to be really proud of being able to work in this innovative and creative space,” says Judith Eifert, college vice president of academics. “From an institutional perspective, it’s a very efficient and cost-effective use of space.”

“Steelcase really helped us understand how space can be used strategically and how a well-designed work environment can help organizations meet their business goals.”

Surveys of instructors reveal a changed organization:

- 87% believe the new workplace enhances their effectiveness
- 98% are satisfied with their access to relevant colleagues
- 95% are pleased with space for formal and informal meetings



The Knowledge Gallery is an interactive public space and host to many impromptu collaborations.



A coaching nook outside a faculty office makes a convenient place for student mentoring.



Private but still a part of the group, an instructor's office has areas for concentration, contemplation and collaboration.

This revealed the extent of the department's communication issues:

- full-time, part-time and project employees often barely knew one another
- communication had to be formally planned or it didn't happen
- knowledge sharing and mentoring were limited, and curriculum development was slow
- staff often didn't even know who was in the office on a given day

Based on the findings, a design strategy was developed for a new environment:

- central communal space for team building
- views into group spaces for people finding
- spaces to support diverse work processes and storage
- user control over boundaries
- worktools that make it easy to move from one task to the next
- passageways between spaces to allow sharing information and transferring knowledge