



March 17, 2020

Provost David Ward, PhD, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Lumbee Hall

Dear Provost Ward,

Greetings—I hope you are doing well, all things COVID-19 considered.

On behalf of the Task Force on Teaching Excellence and with the input of former Chief Information Officer Nancy Crouch, former architect Scott Noble, and industry representatives over the course of AY2018-2019, I am writing in regard to assuring excellence in classroom design, technology, and furnishing.

It is the Task Force's recommendation that all classrooms at UNCP align with the following principles:

1. The design or redesign of classrooms and the integration of technology therein should reflect current research and best practices in teaching and learning.
2. The design or redesign of classrooms and the integration of technology therein must align with principles of universal design and thereby minimize or eliminate the necessity of accommodations, ensuring classroom environments that “can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability.”
3. The design or redesign of classrooms must fulfill and advance the University's commitment to environmental sustainability.
4. The design or redesign of classrooms must support multiple modes of teaching and learning, such as lecture, the presentation of audiovisual material, collaboration among students and between students and faculty, and the easy movement of all faculty and students for consultation.
5. The design or redesign of classrooms must incorporate appropriate lighting and acoustics and provide for easy access of all users to appropriate infrastructure.
6. The design or redesign of classrooms must spur creativity through appropriate, user-centered sensory engagement.
7. The design or redesign of classrooms must make possible the scholarship of teaching and learning so as to determine and establish innovations in teaching and learning.
8. The design or redesign of classrooms must aspire to flexibility in support of future best practices in teaching and learning.

The Task Force's recommendation grows out of its consultation with subject-matter experts and University leaders in the hope of creating an optimized standard for the design and redesign of classrooms that foster excellence in teaching and learning.

Please find a full development of these principles in the attached framework, and please know that the Teaching & Learning Center stands ready to assist in fostering collaboration among relevant University offices and divisions in the advancement and implementation of this framework.

The Task Force and the TLC are grateful to you for your investment in faculty excellence. Thank you for your consideration, and please contact us if we may provide further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Hicks", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Scott Hicks, Ph.D., Director
Teaching & Learning Center

Enclosure

cc: Associate Vice Chancellor of Information Resources and Chief Information Officer Katina
Blue, EdD, MSIT, MBA, MPA, CGCIO
Assistant Vice Chancellor of Facilities Annie Angueira

Spaces for teaching and learning at the University of North Carolina, Pembroke, must contribute to the fulfillment of the University's mission to "promote excellence in teaching and learning, at the master's and undergraduate levels, in an environment of free inquiry, interdisciplinary collaboration, and rigorous intellectual standards" by "faculty and staff ... dedicated to active student learning"; advance the University's vision to "challenge students to adapt to change, think critically, communicate effectively, and become responsible citizens"; and manifest the University's core values of "[t]he creation, exploration, evaluation, and articulation of ideas," "[t]he appreciation of diversity and respect for the dignity and worth of every individual," and "[t]he commitment to prepare graduate and undergraduate students to succeed in an ever-changing and increasingly technological global environment.

To this end, the Task Force on Teaching Excellence recommends to the Provost and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs these principles for the design and furnishing of classrooms and the integration of technology for teaching and learning therein at the University of North Carolina, Pembroke:

1. The design or redesign of classrooms and the integration of technology therein should reflect current research and best practices in teaching and learning.
 - 1.1. Faculty via the Task Force on Teaching Excellence, students via the Student Government Association, the Division of Information Technology, and relevant and appropriate vendors, shall ascertain cutting-edge research and formulate best practices in teaching and learning through collaboration and consultation.
 - 1.2. The Provost and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs shall implement and assure the design or redesign of classrooms in keeping with cutting-edge research and best practices, facilitating collaboration from initiation to completion among faculty, staff, and students; the offices of Facilities Planning & Construction and Purchasing; and external contractors and vendors.
2. The design or redesign of classrooms and the integration of technology therein must align with principles of universal design and thereby minimize or eliminate the necessity of accommodations, ensuring classroom environments that "can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability."
3. The design or redesign of classrooms must fulfill and advance the University's commitment to environmental sustainability.
4. The design or redesign of classrooms must support multiple modes of teaching and learning, such as lecture, the presentation of audiovisual material, collaboration among students and between students and faculty, and the easy movement of all faculty and students for consultation.
 - 4.1. In order to facilitate interactive teaching and learning, classrooms shall be sized to allow for 28 square feet per occupant, and the classroom's entrance(s), exit(s), and pathways must be accessible for the usage of wheelchairs.
 - 4.2. Furniture should be mobile, durable, accessible, ambidextrous, comfortable, and potentially stackable or nestable, such as mobile podiums and tables, height-adjustable work surfaces, chairs with flippable surfaces, so as to promote transitions between multiple modes of teaching and learning from class to class as well as within classes.

- 4.3. In order to facilitate collaborative learning, each student's work surface should be at least 30 by 24 inches, so as to allow simultaneous use of laptops, notebooks, and books.
- 4.4. In order to advance the University's commitment to writing-intensive teaching and learning, classrooms should feature writing surfaces throughout their spaces and on multiple walls, including but not limited to whiteboards (wall-mounted or mobile), glassboards, personal tablet whiteboards, and writeable tabletops.
- 4.5. In order to maintain easy movement, classrooms should provide temporary storage (cubbies, hooks, and/or racks) for coats, bags, and personal belongings and instructor storage for notes, laptops, and books.
5. The design or redesign of classrooms must incorporate appropriate lighting and acoustics and provide for easy access of all users to appropriate infrastructure.
 - 5.1. Classrooms should include dimmable lighting and zone controls so as to facilitate diverse teaching tasks and classroom activities, including individual work.
 - 5.2. Lighting in front of monitors and/or projector screens should be subject to the control of the presenter.
 - 5.3. Classrooms should maximize natural light as a substitution for artificial lighting where possible and incorporate effective window shades when less light is required.
 - 5.4. The construction of classrooms should include sound-absorption materials and the furnishing of classrooms should include flexible or mobile buffers to facilitate the capability of students and faculty to hear each other easily, whether one person is speaking or whether multiple groups are engaged in simultaneous conversations and to mitigate noise that emanates from within as well as outside the space.
 - 5.5. Classrooms designed for occupancy of more than 25 students must include microphones and amplification.
 - 5.6. Classrooms must provide ample access to electrical power for student, faculty, and staff devices.
 - 5.7. Classrooms must offer mobile access to classroom technologies from anywhere in the space.
 - 5.8. Classrooms should offer students access to shared computer monitors or screens.
6. The design or redesign of classrooms must spur creativity through appropriate, user-centered sensory engagement.
 - 6.1. Classrooms should be painted in colors that foster focused attention as well as creative work and/or create zones for various kinds of teaching and learning within spaces.
 - 6.2. Classrooms should feature artworks and/or artifacts that intentionally and thoughtfully add visual interest and promote critical thinking.
 - 6.3. Classrooms should provide areas for individuals who seek sensory friendly accommodations.
7. The design or redesign of classrooms must make possible the scholarship of teaching and learning so as to determine and establish innovations in teaching and learning.
8. The design or redesign of classrooms must aspire to flexibility in support of future best practices in teaching and learning.