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Book Review

Cases on Higher Education Spaces:
Innovation, Collaboration, and Technology

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Cases on Higher Education Spaces: Innovation, Collaboration, and Technology
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BOOK DETAILS

Over the past couple of decades, the quality of teaching and learning in higher education has been extensive discussed (Stes, Coertjens & Petegem, 2013). There is a need for higher education to cultivate deep knowledge and skills in the ever-evolving area of sustainability (Lockrey & Johnson, 2013). As we know, technology transfer and innovation are considered major drivers of sustainable development (Brodhag, 2013). Sustainability can be a key factor in campus space design, a topic that has been linked to pedagogy innovation in recent years (Jessop, Gubby & Smith, 2012; Neary & Thody, 2008). However, some researchers indicate that there is a lack of empirical data in the study of spaces, particularly as related to higher education, where it has been described as an "under-researched" area (Gray, 2003; Jessop, Gubby & Smith, 2012; Temple, 2008). The book, *Cases on Higher Education Spaces: Innovation, Collaboration, and Technology*, leads us to a deeper understanding of the needs of students, such for as libraries, writing and communication centers, digital media labs, entertainment and academic learning spaces. In our opinion, higher education should devote itself to create spaces suited for learners and excellent campus learning environments.

This book covers 10 main topics, including: (1) collaborative perspectives on space design; (2) creative approaches to space design in higher education; (3) designing social spaces in higher education; (4) effective spaces for communication design; (5) information literacy and space design; (6) innovative space design; (7) integrating technology in higher education spaces; (8) pedagogy and

the design of learning spaces; (9) research in space design; and (10) space redesign. The 19 chapters of this book are divided into five sections.

The first section (Chapter 1 and 2) focuses on the perspectives and methods for higher education spaces, and reminds us that students entering universities have diverse academic backgrounds, for which traditional pedagogies may be inappropriate, since they do not differentiate at all between students' prior experience, nor do they encourage active engagement in the learning process. Therefore, in order to build a first-class campus environment and satisfy the learning needs of all students, universities should be rethinking, redesigning, and renovating campus learning spaces. The second section (Chapter 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7) illustrates that higher education faces challenges and opportunities in creating space and place. This section is primarily comprised of case studies from different types of learning centers and universities. The third section (Chapter 8, 9 and 10) mainly focuses on innovative models for teaching and learning spaces in higher education. Case studies introduce the use of technologies, physical environments, and multiple kinds of instructional activities. In addition, this section not only describes, but also analyzes, the tremendous changes in teaching that impact course delivery in higher education, then illustrates how universities may gather educational specialists, staff and faculty members to create a brand-new learning environment called "the ideal classroom".

The fourth section (Chapter 11, 12, 13 and 14) is devoted to fostering innovations in higher education spaces, especially those which subvert the traditional educational environment and teaching methods through campus changes. One concept given attention is virtual learning commons, through which learners can use diverse resources and technologies to implement self-directed learning at their own pace. As more and more universities start to integrate subjects and promote interdisciplinary collaboration, there are fewer limitations on students' learning. Students do not have to sit in the classroom and absorb knowledge unilaterally. With suitable environments, learners can acquire knowledge anytime. The fifth section (Chapter 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19) introduces models for cross-disciplinary collaboration and space design in higher education. The campus is no longer just buildings, but space with the mission of carrying out education. Library, learning center, and classrooms have been integrated and cross-disciplinary collaborations are utilized to make these become student-centered spaces.

Regarding relevant topics that the book could have addressed, two are noted. As described above, the author mainly focuses on space design, such as campus buildings and learning spaces. However, the education space is not limited to physical environment. Some research has divided higher education spaces into four types, including: (1) Models of physical environments, (2) Models of human aggregates, (3) Models of structural/organizational environments, and (4) Models of perceptual/constructed environments (Huebner, 1989; Huebner & Lawson, 1990; Moss, 1976, 1979; Strange, 1993, 1996). Thus, this book could provide more multifaceted information that would be useful for more experienced school authorities and researchers. In addition, an effective educational environment can be constructed via not only hardware but also software. A well-designed virtual environment can lead students to experience a positive campus atmosphere from interaction with peers and the perspective of others. This could bolster their new college experience and nurture supportive relationships among people with common traits to form their perception of the university experience.

Cases on Higher Education Spaces: Innovation, Collaboration, and Technology, is a comprehensive source of insights into the use of learning space, and it collates numerous case studies of learning experiences. In our opinion, *Cases on Higher Education Spaces: Innovation, Collaboration, and Technology* is a highly recommendable book that is well-organized, well-written, and well-integrated. The scope and breadth of examples is both engaging and thought provoking. It is worth noting that the greatest value and forte of this book is that its authors were able to systematically address each of the components of this immense subject, providing clear-cut explanations and specific examples to explicitly and successfully get their points across to the readers. The cases, terms and notions covered are described in simple and comprehensible language, using grounded and intelligible examples. It is only logical to conclude that this book will be of particular interest and utility to a wide range of readers.

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