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DOBER LIDSKY MATHEY
CREATING CAMPUS SOLUTIONS

SCUP: THE FACULTY OFFICE 1991

The abridged talk below was presented by Arthur J. Lidsky as part of a panel discussion on the role of facilities on faculty recruitment and retention for the Facilities Planning Academy at the Society of College and University Planners, 1991.

The faculty office is a prime site for student and faculty interchanges, contact and discussion among peers, the advancement of knowledge, and the carrying out of professorial assignments and tasks outside the scheduled teaching environment. Drawing on statistical information and observations, the proposed model addresses the issues of office size, configuration, furnishings and technologies as a means of enhancing faculty time and physical presence.

If you ask a faculty member to describe the ideal faculty office, their reply will be swift. It must be spacious... with room to meet with several students

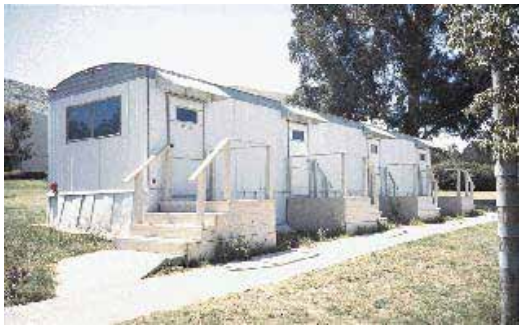
It should have windows that open—corner windows, preferably with a view of the ...

... mountains out of one window and a view of the ...

...ocean out of the other.

And, There should be sufficient book shelves to accommodate their personal library.

Of course, not all faculty offices are ideal. The type of environment that we provide has an impact on faculty retention, morale, teaching, and research activities.



Purpose and Use of a Faculty Office

The faculty office is a truly multipurpose space. Common activities include:

Administration
Advising
Classroom Preparation
Home Base
Meetings/Conferences with students, faculty, and staff
Personal activities—quiet space, eating, etc.
Reading
Research
Teaching
Tutoring
Writing
These activities can occur in various combinations during the course of a single day.

Size and Configuration

How large should a faculty office be? What effect does configuration have on adequacy? Campus mores and faculty expectations certainly have an impact on size of office.

Faculty offices in renovated or retrofitted buildings are sometimes in spaces designed for some other purpose: typically, a classroom divided into three or four offices or a residence renovated for a small academic department where a bedroom or living room is used as an office. There are, of course, specialized offices, such as for music or art programs.

Space Standards

State Standards Range from 100 NSF to 180 NSF
Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education guidelines: 110 NSF to 130 NSF
Council of Educational Facility Planners: 110 to 140 NSF
Space Allocation Models: Univ. of Minnesota and Illinois—120 to 130 NSF

Many state standards include a prorated amount of space for service, administration, and conference space.

We have over 18,000 faculty offices in our space allocation data base. This data base includes offices from public and private universities, as well as private colleges. The average faculty office in our data base is 163 NSF. Some selected averages include:

Science and Engineering offices average 165 NSF
Humanities offices average 162 NSF
Biology 167
English 173 NSF
Philosophy 148 NSF
With English averaging 173 NSF, it just proves that the pen is mightier.

Furniture and Equipment

The size of an office is based, in part on the activities that take place within it, and in part, on the furniture and equipment. To carry out the activities previously listed, a typical faculty office should contain:

Desk,
desk chair,
two visitor chairs,
conference/worktable table,
conference/worktable table,
computer workstation,
telephone,
min. 63 L.F. of shelving,
two file cabinets,
Chalkboard/white board,
Bulletin Board
An office of 150 NSF can be rearranged in many different ways: Based on these drawings and furniture layouts, we recommend that an office of 130 to 150 is an appropriate size faculty office.

Changes in Undergraduate Teaching

As we move into the 21st century, three forces will have spatial impact on the faculty office.

The first is changes in undergraduate teaching. There is a renewed **national focus** on undergraduate teaching. Institutions are reviewing program content as well as teaching methodology. The faculty office, as a teaching environment will be an important resource in any improvements to undergraduate teaching.

The **second** force that will have spatial implication for the faculty office is the extraordinary rapid change occurring in computer and communications technology.

The **third** force is the changes that are occurring in architectural building systems.

Lets talk a little about computers first.

It was just 14 years ago that Apple and Commodore computers began production; and only ten years since the introduction of the IBM PC. What an incredible change in such a short period of time. The office environment and the way in which we work will never be the same.

During this past decade the computer has evolved from a perceived **tool** for number crunching, word processing, and image manipulation to, in this decade, a **source** of information.

There is a vast number of interconnected, international computer networks linking countries, governments, institutions, and people.

There are databases upon databases

During this coming decade the electronic transmission of voice, data, image, and video will become faster, simpler, and cheaper and probably integrated in some fashion with the computer on your desk.

Computer technology will continue to change; so too, will communication technology.

Academic buildings should be designed with the understanding that the communication systems will **change**.

A more integrated approach to cable distribution is necessary utilizing both horizontal and vertical distribution, multiple distribution points, and easy access.

Increased Use of Electronic Teaching

This fall, the Rochester Institute of Technology and Gallaudet University will offer two courses—one taught from Rochester, and the other taught from Washington. Class discussions and meetings between teacher and student will all be done by telecommunications.

Chemeketa is offering an English composition course and a psychology course using telecommunications for all interactions except for examinations.

Collaborative research, writing, and teaching is possible today and will be occur more frequently in the next decade. Collaboration will be facilitated by multimedia conferencing within the faculty office.

Not all communication is electronic—signage is another form.

You used to be able to tell the discipline of a faulty member by the cartoons on the door: The Far Side and Doonesbury - Science and Humanities.

Although some students will want to hand in their assignments electronically others will continue to use a more conventional media—paper

Many times the solution for leaving or picking up a paper at a faculty office

is *ad hoc*

A mail slot or built-in tray might be a simple solution

Architectural Characteristics

The **third** force having spatial implications on the faculty office is the changes occurring in architectural building systems. These changes provide increased flexibility in academic buildings and more individualized control of office environments.

The Center for Building Performance and Diagnostics at Carnegie Mellon University lists the following design changes for the office of the future:

Distributed communications and HVAC Systems

Multiple Core Systems

Improved techniques for balancing heating and cooling

Flexible, movable systems for lighting, communications, HVAC

The end result is a building that expects change and can accommodate it.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Full time faculty offices s**hould not** be shared. Student and faculty discussions often need to be confidential, and it is impossible to achieve confidentiality in a shared environment.

Location

Where should faculty offices be located? Near each other in their department? or near their lab?

Departmental integrity,
Proximity to Department Office and department faculty,
Proximity to other faculty offices,

Proximity to support services,
Proximity to teaching/research labs.

The answer is an institutional decision. Some institutions mix faculty offices from other departments It is more common to have faculty from one department in close proximity.

Some times the answer is economic. In a science building, it is easier to group similar types of spaces—labs with labs offices with offices. Some science faculty like to merge office and research lab.

Policy Issues

Who should have an office? What type of office should be provided?

We often hear that part time faculty or adjunct faculty do not participate in the day to day life of the institution. They come to campus, teach their course, and leave.

Often, part time faculty have no office, or have a small, shared, Spartan space and its no wonder that they don't stay on campus.

Providing improved facilities for part time faculty can open opportunities for expanded interaction among faculty and students and a lead to a stronger academic program.

In Closing—three forces are affecting the faculty office:
National focus on undergraduate teaching
Changing Computer/Communications Technology
Changing Building Systems Technology.

By providing an appropriate office environment we will enhance faculty time and physical presence.

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