

2017 LSC Post-Conference Roundtable: Planning Physical Spaces for Making - Questions for the Future

Q1: Institution / Firm / Organization Name: University of North Texas

Q2: Participant Information

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Q3: Three themes will be woven through this four-hour LSC Roundtable on spaces for making in the undergraduate environment, about: The impact spaces for making have on the user, on their experience as learner Why spaces for making have become an essential part of the 21st century ecosystem for learning Lessons learned from findings from research and practice in the field about what works in planning spaces for making. VentureWell colleagues interested in participating in the LSC Roundtable are asked to share their thoughts on these themes (150 – 300 words). These thoughts, together with materials from the five participating architects, will be assembled and, together with other resources from the LSC archives, distributed to all participants in early March.

The University of North Texas is at an inflection point in its history; last year we were ranked as a Carnegie Tier 1 Research University. Although we have several makers' spaces on campus already, there is no core program focused on engaging students to use the different spaces or to use them as a way to drive behavior campus. Additionally, we have begun construction on a new 45,000 sq ft building dedicated to innovation which will include makers' space. As someone new to managing student makers' space with responsibility for building a large building, this session will be incredibly valuable for helping me learn from others mistakes and create new opportunities. Each of the core themes are critical to my innovation leadership success at UNT.

1. We are developing a centralized space for our 38,000 student population; since we are at the design and building phase, this session will allow us to design the space so that it serves the different purposes of the space (collaboration, community, energy, and focal point for innovation).
2. There are many reasons why space has become essential for learning, but central to my view is that as technology allows people to work remotely, we have lost focus on building communities that foster innovation. For example, the bay area continues to lead new company development because the culture in the area pushes the population to innovate. On my campus, students are divided into their different degree programs, but this collaboration space will unite students across all schools to work together and learn from each other.

I do not feel I have the basis for what research has demonstrated about makers' spaces; I think this session will provide me the experience and vocabulary to design the useful metrics to track success for our programs.
