



California State University, Fresno

Fresno, California, US



Seeking a model for more stimulating and collaborative classroom settings, California State University, with help from Herman Miller, created a Learning Studio in its Family and Food Science building. The university plans to use the insights it's gaining from the project to develop more learning centers for students and faculty.

Recently, California State University in Fresno partnered with Herman Miller to design a Learning Studio in the school's Family and Food Science building. The university saw Herman Miller's Learning Spaces Research Program™ as an opportunity to test a more flexible, collaborative classroom layout using a human-centered, research-based approach. "I liked the Herman Miller program because it uses actual research on students' perceptions of learning spaces," says Rudy Sanchez, Director of Academic Technology and Innovation.

During the project, the team had to solve a number of design challenges, including the university's request that the small space accommodate up to 60 students. To achieve this, the team minimized the footprint of the teaching station, giving professors and students more space to move about and work

Case Study

together. They added mobile chairs and tables to allow groups to rearrange furnishings as their needs change, and café-height seating lines the perimeter. Students and faculty now have a choice of furnishings to suit a variety of learning styles. A large, centrally located monitor has been replaced with four monitors, all thoughtfully placed for optimal viewing by everyone in the Learning Studio.

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Direct feedback from students and faculty indicates that they are thriving in the new environment. “I think we all know that space is important on some level,” says Sanchez, “but this project really reinforced for me, for others across campus involved in the project, and students and faculty using the space just how powerful the learning environment is.” The university plans to use insights gained from the Learning Studio to develop more student- and faculty-centered learning spaces.



Mobile chairs and tables allow the kind of movement and interaction that traditional classroom design can't match.



The new, dynamic environment provides plenty of options for students and instructors to meet, mingle, and get things done together.

Case Study

Industry
Education

Topics
Collaboration
Performance

Applications
Learning Spaces

Project Scope
54 seats, 989 square feet

Herman Miller Products
Caper® Multipurpose Chair
Everywhere® Tables
Intersect® Portfolio Mobile
Easel

Programs/Services
Learning Spaces Research
Program

Year Completed
2014

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Officially designated an arboretum in 1979, the California State University, Fresno campus is a fertile environment for both learning and the 4,000-plus trees that flourish there.