





















the classroom layout (n=23), has good sight lines (n=22), is bright and featured natural light (n=20), and uses the tables to provide group structure (n=12). Features that warrant a fair or poor ranking include insufficient space at tables (n=36), the serpentine table shape (n=9), poor lighting (n=9), difficulty seeing the front of the room (n=8), and having a classroom configuration that is a poor match to the class activities (n=7). Our students sought the same kinds of features as reported by others (Veltri, Banning, & Davies, 2006).

The classrooms are designed to accommodate a variety of different pedagogies and thus far we have paid little attention to aligning classroom assignments with teaching strategies. Consequently, it is not surprising that students recognize when the classroom design and the pedagogy are mismatched. The only data we gathered to date regarding actual utilization was faculty self-reported percentages of time spent in forward-focused activities, as shown in Table 6. Since this is self-reported data from faculty, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions. Faculty indicate that the classes in the straight and serpentine table rooms may have more forward-focus activity based on the percentage of faculty choosing the 81-100% response. In the future, we intend to explore the actual uses of different types of pedagogies more closely.

<i>We are interested in the amount of time your students spend in forward focused activity (e.g., lecture) vs. group or individual work. In general, approximately what percentage of class time is spent in forward-focus activity in your courses in RNSxxx?</i>					
	<b>Percentage of Time in Forward-focused Activity</b>				
<b>Room</b>	<b>81-100%</b>	<b>61-80%</b>	<b>41-60%</b>	<b>21-40%</b>	<b>0-20%</b>
half-round 210	10.0%	55.0%	20.0%	10.0%	5.0%
straight 310	22.7%	31.8%	27.3%	4.5%	13.6%
serpentine 410	26.7%	46.7%	20.0%	6.7%	0.0%

**Table 6.** Faculty Survey: Self-reports on time spent in forward-focused activity.

### Conclusions

We had three goals for this study. First, we wanted to determine whether the three classroom layouts were effective teaching and learning spaces for a range of pedagogical approaches. Faculty thought the room with the half-round tables was the best all-around classroom because it was flexible and allowed easy transitions

between forward- and group-focused activities. Students preferred this room for group work, but considered the room with the straight tables the best configuration for lectures. Seniors regarded the straight table room as the best overall learning environment.

Second, we sought to identify design elements that enhanced teaching and learning for faculty and students. Students responded positively to all three classroom designs. They appreciated the tables that suggest ready-made groups and encouraged student-student interaction. Faculty had a clear preference for the room with the half-round tables over the other rooms regarding classroom design, classroom mechanics, and teaching and learning environment.

Both faculty and students saw the writable walls as a benefit to the learning environment. However, since most faculty reported using the walls “occasionally” or “never,” we suspected that this benefit may be underutilized in practice.

Finally, we wanted to evaluate the effectiveness of the technology resources in the classroom. Faculty responded to statements about the room sight lines and technology in the same way for each room. Students noted that the sight lines in the room with half-round tables were not as good as in the room with serpentine tables and preferred the technology in the serpentine table room over that in either the half-round or straight table rooms. Since the technology installations were identical in all three rooms, we speculate that the students’ perceptions of difference are related to the ways in which the technology was used in the different classrooms. While examining the classroom technology efficacy was a goal of this study, the identical technology installations and the type of data collected limits the conclusions we can draw.

Overall, we were pleased that our classroom designs for these three classrooms in Regents Hall were so well received by students and faculty. The systematic analysis of the data provided some ideas for others in the design stage of a project to consider as they develop their plans. In addition, some issues arose that might be implemented in our own spaces, such as making an effort to match pedagogy and classroom, shifting movable tables to increase personal space as possible, and paying more attention to sight lines for students in certain room locations.

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