

THE PROJECT

Space guidelines are critical to responsible management of space as they ensure that existing and new space supports institutional mission; ensure fair, consistent, and efficient use of space; help define the magnitude of new capital projects in the initial planning; and improve capital planning, budgeting, and management.

Tennessee has 9 state universities, 3 as part of the University of Tennessee system, 5 specialized institutions, 13 community colleges, and 27 technology centers, yet the state has one set of space standards for all institutions.

Existing THEC space standards were adopted in 1992 for budgeting purposes and apply only to educational and general (E&G) space. They need to be updated to respond to changes in teaching methodology, pedagogy, learning, technology, instrumentation, building codes, accessibility regulations, and sustainability requirements.

CHALLENGE

The current trend in the design and construction of postsecondary buildings has shifted over the past 30 years. New facilities need to allow change to occur at minimum cost and with little disruption as programs, pedagogies, and technologies continually evolve. They also need to include spaces that are appropriate for the type of institution they serve, from major research universities to certificate-granting technology centers. Only one set of standards exists for all THEC institution types and they are not flexible enough, nor are they well enough articulated to serve that diversity.

SOLUTION

The study included an analysis of existing space standards and actual allocation of space at the institution types in the THEC system. DOBER LIDSKY MATHEY (DLM) held regular meetings with the Space Planning Study Committee, which guided the process, in addition to touring a representative group of 15 institutions and interviewing their constituents in an effort to understand facility issues and needs. In addition, higher education space guidelines and standards from other states and peer institutions were evaluated and compared.

The guidelines have been generated to assist in campus planning and will inform discussions about future facility improvements and responses to change. As such they will be a tool for planning rather than rigid space standards.



RESULTS

The comprehensive guidelines were approved in Spring 2009. Following application of the guidelines to several institutions at each level of the system, DLM produced and THEC issued an updated/refined document and supporting models in 2011.

REFERENCE

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