

Transformative Learning Spaces - College of Education and Professional Studies



Aspiring educators seek to engage their students with technology in the classroom. UW-Whitewater seeks to give our students access to these devices and applications prior to graduation to give them confidence in employing them successfully in their own classrooms post-graduation.



Technology also provides opportunities for student teachers and faculty to interact while they are on their student teaching assignment, increasing mentorship and support while in the field.

The 21st century has seen the rapid emergence of mobile communications devices that are inexorably changing the way people communicate, collaborate, create and transfer knowledge. Constructed in the 1960s, the teaching spaces throughout the College of Education and Professional Studies were designed for “front and center” one-way communication and lecture-based instruction. Existing classrooms need to be transformed and reimagined as collaborative, active, shared and flexible learning environments so all majors graduate prepared and ready to enter the workforce.

Faculty have embraced the opportunity to present workshops on emerging educational technologies and empower our students to design learning experiences from the ground up, utilizing technology in a relevant, experiential and practical way. However, shifting to more inquiry based learning and personalized education also creates hurdles when working in a traditional classroom. For example, if an instructor envisions an opportunity to hold a Socratic discussion, no student should struggle to see another student’s face as they
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provide their opinion. We envision a new, flexible Instructional Technology Resource Center that would eliminate these barriers with flexible seating and furniture, mobile collaboration boards, interactive data and sound systems combined with moveable walls throughout the first floor of Winther Hall. This will also provide needed space for community workshops, PK-12 professional development, demonstrations and presentations to support the needs of local school district personnel.

Recent discoveries about how people learn, rapid advancements in technology, and heightened awareness of student expectations have shifted the way that learning how to teach is approached in the college. In order to take advantage of these changes, teaching and learning spaces must be able to utilize emergent technologies and have classrooms that are flexible enough to accommodate different teaching styles. Our classrooms need continual revision to maintain the highest quality instruction, technology upgrades, and equipment and teaching materials to maintain currency.

UW-Whitewater was founded as a teacher preparatory school. Imagine the millions of students who learned from a UW-Whitewater teacher over the last 150 years, and how many more young minds will be awakened by one of our graduates, now and in future generations. Our goal, as it always has been, is to give our students the best practical education so that they will be well-equipped to confidently teach others. Imagine how well-prepared our students will be when they enter their own classrooms when they have had the opportunity to learn in a high-tech, flexible environment to best meet the individual needs of students to increase overall benefit to the class. With the Transformative Learning Spaces fund, that future is possible.