Prototype Collaborative Learning Space
Launched in The Budig Computer Lab

— Tom Roderick, student technology coordinator

The HVC2 Collaborative Learning Spaces Committee has developed a prototype collaborative learning environment in an effort to learn what will be needed in the larger learning environs of Anschutz and Watson Libraries. Smaller spaces in each of these libraries initially were considered until six months of planning condensed into one week of action, and The Budig Computer Lab was selected as the prototype environment. Since our goal is High Velocity Change, creating the prototype by Fall 2004 was essential. Locating the prototype in either of the libraries would have required months to modify those spaces to house such a project, whereas The Budig Lab will require simple rearrangements and minimal architectural changes. We held daily planning meetings over one week in early June to develop our plan to convert The Budig Computer Lab into a Collaborative Learning Environment.

The Budig Lab’s current configuration includes rows of single-person computer stations and mostly targets individual users. The new configuration will promote collaboration between our customers on their projects and research. This new configuration will include three separate spaces designed to complement the existing computer facilities:
• Half of the existing lab preserved for single-person computer use, as this is still an important service provided by The Budig Lab. While some computers are being removed from The Budig Lab to make room for the collaborative learning space, these computers will be moved to other locations in Anschutz Library, so that we do not decrease the overall number of computers.
• The two classrooms preserved for their existing functions, but with significant technology upgrades.
• A new collaborative space in the east half of the Main Lab, between the classrooms and single-use computer area. The collaborative space will be separated from the single-use workstations by glass and dry-erase walls, so that people can enjoy unobstructed views from both sides, but with a break in the wall to allow people to move freely across the lab and access the on-site staff. The collaborative space’s three areas will include:
  • An instructional area with privacy walls that can close, tables and chairs on wheels to allow flexible rearrangements, wireless capability and laptops available for checkout, a rear-projection SMARTBoard, and walls lined with dry-erase boards. When not reserved for instruction, this area will be wide open and available to students for group work.
  • Just outside of the instructional area is a more open space available for collaborative work. Here, students can use the many dry-erase boards, more movable tables and desktop computers set up for more than one student to work at a time.
  • A lounge area near the lab’s entrance with comfortable seating, a large coffee-table style work area, and moveable dry erase boards for student use. The area will be wireless, so this will likely be where students use their own laptops and work in an unstructured environment.