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Bricks & Bytes Roundup

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Bricks & Bytes Wrap Up
Debbie Ginsberg, Educational Technology Librarian
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The 2010 Bricks, Bytes and Continuous Renovation Law School Facilities conference was held in Philadelphia, PA, from March 10-12. Topics included the importance of designing law schools to encourage social interaction (“social design”), law school classroom design, and what to expect in 2020. Find more information here: http://bit.ly/8TISiu

Trends in law school facilities

- Media players and instructional computer in every classroom
- Smart podiums with media controllers
- Classroom video capture using built-in recording equipment
- Classroom variety including traditional, horseshoe, and circular layouts
- Law school as social space - designing law schools to encourage student/faculty involvement
- Green buildings with environmentally-conscious designs, e.g. solar power, roof-top green space

Social design in law schools: Marquette

Marquette’s new law school building will open in August 2010. The $85M Eckstein Hall features:

- 4-story interior atrium designed to foster faculty and student interaction
- “Library without borders” which will be accessible on every floor with no controlled entrances
- Fitness center, café, large lockers- services to improve campus life for commuter students

Law school facilities tours

Bricks & Bytes was held at 3 law schools, Drexel, University of Pennsylvania, and Rutgers-Camden. I’ve put pictures here: http://flickr.com/gp/dtclibrary/hj9595.

Drexel – a newer building with sophisticated technologies in every classroom:

- Podium with computer, DVD/VCR
- Smart media controller
- Classrooms with dual projectors
- Sympodium™ monitors – faculty write directly on these monitors and notes are projected on the screen. Notes can also be saved to distribute to students.
Several study rooms featured built-in large-screen monitors on the walls for sharing documents and presentations. Drexel also has “hydration stations” for filling water bottles.

**University of Pennsylvania** – recently renovated several classrooms, improved student spaces, and will soon build a new building with a state-of-the-art courtroom, auditorium, and seminar rooms. New classrooms featured:

- Adjustable podium & sliding whiteboards
- Technology wall cabinets with AV equipment and computers
- Smart controllers to switch media
- Extensive sound proofing

In addition, classrooms (even older ones) now feature built-in recording equipment. New student spaces include meeting rooms for organizations and clubs, new lockers, and lounges which can be used as event spaces.

The newly-renovated faculty lounge doubles as a faculty event room with built-in presentation technologies.

**Rutgers-Camden** - completed its new building in 2009. The new building connects to the old campus by a bridge which doubles as a student lounge/cafe. The new building features:

- Classroom podiums with built-in computers, media, smart media controllers
- Classrooms with built-in audio and video recording equipment
- Sophisticated digital signage

Other new improvements include study rooms with built-in cameras so students can record and review skills practice sessions.

**What to expect in 2010**

One of the most interesting sessions discussed future technologies which will impact law schools during the next 10 years:

- Wireless chargers for phones and notebooks
- Green technologies such as improved HVAC, building materials, recycling technology, and solar power
- Improved remote learning technologies such as seamless video transmission, technologies which will be “reliable as the dial tone”
- E-casebooks – technologists continue to predict the demise of print (at least for textbooks)
- Ubiquitous digital signage especially since flat-screen displays will become even cheaper
• Voice recognition and the disappearance of the traditional keyboard