

TOP 10 TRENDS IN

# CAMPUS DESIGN





## Campus experience matters.

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A positive campus experience helps attract and retain students, builds a sense of community and establishes culture. Today's students have **options**. One of the best ways to beat out the competition and ensure your institution is their top choice is to stay ahead of campus design trends.

You want students to graduate with the sentiment of "I was lucky enough to attend that school," but how can you ensure your campus meets their expectations?

**Incorporate these 10 design trends into your campus.**



1.

## TREND ONE

# Healthy Buildings

The EPA estimates 46 percent of all U.S. public universities have conditions that negatively affect the quality of the indoor environment.<sup>1</sup> Students want to learn and grow in a healthy environment. Incorporating this trend into your campus doesn't mean you need all new buildings. Campuses can create a healthy environment in many ways, big and small.

### Increased exposure to nature and outdoor views

Increased exposure to nature is arguably one of the best ways for college students to stay refreshed and engaged. Time in nature [reduces stress and improves creativity and concentration](#). In fact, in a study at the University of Michigan, two groups of students were given a memory test. One group took a walk through an arboretum while the other group walked through the city. The group that had the arboretum experience [performed 20 percent better on the test](#).

### More stairs, fewer elevators

Between clubs, classes, working and studying, college students barely have time for anything else. One activity that immediately gets cut out of the schedule is exercise. By creating an environment with more stairs, working out becomes a natural part of the college student's day. Taking the stairs causes the [body to release chemical endorphins](#), making you feel happy and calm. Over the course of a day or a week, these chemicals reduce stress and increase ability to concentrate.

### Healthy dining options

Food is fuel. Just like an automobile, without the right fuel, a college student cannot perform their best. The majority of college students eat on campus so it is up to universities to provide a [healthy dining experience](#).

### Improve Indoor Air Quality

From chemical-free cleaning supplies to finishes low in Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC), institutions can help mitigate against poor indoor air quality and exposure to allergens. Increased air circulation improves air quality and helps students and staff maintain focus.

## How to Incorporate on Your Campus

- Use nontoxic building materials for construction projects
- Implement proper HVAC and recirculation of air
- Find more opportunities for natural light for improved overall health of your students
- Deploy chemical-free cleaning and low-VOC finishes
- Recommission existing buildings to assure air systems work as intended

# Technology

In a world where [more than 80 percent of students use mobile technology](#) to study, technology in the classroom is simply the way of the future. The key is incorporating technology into campus life in a way that is helpful instead of distracting.

## Interactivity

For millennials and Gen Z, technology already is an integrated part of their life. It only makes sense to also use it to communicate with people at their university. Create an atmosphere of openness by encouraging university faculty and staff to communicate with students using technology either via mobile devices or by using a virtual learning environment and course management system.

## Accessibility

[Accessible technology](#) is technology that has been designed to accommodate all users. When creating documents, websites, applications or other technology for the university, it is important to take into consideration every user. People with disabilities should be able to access the technology by enlarging the font, connecting audible or tactile output, or using other assistive technologies. Every device—including desktops, laptops and mobile devices—should be able to easily access university technology.

Additionally, [91 percent of students list Wi-Fi as an important element](#) of a great on-campus hangout, so make sure it is accessible across campus.

## Convenience

Today's college students are one of the busiest populations. To improve their day-to-day lives, many of them rely on technology for convenience. In fact, 58 percent of Gen Z use their laptop to order food, compared with 38 percent of millennials.<sup>2</sup> As well as ordering food, many college students order books and clothing online to save the time of shopping in stores.



## How to Incorporate on Your Campus

- Use apps and touchscreen devices to make restaurant ordering faster
- Incorporate tech-enabled spaces for collaboration
- Capitalize on the growing popularity of augmented and virtual reality
- Add gaming and simulations
- Prioritize technology-centric classrooms
- Ensure Wi-Fi is everywhere
- Allow for screens and easily accessed information

3.

TREND THREE

# Connectedness

As our world gets more connected, college students often find themselves spending so much time talking to people online that they are not interacting with the people right in front of them. In fact, [25 percent of teens spend time with friends in person \(outside of school\) on a daily basis while 55 percent of teens text their friends daily](#). It is important for universities to foster in-person connections by providing space for students to come together and encouraging socialization and togetherness outside of the classroom. One of the easiest ways to do this is by creating engaging communal spaces, such as dining venues and other gathering spaces.<sup>3</sup>

Many universities today are creating Living Learning Communities. These communities are residence halls filled with students of a common interest. For some universities, this means students of the same major. For other universities, these are students of all different majors who have a similar hobby or interest outside of the classroom. Whatever the theme, these areas support connectivity within the campus community and are particularly beneficial for first-year students.



*Students need to be in an environment where the connections they feel to all the worlds that they connect with can be allowed, more or less simultaneously. These students will be working in a world where that kind of connectivity, that kind of split-second shifting from one thing, that has maybe a social implication, to another that has a work, or a business or a learning implication... those boundaries are not crisp anymore. I think our environments need to allow people to move smoothly in and out of those different worlds that they inhabit. What works to prepare a student to be successful in their classes, with the kinds of skills they have to use, is not that different from the skills they're going to need when they graduate and go into the workplace."*

**Lee Van Orsdel**

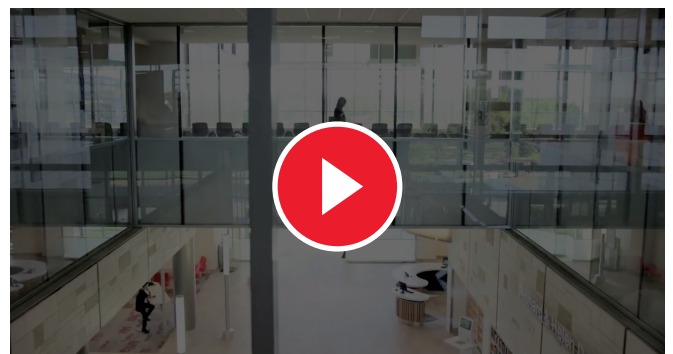
Dean of Libraries, Grand Valley State University

## How to Incorporate on Your Campus

- Add service and meeting hubs
- Carve out game areas
- Create venues for art, music and the spoken word
- Develop [modern gathering spaces](#)

### Higher Ed Example:

Grand Valley State University  
Mary Idema Pew Library



4.

## TREND FOUR

# Local Connection

By providing a connection to the building or community's roots, campus design can highlight the history of a space through architecture and décor.

When choosing a college, students are not naive to the fact that they will be calling this place home for years. Not only do students check out the campus, they also explore the surrounding areas. Whether that is a big city or a rural community, students love to learn about where they live. Allow prospective students to learn about your surrounding areas by incorporating them into everyday campus life.

## How to Incorporate on Your Campus

- Use repurposed and recycled building materials
- Initiate volunteer opportunities and community involvement
- Hire local designers
- Use repurposed and locally sourced materials



# 5. TREND FIVE Convenience

While college students increasingly are being portrayed as poor and frugal, they are willing to pay more for some things. Almost all of which fall into the category of convenience. Today, convenience is a “must-have” attribute for busy students.

At many universities, you will find students paying hundreds of dollars for a parking pass near their residence hall, and 46 percent of students cited convenience as a main factor in choosing a dining location.<sup>4</sup>

Growth of startup businesses speaks for itself. Companies like ride-sharing service [Uber](#), meal-delivery service [Blue Apron](#), and online subscription and personal shopping service [Stitch Fix](#) are growing tremendously. What do all of these companies have in common? They make an everyday chore or necessity (getting from place to place, grocery shopping and clothing shopping) quicker and easier.

Here’s the breakdown.

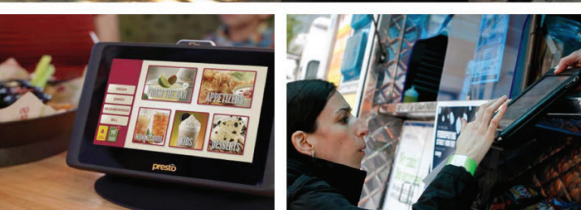
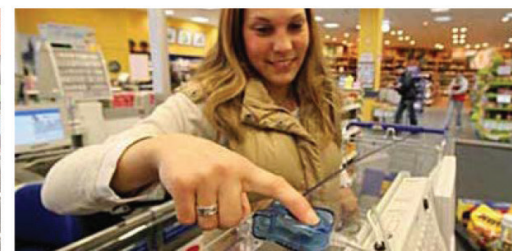
## On average each day, **full-time university and college students spent:**

- 3.5 hours on education activities
- 2.3 hours working
- 8.8 hours sleeping
- 4 hours on leisure and sports activities

This doesn’t leave a lot of time for anything else. Because of this, students are happiest in environments centered on convenience.

## How to Incorporate on Your Campus

- Offer grab-and-go high-quality food options
- Install self-checkout
- Create conveniently accessed dining options
- Install mobile systems to communicate with students and for students to communicate with campus functions



6.

TREND SIX

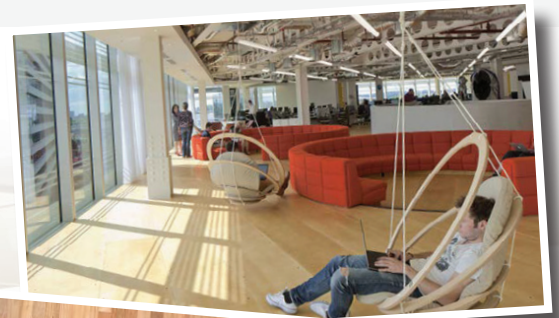
# Informality

Today's students thrive in collaborative environments and relaxed settings.

"Students increasingly use on- and off-campus food service locations for study sessions; a casual, comfortable ambiance may appeal to those looking to discuss assignments with others or study alone."<sup>5</sup> In fact, 89 percent of students cite comfortable furniture as an important element of a great on-campus hangout.<sup>6</sup>

## How to Incorporate on Your Campus

- Choose lounge study spaces rather than desks and chairs
- Add stadium classroom seating
- Create relaxed gathering areas
- Build out coffee shops with lounge seating



7.

## TREND SEVEN

# Flexibility

A flexible campus design offers **choices**.

### Studying

Students are increasingly comparing university experiences to the real world and the classroom is the first place they will look to make that comparison. Is your curriculum based around tests and lengthy papers or group projects and internship opportunities? With group projects and internship opportunities, students are allowed to choose a topic or a company and explore things they are interested in. In the long run, this leads to happier and more prepared graduates.

### Socializing

Socializing is a fundamental part of student life. Allowing students options on where and how to socialize is imperative to ensure success for all types of students. Some students thrive in organized social activities like clubs or school-sponsored events. Other students need common spaces like coffee shops and lounges to socialize on their own.<sup>7</sup>

### Classroom Design

Classroom design is one of the most influential factors in increasing interaction and engagement. The highest [levels of information retention](#) are reached through students doing and teaching others while the lowest retention levels are reached by lecturing. Classroom settings that allow teachers and students to move around freely and interact with one another keep minds focused. When creating [active learning spaces](#), guide the design using these four questions:

1. What's the vision?
2. What's the focus?
3. How flexible?
4. What's the budget?



### Dining

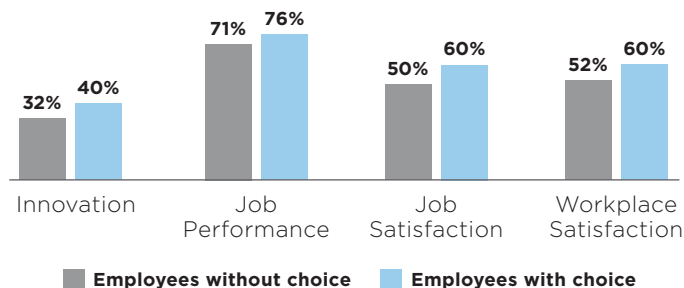
When it comes to their dining options, students don't just want several choices—they also want the flexibility to customize their choices. Fifty-three percent of students said they value the ability to make food substitutions, and 50 percent of students want the ability to add ingredients themselves.

Flexibility isn't just good for the student experience—it also has been shown to improve employee experience in their workplace.

## How to Incorporate on Your Campus

- Invest in modular furniture
- Incorporate interior movable walls
- Offer more customizable dining options
- Create flexible classroom learning environments

Employees who can choose when, where and how to work have higher levels of...



SOURCE: Gensler 2013 Workplace Survey

8.

TREND EIGHT

# Transformation

Do you wish you could do more with your campus, but you just don't have the space? One room, hall or stadium can have many purposes. Renovating existing spaces to be transformative multipurpose spaces can save institutions between 23 and 108 percent, depending on the space.<sup>8</sup>

For instance, the John Paul Jones Arena in Charlottesville, Virginia, transforms many times per year from a basketball arena to a concert venue to allow various types of entertainment for students and community members.

Not all transformation spaces require a huge construction project.

## How to Incorporate on Your Campus

- Create a dining space by day and banquet hall or event space by night
- Add garage or sliding doors that turn indoor dining spaces into outdoor dining spaces
- Develop spaces that are lecture hall by day, music venue by night



# Sustainability

Sixty-nine percent of college applicants this year say having information about a [college's commitment to environmental issues](#) would contribute to their decision to apply to or attend the school. There are many ways universities can show their green initiatives. The [Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System™](#) (STARS) is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance. Participating in STARS allows your university to gain international recognition for your sustainability efforts. Higher ed institutions also have an opportunity to become LEED-certified.

Forty-six percent of students say that it's important for the restaurants they visit to be socially and environmentally responsible.<sup>9</sup> American University purchases around [36 percent of its dining hall food within 250 miles of campus](#). The college also has started a community garden on campus that is run by AU students but [open to community members](#) interested in composting or gardening.

## How to Incorporate on Your Campus

- Use recycled paper products in cafes and coffee shops
- Bring farmers markets to campus to allow students access to local produce
- Redesign buildings with solar panels
- Replace outdated water fixtures with efficient ones
- Place rain water barrels outside campus buildings
- Start a recycling program
- Add farm-to-fork dining options
- Compost
- [Implement energy management techniques](#)



10.

TREND TEN

# Food Transparency

Sixty-five percent of consumers say it's important to know how their food is produced.<sup>10</sup>

## How to Incorporate on Your Campus

- Offer menus that identify location of food source
- Host "Meet the Farmer" events in dining areas
- Prioritize ingredient transparency
- Schedule cooking demonstrations
- Create a campus garden

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*It is becoming more important than ever that consumers are assured of where their food comes from, how it is made and what the food contains. The growing demand for transparency is leading restaurants to shift gears in how they communicate with consumers. Not only does transparency sell a narrative around food quality, simplicity and freshness, but it connects with a human, emotional component that is centered on social responsibility, sustainability, food safety and animal welfare.”*

Technomic Top 500 Chain Restaurant Report



# IMPLEMENTING THESE TRENDS ON CAMPUS CAN BE COMPLEX—BUT A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP ENHANCES THE CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

Learn how Aramark can help your  
campus implement these trends!

Contact Aramark today.

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SOURCES:

<sup>1</sup> Harvard Chan School of Public Health, "School buildings can influence student health, performance"

<sup>2</sup> Technomic Smart Support, "The Gen Z Selfie," June 2016

<sup>3</sup> Technomic Smart Support, "The Gen Z Selfie," June 2016

<sup>4</sup> Aramark DiningStyles Fall 2016 Aggregate Report

<sup>5</sup> Technomic College and University Consumer Trends Report, 2015

<sup>6</sup> Aramark Campus Insights, "What Students Want From a Modern Campus"

<sup>7</sup> Aramark, "Critical Factors for the Future of Campus Living and Student Experience"

<sup>8</sup> University Business, "Renovate and Reuse: Higher Education's New Mantra," 2010

<sup>9</sup> Technomic College and University Consumer Trend Report, 2015

<sup>10</sup> Sullivan Higdon & Sink FoodThink, "Evolving Trust in the Food Industry"