

# Edge project room usage survey

## Background<sup>1</sup>

After the end of the spring 2015 semester, a survey<sup>2</sup> developed by the Edge Leadership Team and the Assessment & User Experience Department was sent to 113 people involved with the 19 project teams who used shared or dedicated space in the Edge.<sup>3</sup> The goal of this survey was to better understand what participants found helpful about having space in the Edge, as well as how the space or process of working with a space could be improved.

## Recommendations

- Directly email the primary contact of the six projects from which no one responded to the survey; ask them to respond now (if the issue is just that they ended up not using the room, we'd really like to know that too, and know why).
- Address issues around whiteboards. These whiteboards seem to be physically difficult to clean; is there an ideal cleaning product? Is there a way to keep cleaning supplies in each room (could they be locked in the storage units)? Could the libraries perform a regular "full cleaning" with appropriate supplies – perhaps once every week? Could funds go to keeping more cleaning supplies on hand?
- General cleanliness of shared rooms came up as a problem. Consider how to address this. Can signage be added asking folks to be mindful/clean up? Can frequency of cleaning be increased?
- Open the application for space earlier in coming semesters; consider allowing groups to change the time of day of their reservation mid-September, if needed.
- Technology considerations: is there a way to leave dongles/cables in each room (could they be locked in the storage units)?
- Consider whether codes should be required to enter. Do we still think this is the best workflow?
- Several people requested that Edge rooms be bookable online – this is out of scope for feedback on shared/dedicated rooms, but did come up several times.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information, please contact [emily.daly@duke.edu](mailto:emily.daly@duke.edu)

<sup>2</sup> See the full survey in appendix A.

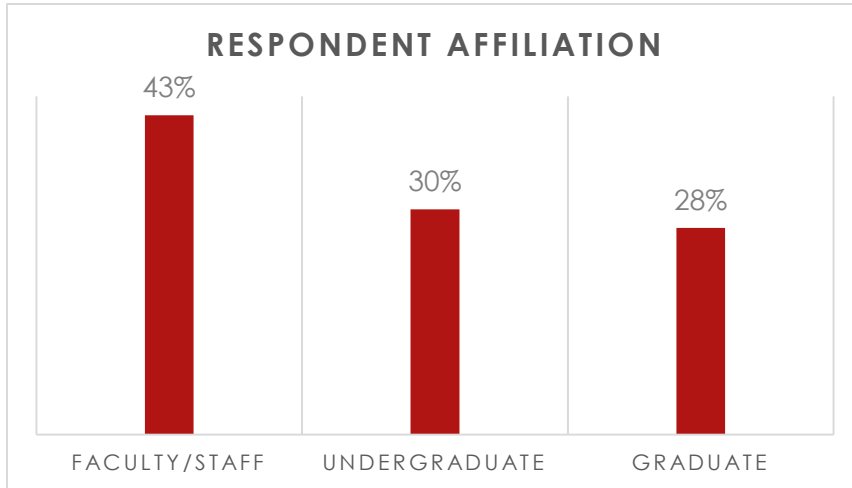
<sup>3</sup> One team had dedicated space, 18 had shared space.

## Findings

The survey received 40 responses; a 34.5% response rate. Responses came from 13 of the 19(68.4%) projects that had shared/dedicated space in the Edge. There were six groups from which no one responded (see bottom of Table 1). There were also two groups from which every project participant responded. Other response rates varied from 27%-67%.

**TABLE 1. RESPONSE RATE BY PROJECT GROUP**

Project Name	Partners	No. responses	Response rate
Crowdsourcing Societal Tradeoffs	3	3	100%
Mapping Sustainability Links	5	5	100%
Fulfilling the Promise: Do MOOCs Reach the Educationally Underserved?	3	2	67%
Visualizing History at Duke	9	5	56%
Project Vox	6	3	50%
The University as a Laboratory for Smart Grid Data Analytics	6	3	50%
ViFlex	2	1	50%
One Person, One Vote	9	4	44%
Project Narrative: Voices of Medicine	5	2	40%
Bass Connections Sickle Cell Project	8	3	38%
Wilbourn Infant Lab Writing Group	11	4	36%
Bass Connections EHD: Coursera and the Future of MOOCs	6	2	33%
Exploring the Intersection of Energy and Peace-Building Through Film	11	3	27%
Changeworks	7	0	0%
Discrimination and Health meta-analysis	2	0	0%
Dream MD	3	0	0%
DSGRU	3	0	0%
Neuroplicity	4	0	0%
VLOP SHEDF DUKE Social Innovation	10	0	0%



The majority of respondents were faculty and staff (43%), but sizeable portions were also graduate students (30%) and undergraduates (28%). There were no post docs in the respondent pool. This may simply reflect the makeup of the population in question.<sup>4</sup>

The 40 respondents were affiliated with over 25 different departments. These are shown below in Table 2, ordered from most frequently occurring to least frequently occurring.

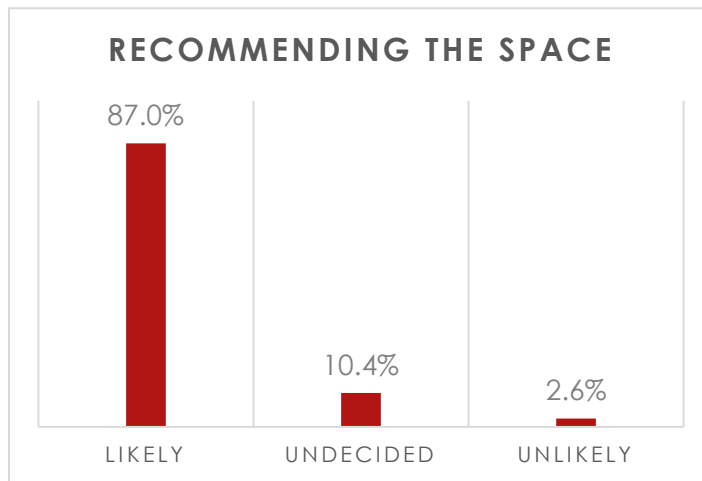
**TABLE 2. DEPARTMENTAL REPRESENTATION**

Department	Number of respondents affiliated
History	6
Nicholas School of the Environment	4
Psychology	4
Computer Science	3
Global Health Institute	3
Philosophy	3
African & African American Studies	2
Center for Documentary Studies	2
Electrical and computer engineering	2
Library	2
Neuroscience	2
Public Policy	2
Art, Art History, & Visual Studies	1
Audiovisualities	1
Biology	1
Center for Instructional Technology	1
Cultural Anthropology	1
Economics	1
Energy Initiative	1
Engineering	1
Project Health Narrative	1
SSRI	1

<sup>4</sup> Affiliation was not tracked outside the survey, so we only know affiliation for survey respondents.

Statistical Science	1
Statistics	1
Sustainability	1
Sustainable Duke	1
Trinity College	1

### How likely are you to recommend this space to others?



Thirty-four respondents (87%) said that they are likely to recommend this space to others. One respondent (2.6%) said s/he would not recommend the space; this respondent worked with the “Fulfilling the Promise” project. S/he noted that:

*“The rooms already seemed dingy because of the white board marker removal being*

*less than ideal. The room was often dirty as well.”*

Additionally, four respondents (10.4%) were undecided as to whether or not they will recommend the Edge to others. Of these four, three provided a comment elsewhere that may explain the answer choice. One reported never using the shared room personally, though others on the project team did. A second said his entire project team barely used the room:

*“My group, ViFlex, only got to use it for couple weeks and was figuring out partnership with the Innovation CoLab, so we actually ended up not using it much.”*

A third had issues with the space not being well-suited to the size group that had been assigned to it (the “Exploring the Intersection of Energy and Peace-Building Through Film” project):

*“The room was a little too small for the number of people in my class, and as it was long and thin it was a little difficult to talk to everyone. Definitely better as a study space than a classroom.”*

### What was helpful about having a Project Room in the Edge this semester?

This was a free-text question that the majority of respondents answered. Responses were coded into categories for quantitative analysis. The two aspects of the space cited most frequently as helpful were the **central location** of the Edge and the ability to **have reserved, private, dependable space** (48%, 19 respondents each). A quarter of respondents (25%, 10 respondents)

mentioned the writable walls as one of the great features enhancing the workspace, and 15% (6 respondents) emphasized the technology available in the rooms as a feature that greatly enhanced their ability to collaborate effectively. Eighteen percent of respondents (7) also mentioned how helpful it was to simply have a nice space to work in – they mentioned the light, the wall colors, the design, the amenities, and the fact that the space was “nice” and new. Select comments illustrating responses to this question are pulled out below.<sup>5</sup>

*“The idea of having a place for my students to regularly meet and work was extremely attractive for the team-building and community building perspective. My students said they really liked the space and its central location and wish they could have met there more often. “*

*“It was great to have a space where my group was able to meet to work on our project. Having white boards all around the room and a TV where we could project...was extremely useful. In addition, it was nice to know that each week the room would be ready and waiting for us at the same time.”*

*“It was fantastic! Having the same space each week made it feel like it was our own, and the writable walls were extremely useful as we brainstormed together.”*

*“Having a common and private meeting space to share with our project members was extremely helpful for coordinating the progress of our project this semester. We used The Edge space to discuss and visualize our data and to meet with Duke staff who could help us master software and plan methods. We used the white boards to facilitate group discussions.”*

### How could the experience having a Project Room in the Edge be improved?

This was a free-text question. Responses were coded into categories for quantitative analysis.<sup>6</sup> The aspect of the space cited most frequently as problematic was **the state of the whiteboards**, lack of functional whiteboard cleaning supplies, and difficulty cleaning the whiteboards; 20% of all survey participants complained about whiteboard cleaning.

*“The white boards in the rooms were often really really dirty and the proper eraser, spray, cloth was never in the room. We often had to find someone at the front desk to give us a spray and cloth or we had to get wet a paper towel in the bathroom. Figuring out a way to keep the rooms cleaner in that regard would be useful.”*

*“Many times when we would begin our meetings the white boards, would be covered in writing from a previous session. It would take a lot of time to clean those off, and many times it was difficult to clean off, which would be an inconvenience to our session.”*

*“We kept finding inappropriate graffiti on our room walls.”*

Additionally, 10% of survey respondents (4) complained about the **general cleanliness of the rooms**.

*“The cleaning staff needs to clean more often. The rooms are grubby most of the time.”*

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix B for all comments.

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix B for all comments.

Other aspects of time in The Edge that elicited suggestions for improvement included:

- **Scheduling.** Several people requested online room reservation options, despite the fact that this was out of scope for the question of shared/dedicated space. In the words of one graduate student, "I am based on East Campus and have a 40 minute campus commute. As a result I can't really book a room on a regular basis." Another graduate suggested online reservation/cancelation stating that "There were times when we had [the shared space] reserved and didn't need it and I could have canceled our reservation and allowed others to use the space."
- **Technology.** The availability and logistics around accessing HDMI and other dongles in order to use room technology were mentioned several times. One person asked that HDMI cables be kept in each room so that we didn't have to check them out and have them back by specific times. The main problem is that we often couldn't find connectors/dongles/etc. to use the monitor in the room.
- **Door codes.** Three respondents did not believe the shared rooms should have passwords to enter, particularly if the passwords are posted on the door. It was described as "silly," "wasting a lot of time," and "a hassle."
- **Glass walls/privacy.** Two respondents mentioned that the glass wall was very distracting when The Edge was busy, or when people were booking the meeting room right outside the door. One requested curtains.
- **Application process.** One person asked that applications be done earlier, and another asked that the process be shortened. It was unclear exactly how s/he meant this; probably time from application to being informed that the project had received space. A third person said it would be nice to be able to change times/days at a later point in the semester if the project had changes that made the original reserved time unfeasible.
- **Temperature.** Two people reported that with the doors shut, the rooms become too hot and stuffy.

### Would you join a community of researchers presenting their work in The Edge?

When asked if they would like to join a community of researchers presenting on their work in The Edge, 53% of respondents said that they would not, and 40% of respondents said that they would. For a list of contact information for those who would like to join such a community, please speak with Joyce Chapman: [joyce.chapman@duke.edu](mailto:joyce.chapman@duke.edu).

### Is there anything else you'd like to share?

When asked if they'd like to share anything else, one participant responded:

*"Brittany was really helpful, thanks!"*

## Appendix A

### Edge Project Room User Survey

What best describes you?

- Undergraduate
- Graduate
- Post-doc
- Faculty/staff
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

What department/s are you affiliated with?

What did you find helpful about having a Project Room in The Edge this semester? Feel free to discuss spaces, services, staff, geographic location, hours, etc.

How could the experience with Project Rooms in the Edge be improved? Feel free to discuss application process, logistics, materials, spaces, hours, etc.

How likely are you to recommend this space to others?

- Unlikely
- Undecided
- Likely

Is there anything else you'd like to share?

Would you be interested in joining a community of researchers presenting on their work in The Edge?

- Yes, I'm interested in being contacted about this opportunity
- No, I'm not interested in being contacted about this opportunity

## Appendix B

### What did you find helpful about having a Project Room in the Edge this semester?

The space is nice, location is good...I was not sure how it's supposed to be different...from the LINK though. The wallboards for writing are great.
Hours, having a reserved space to leave project necessities
Having a room in the Edge was great. The location on campus is ideal. It was close to the Bryan Center, so we could run out and get coffee and lunch. We were doing a research project, so being in the library was great. We could run downstairs and get books whenever we needed them.
It was fantastic! Having the same space each week made it feel like it was our own, and the writable walls were extremely useful as we brainstormed together.
Having a common and private meeting space to share with our project members was extremely helpful for coordinating the progress of our project this semester. We used The Edge space to discuss and visualize our data and to meet with Duke staff who could help us master software and plan methods. We used the white boards to facilitate group discussions.
Our primary way of using the space was to hook up an individual computer to the large wall-mounted screen (using an HDMI cable borrowed from The Edge) so that we could simultaneously view the same data. I found that this strategy was absolutely necessary to work on collaborative projects since some conversations were impossible unless all members could share the same view. (see next question for more on this)
It was great to have a space that was ours ahead of time without having to reserve it for every meeting.
Easy to reserve, could reserve for the semester, lots of space to write, good central location, room was quiet.
Having a consistent space throughout the semester was really nice. The location is centrally located, and the rooms have nice workspace and white boards.
availability of dedicated space
Knowing we could have all our meetings without difficulties; easy use of computer for on screen viewing.
Having a set space that brought us together on a regular schedule; that it was conveniently located in the library.
Location, appropriate size room
The room was spacious and provided a great space to meet in a central part of campus. Reserving the room was very easy and we had no problems.
The library is fairly centralized, which is great for meetings with students, staff, and faculty. Also, we like the ability to reserve the room at the same time every week throughout a semester since we had a few independent study courses that we were advising.
It was great to be near all of the library's resources and to have a space to hold meetings/workshops, etc.
Having a dedicated project room in the Edge enhanced collaboration within the One Person, One Vote Project. Project Team members could come by to work or access resources in the project room at any time of the day. It meant that students spent more time in the space, which in turn, fostered more productive conversations about content. Being located in the library, students also made use of the Multimedia Project Studio, books, and archival collections in Rubenstein. The project room also improved communication between project partners within the library. The space was ideal for meetings, especially in the last month before launch, and staff members could drop by when they had a concern. The Edge staff made sure that we had the resources we needed and were always more than helpful and accommodating.
centrally located space that was easy for everyone in our team to reach
The project room in the edge was a great place for my group to meet. The space was nice and the white boards and projectors allowed us to brain storm projects, etc.



Convenient location for meeting with people from across campus.
It is very convenient to borrow a projector connector from the front desk, which is a really great service.
The idea of having a place for my students to regularly meet and work was extremely attractive for the team-building and community building perspective. My students said they really liked the space and its central location and wish they could have met there more often.
Central location, amenities, general feel of the space.
It was great to have a space where my group was able to meet to work on our project. Having white boards all around the room and a TV where we could project papers or power points we were working on was extremely useful. In addition, it was nice to know that each week the room would be ready and waiting for us at the same time.
The hours, write-able walls, and easy of access.
White boards and being able to connect computer to TV screen! And just having a space that was available to rent on a weekly basis
Private, nice use of the white walls, bright. All of which facilitates learning.
The dedicated space is great for project such like ours.
Nice having a regularly reserved room in a location that undergrad students would come to.
Gave us accountable hours in a structured space to work on a single, goal-oriented project.
Nice tables, white boards, location, and storage space.
Yes - However there was some trouble with kicking people out right before our class. The space was too small for our 10 person group. Otherwise it was fine.
We used it to have informal discussions with students in our project-oriented class.
Project team for SLP was very happy to have. A central room to work and collaborate
Geographical location was optimal
The room was a little too small for the number of people in my class, and as it was long and thin it was a little difficult to talk to everyone. Definitely better as a study space than a classroom.
I actually never used the edge in my work with our group; other members of the team did use the space, however.
My group, ViFlex, only got to use it for couple weeks and was figuring out partnership with the Innovation CoLab so we actually ended up not using it much
Space was centrally located and new

**How could the experience with Project Rooms in the Edge be improved?**

The cleaning staff needs to clean more often. The rooms are grubby most of the time. Also, it's hard to erase the wallboards with those awful chemical sprays. If you can figure out some other way to clean them that would probably save lives in the future.
PUT THE PLUGS IN THE FLOOR.
ALLOW FOR ONLINE RESERVATIONS. I am based on East Campus and have a 40 minute campus commute. As a result I can't really book a room on a regular basis.
Glass wall is sometimes quite distracting, especially during Blue Devil Days. If it is possible to have a curtain or something to that nature, it would greatly help efficiency.

<p>The experience was great. I wouldn't change anything. I especially liked how we had the room 24/7. It was great always having a place to work.</p>
<p>The main problem is that we often couldn't find connectors/dongles/etc. to use the monitor in the room.</p>
<p>Our group often collaborated by hooking up an individual computer to the large wall-mounted screen so that we could simultaneously view the same data. The downside of this strategy was that it delegated one person as the "operator" of the group who manipulated the data for a group of viewers. At times, it felt like it would be easier to collaborate as a group if we could easily switch or share the controls, allowing different members to quickly step in, in order to visualize an abstract point or share in time consuming tasks, like data cleaning. We tried working in Google docs Excel sheets so that we could share the same physical space, see each others' work, yet also all have individual control. However, once we began to move into certain programs, like Tableau, we were using one file and one computer that only one member could manipulate at a time.</p> <p>I'm not sure how we could have changed our strategy to better facilitate both individual action and collaborative work. We will have to experiment with (physical and digital) spaces in order to figure that out. But one thing I can definitely recommend is to continue offering loaner HDMI cables to students so that they can facilitate group viewing whenever they need to. It was particularly helpful to have long cables. The monitors and cables were indispensable for our group!</p> <p>Also, I wonder whether it would be helpful to start introducing new users to types of "space utilization" strategies, so to speak. How have other groups (in various disciplines) used the project space in the past, and with what types of hardware, programs, or group dynamics? Maybe there's a group that had particular success with a certain type of interaction that my group could learn from! That might be helpful to think about for the next semester, to help groups really think outside the box about how they can collaborate in an efficient way.</p>
<p>It would be great to manage our reservation online. There were times when we had it reserved and didn't need it and I could have canceled our reservation and allowed others to use the space.</p>
<p>It seems to me there needs to be a process in place to make sure the white board walls are cleaned and ready for groups--or provide the materials needed for cleaning....not sure what or how</p>
<p>It would be great to have a week early and then later on in the semester where some of the library staff are available at the Edge--like the visualization folks etc.--for drop in consultation in the rooms. It could be cool to get casual advice from a variety of different folks on digital projects. We scheduled a consultation once that was helpful, and could have scheduled a follow-up by lost track of time. Would be cool for more organic encounters with staff, although this might not be logistically feasible.</p>
<p>Missing cords. We always had to go get a cord from outside.</p>
<p>Don't require a password to get in... if the password is going to be posted right outside the door, it is highly unnecessary and just a hassle.</p>
<p>The only issue we ever had with the rooms was the heating/cooling of them. Generally, the rooms were too warm and stuffy, so we would prop the door open.</p>
<p>Sometimes there was a lot of traffic through the Edge (because it is a great space), which could be a bit distracting. Otherwise, it was great - staff was very friendly and helpful.</p>
<p>The Edge more than met the needs of the One Person, One Vote Project.</p>
<p>Overall, our experience in the edge was great. Many times when we would begin our meetings the white boards, which covered the walls, would be covered in writing from a previous session. It would take a lot of time to clean those off, and many times it was difficult to clean off, which would be an inconvenience to our session.</p>
<p>We kept finding inappropriate graffiti on our room walls.</p>
<p>If the rooms are more sound-proof, that would be perfect.</p>

<p>The schedule that was picked at the beginning of the year didn't end up working well for my students, so they met outside of the space at other times. One challenge is that many students don't keep to routines, and so they meet when they're free, and that doesn't work well for a scheduling system. Obviously the onus is on the students to make the time work, but this was the challenge they faced, and why I think it wasn't used by them to the fullest.</p>
<p>Earlier application process would be preferable so that room assignments are set at the beginning of the semester. Also, I'm not sure how best to do this, but it would be nice to have a 5 min gap between reservations. We have a larger group (than just a single person using the room to study) so getting settled takes a few minutes. Not being able to go into the room a few minutes before our scheduled meeting always meant starting a few minutes late.</p>
<p>The application process was a little bit on the length side so potentially shortening that would be useful. In addition, the white boards in the rooms were often really really dirty and the proper eraser, spry, cloth was never in the room. We often had to find someone at the front desk to give us a spry and cloth or we had to get wet a paper towel in the bathroom. Figuring out a way to keep the rooms cleaner in that regard would be useful.</p>
<p>Provide towels or better erasers for the white boards</p>
<p>Having easier access to eraser and white board markers.</p>
<p>Online sign-up for extra space</p>
<p>Perhaps HDMI cables in each room so that we didn't have to check them out and have them back by specific times. It rarely proved limiting to us, but I can see how if in the future multiple teams needed an HDMI cable, it could become a problem.</p>
<p>We chose a time that ended up not working well for us. But other than that while we were using the space it was a great experience. So if there were an easy way to change times that would help. So if groups could reserve only for up to half a semester then have to apply again so allow people to change times or only get it part of the time and let other groups in that would be helpful.</p>
<p>Having a lock code to the room was not optimal. It wasted a lot of time.</p>
<p>Having to enter an access code that is taped to the room is silly.</p>
<p>It is slightly distracting when other people use the screen to sign up for a time while we're in the room (looks like someone is about to join us).</p>
<p>One time we had a lot of people in the room and it got quite hot.</p>
<p>Logistics of registering for rooms</p>
<p>I wish I could say more, but my tasks with my group never required me to use the edge.</p>
<p>N/A</p>
<p>The rooms already seemed dingy because of the white board marker removal being less than ideal. The room was often dirty as well.</p>