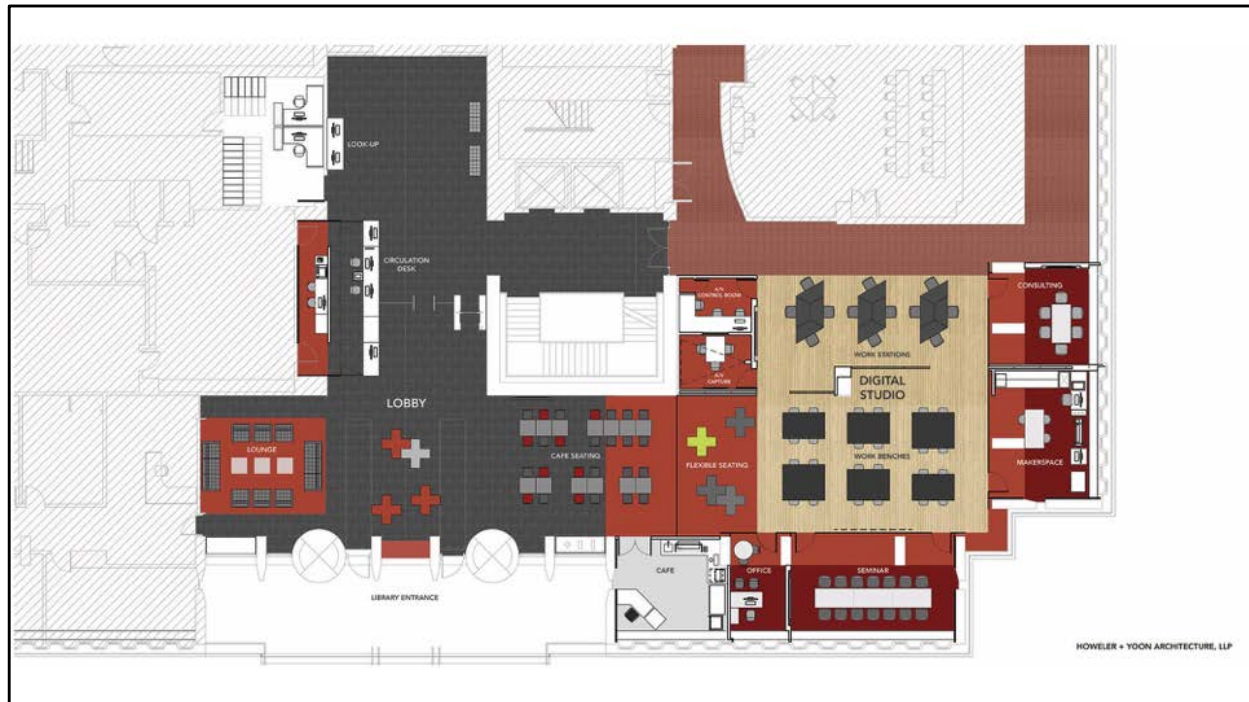




Digital Scholarship Centers don't always have (or need) spaces, and a place can be established without a space, but this talk will be about literal spaces.

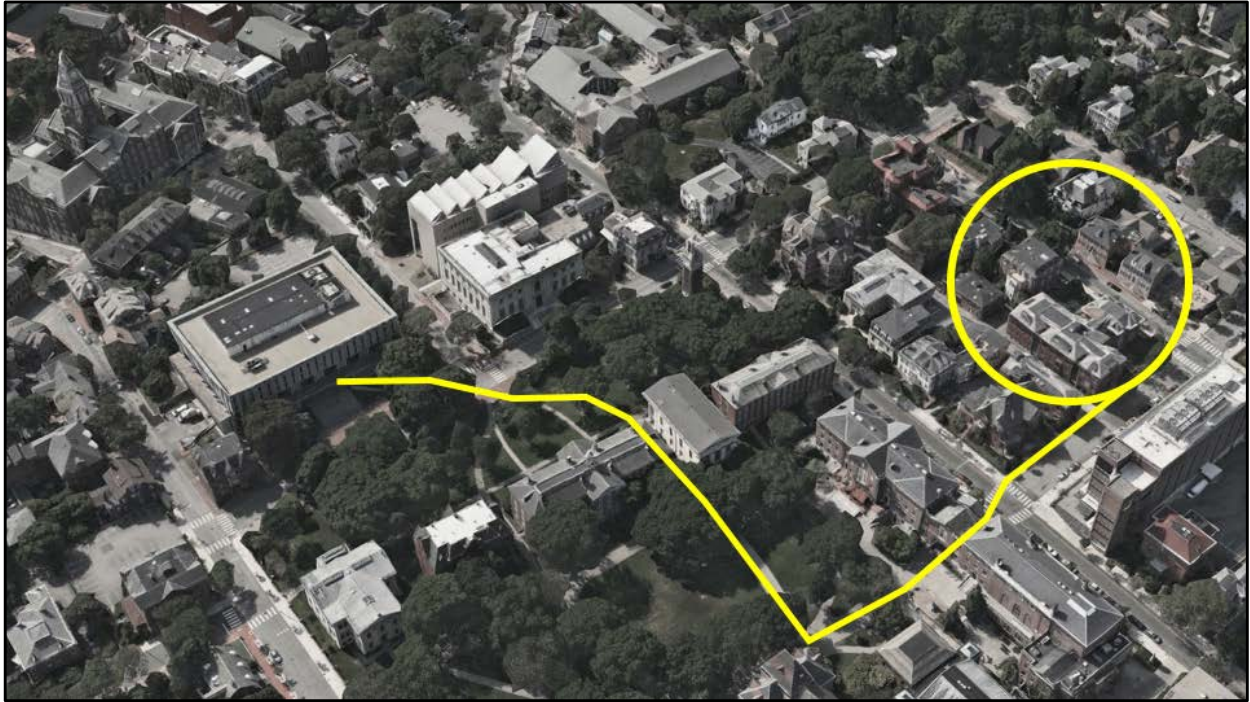
Image: <https://i.ytimg.com/vi/KGk4b2bIp4/maxresdefault.jpg>



When we think about space design, we often default to this kind of a view ...



... or this – a strange, surreal rendering of “people” doing scholarly “work.”



I'd like to think about space – Brown's space – from another perspective.

I am an undergraduate. An English major. It's midterm time, and I need a place to study.

The Rockefeller library is nearby – let's go there.



In the front ...





I look to my right and see through a glass wall an interesting space. (What's that?)



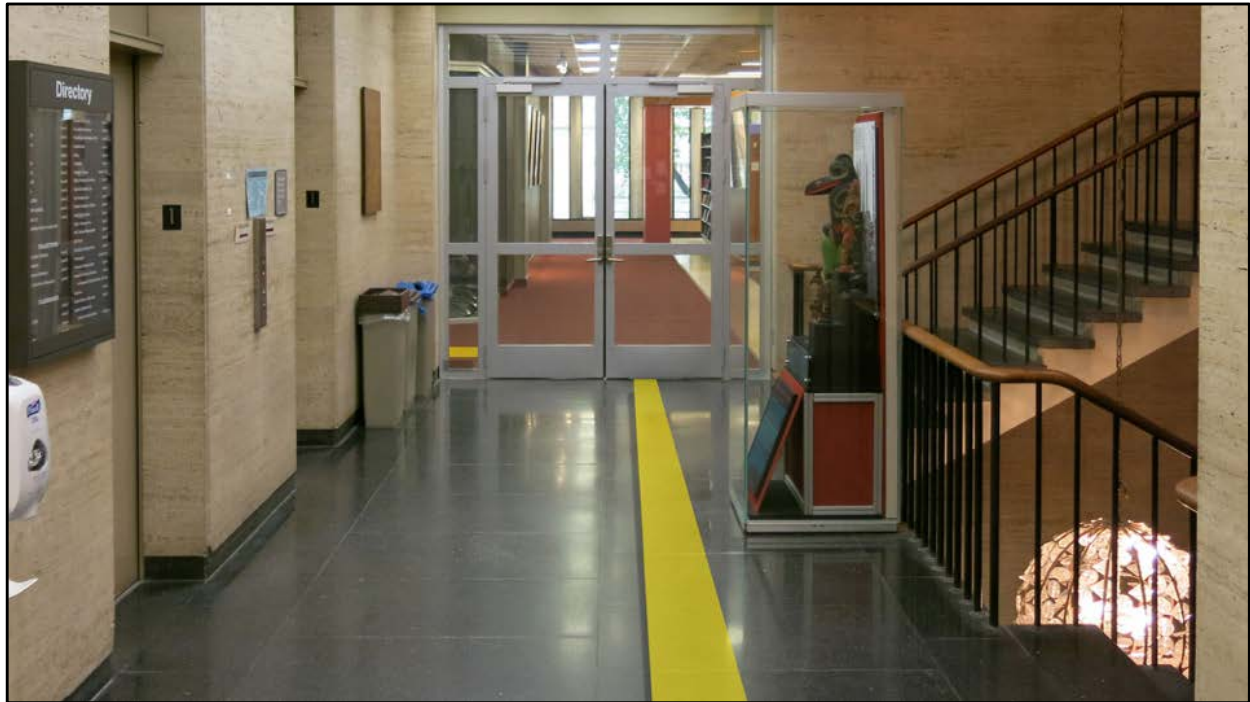
So I walk through the security gate ...



... take a right ...



... past the stairs ...



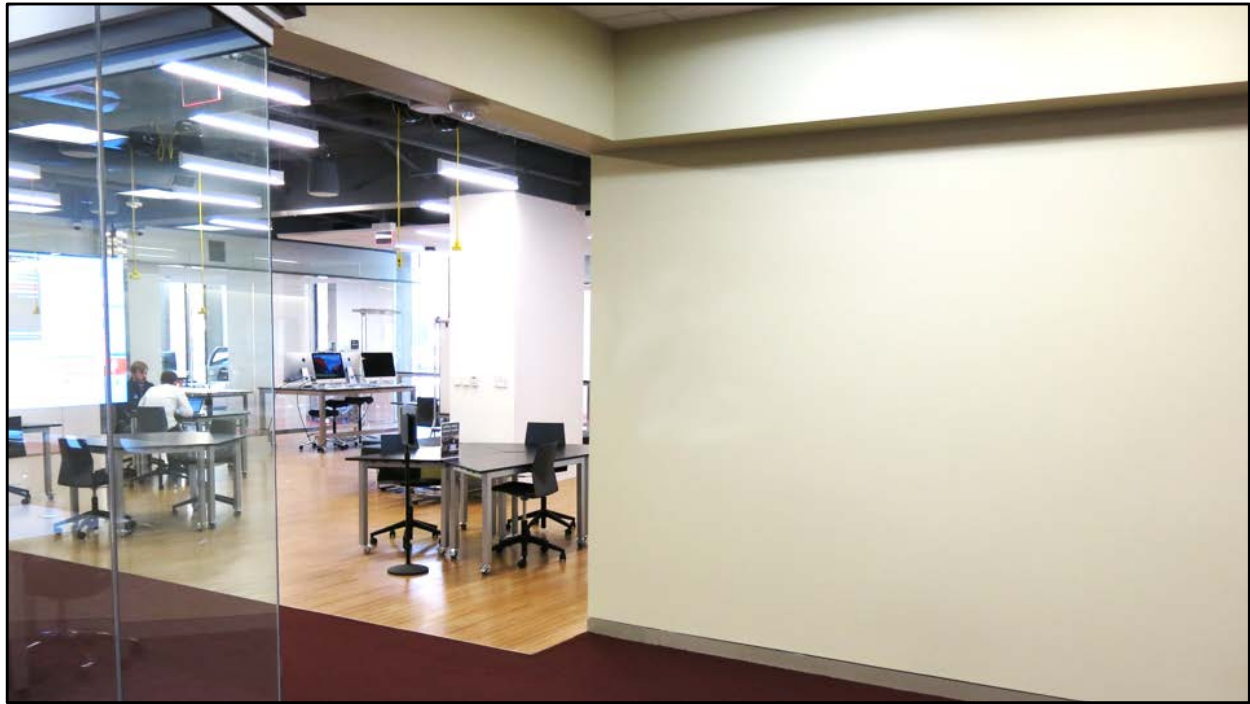
... through the doors ...



What's this? That's impressive! Let's go see what that display is.



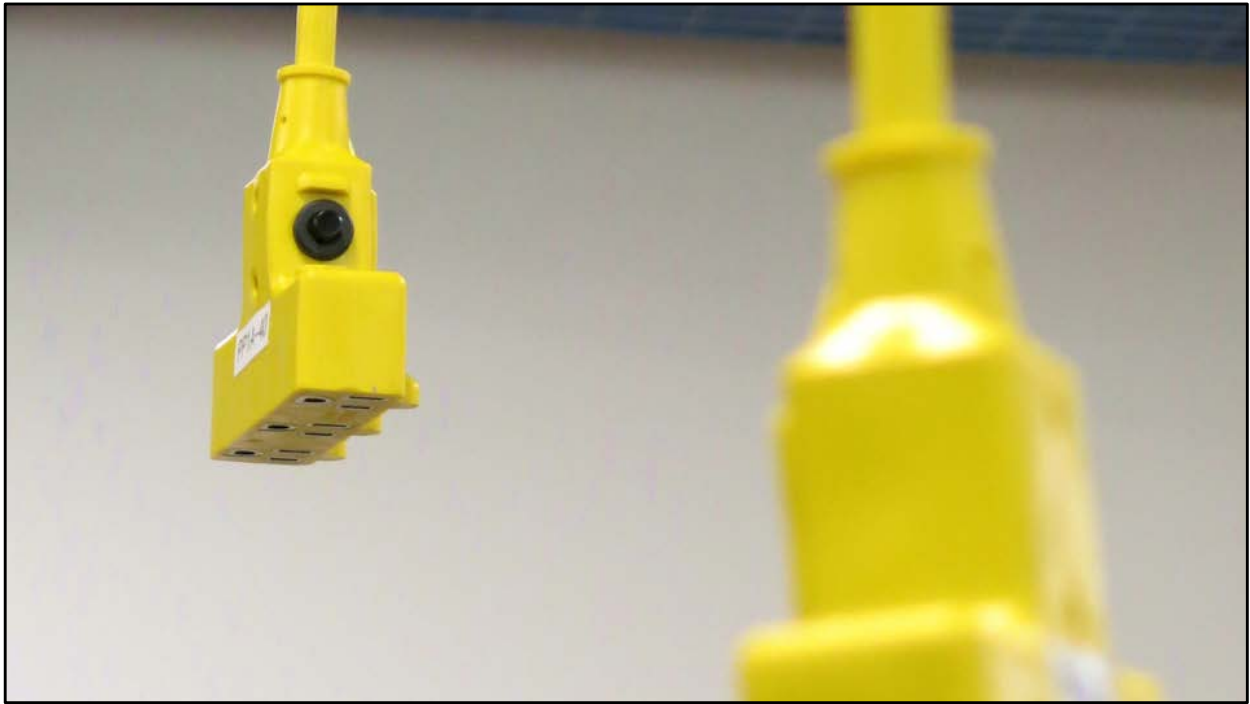
Oh, but it's behind a swipe card access point. Too bad.



Well, let's go check out this space that's nearby. (I saw it through the window at the entrance)



Wow, it's beautiful! Lots of light – but no books. Is this a study space?



There are industrial-looking yellow cords – is this just a regular library space, or something different?





I walk by a notice board – workshops, hmm.



There's a sign with some info, but these mysterious doors are closed. What's behind them? (Don't know)



But I see that there's help, a student.



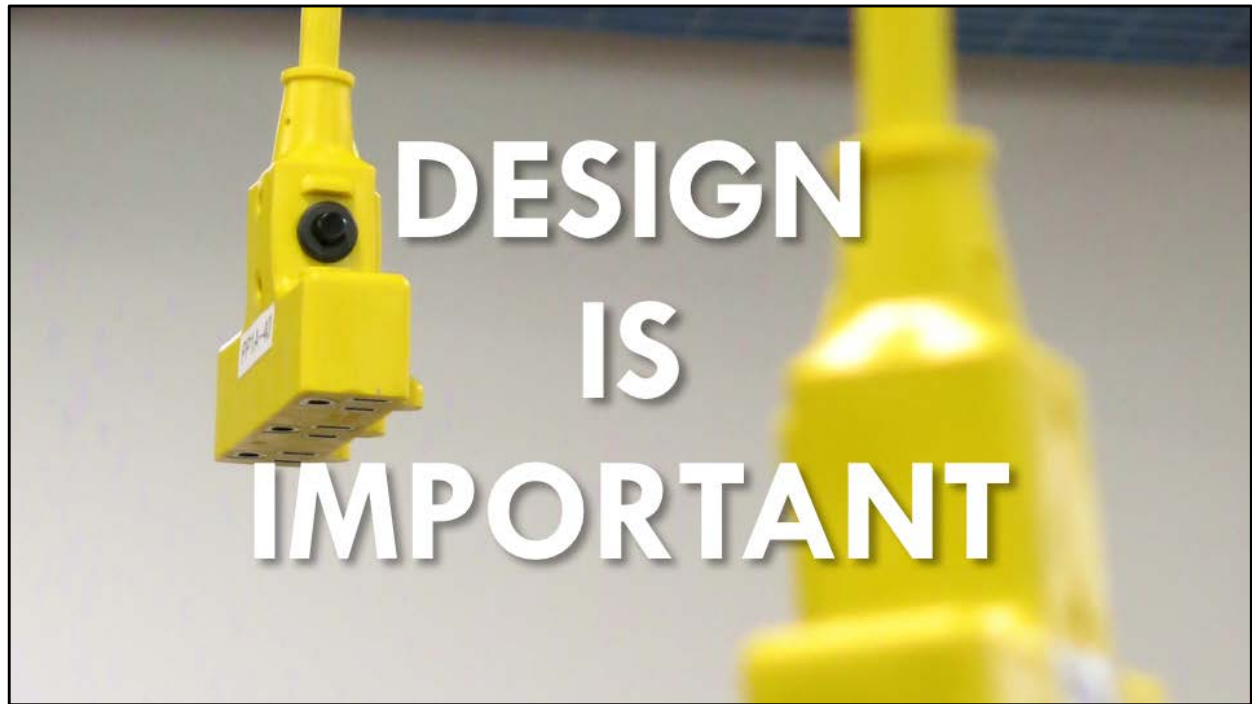
Wandering over to the glass room, there's a display. Oh, 3D printing. I guess that happens here.



Okay, so sound is okay. That's all right – I don't need silent study.

I sit down and crack open the books and laptop. THE END.



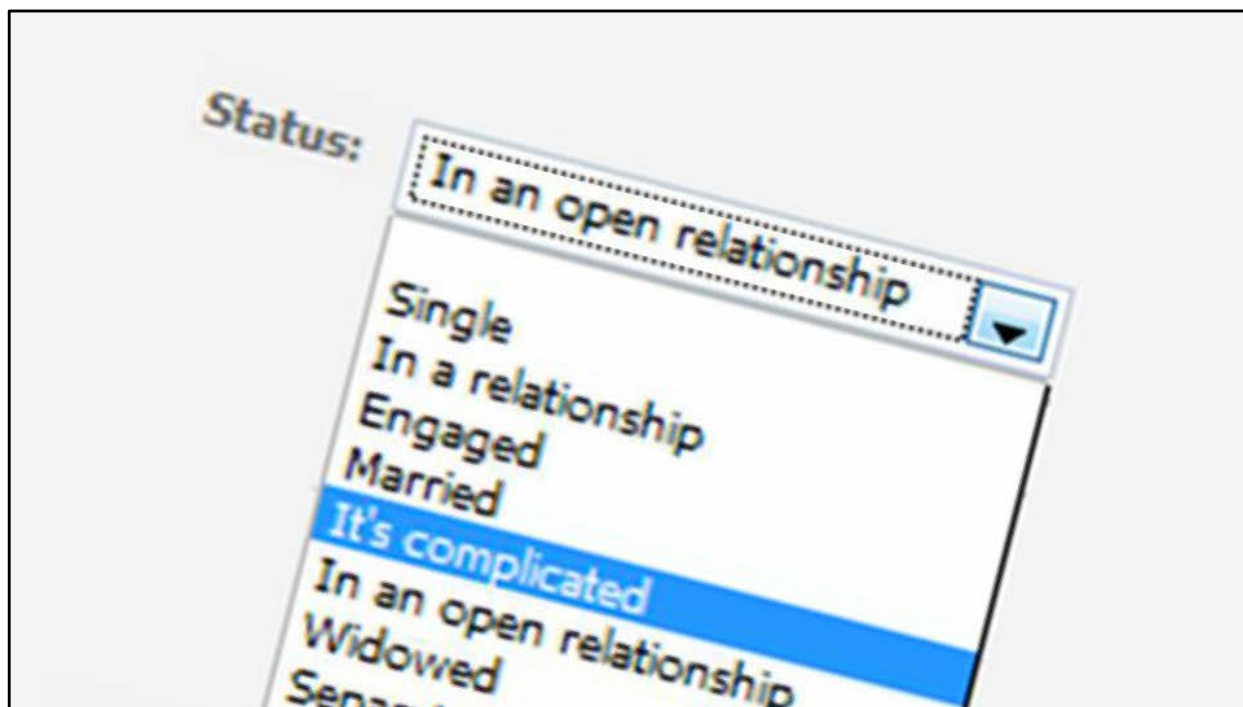


So, what can we learn from this little scene?









These (and many more) factors go into designing a space. You're not just designing space; you're designing people's CONCEPTION of a space, and you're designing people's BEHAVIOR within a space (or trying to!).



You may be hoping that I'm going to provide a bunch of answers. I'm not – my answers will be particular to my situation.



Instead, I'm suggesting a series of QUESTIONS that should apply more broadly.

And yes -- I'll provide some of the answers we've come across at Brown, which (with luck) may inform your situation.



I've roughly grouped these questions into 6 "buckets." I'll cover each in turn.

QUESTIONS

CONTEXT

Where is the space located?
What is the purpose of the
space?

CONTEXT

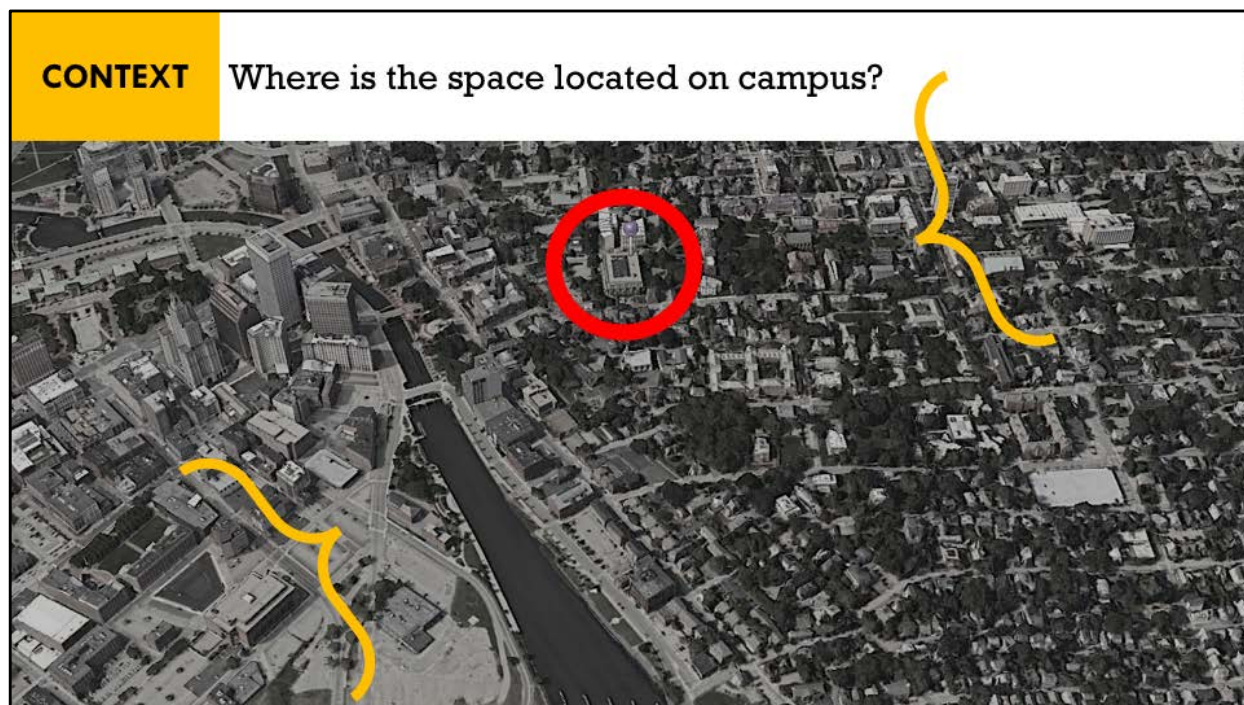
Where is the space located within the organization?



CENTER
FOR
DIGITAL
SCHOLARSHIP

By “located” I mean located in a general sense.

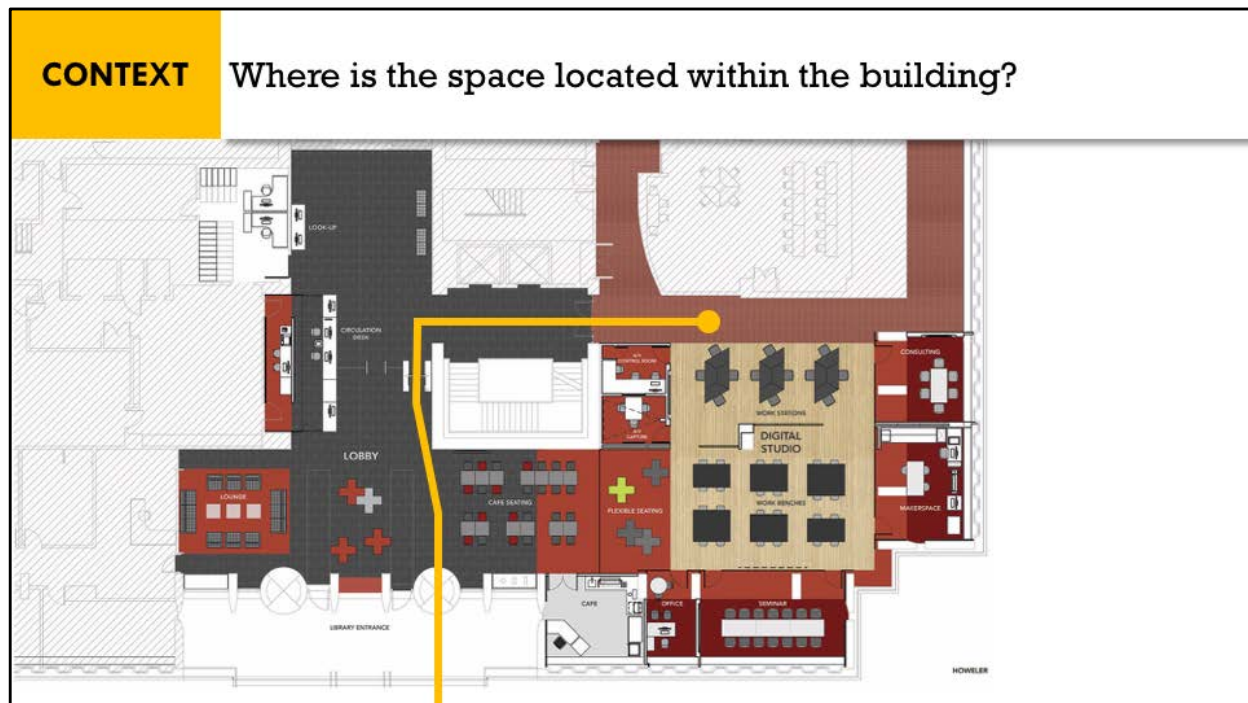
Our space is overseen by CDS, which means that the space is administered and conceived of in a certain way -- the CDS staff have certain backgrounds and professional contexts that color the way the space is run. The staff have approaches to space management that may be different if they were overseen by another part of the library.



The location of the space relative to other locations on campus can also have an impact

We're in the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences library, which determines the type of traffic you'll get. The areas by the brackets are where BioMed and Engineering are, and we don't get much traffic from them.

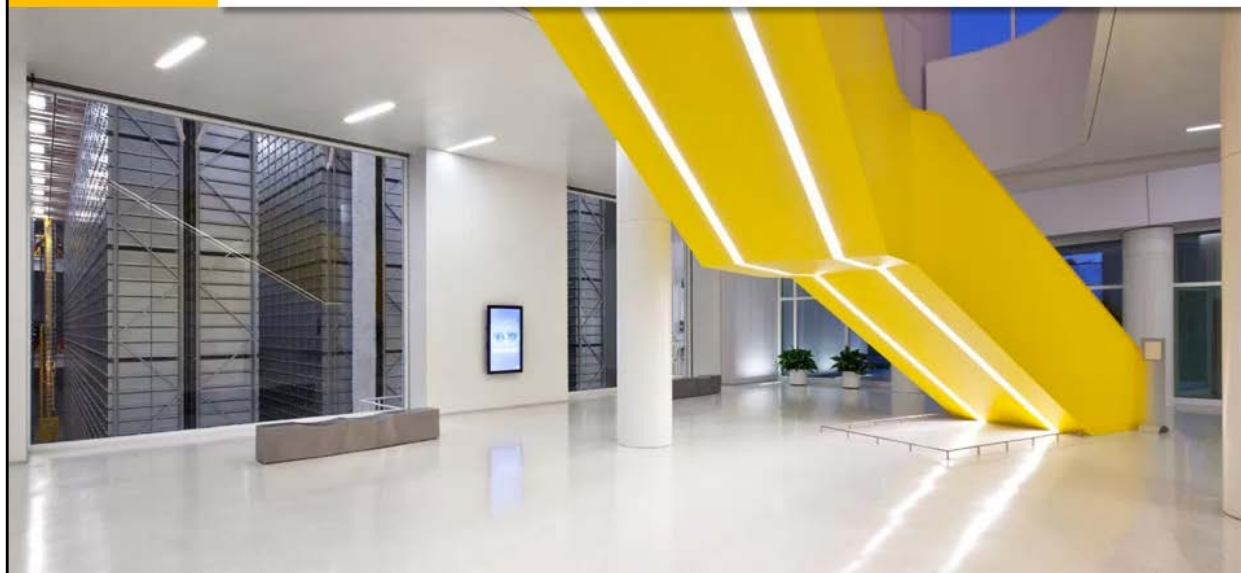
Also, be mindful of the locations of related facilities on campus.



We are on the first floor in a relatively highly trafficked area.

CONTEXT

Where is the space located within the building?



What you put prominently *means* something. Anyone who's entered the Hunt library at NCSU and is faced with the book-fetching robot knows that building position is significant. The robot in a basement or off-site storage would mean something very different.



In a less dramatic way, the location of the DSL (2012) was a central and visible declaration of intent for a library that was rethinking itself.

CONTEXT

What is the purpose of the space?



In terms of purpose, the DSL was intended as a collaborative research and teaching space – but the strength of the space really has been in collaborative teaching. So we've adjusted our priorities along the way.

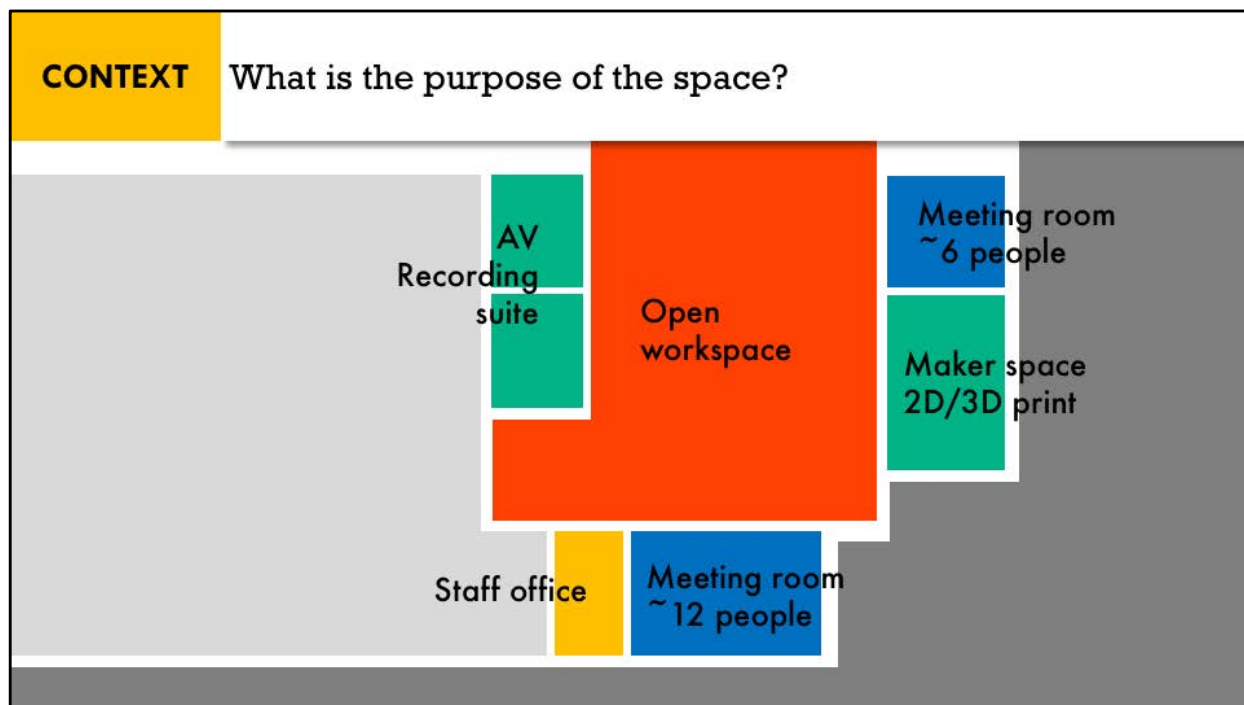
CONTEXT

What is the purpose of the space?



Digital Studio, 2016

Partly in response, the Digital Studio was meant to encourage production, discussion, collaborative projects (as opposed to the DSL as presentation/teaching space).



Here is a function schematic of the Digital Studio -- green is specialized spaces, dark blue is project rooms (that can be reserved), red is open space. Yellow is staff space -- notice that there is room for only a single member of CDS -- this is a decision that does significantly shape the space.



QUESTIONS

What class of relations is suggested by the layout?

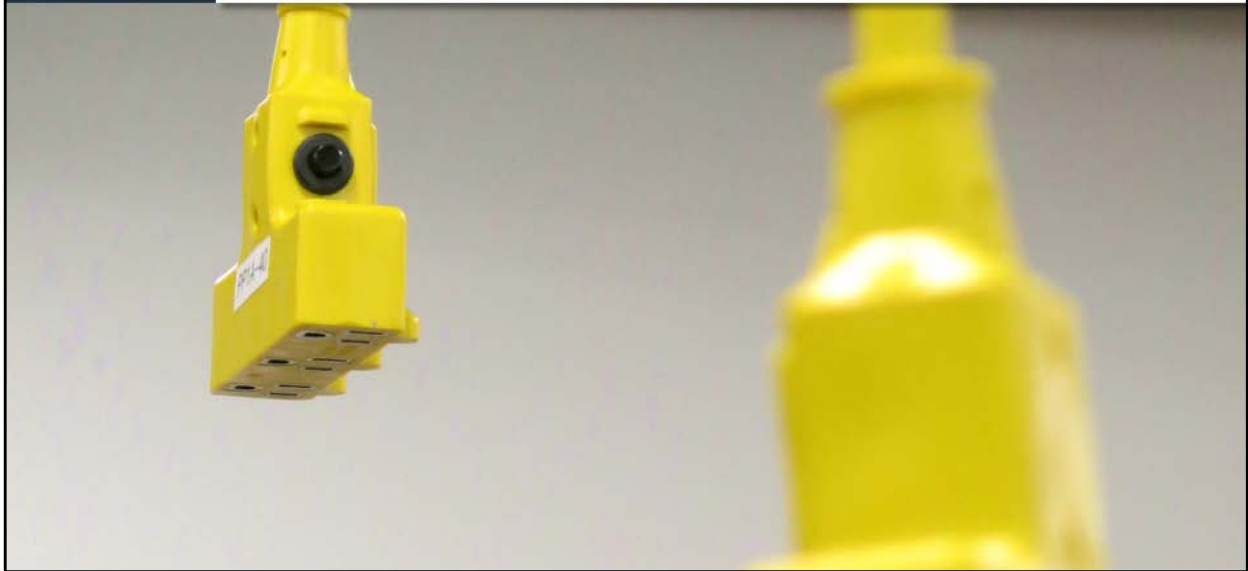
What can you see?

What can you not see?

What is the aesthetics of the space?

DESIGN

Aesthetic details can be significant



Everybody notices the yellow cords as signifiers of a different kind of space. These details can matter. But let's step back a moment.

DESIGN

All space is *social* space



Hecker Center, 1996

All space suggests a mode of social interaction. What is the nature of interaction in a space like this?



The room is really designed for a single lecturer and an audience. Anything else is awkward.



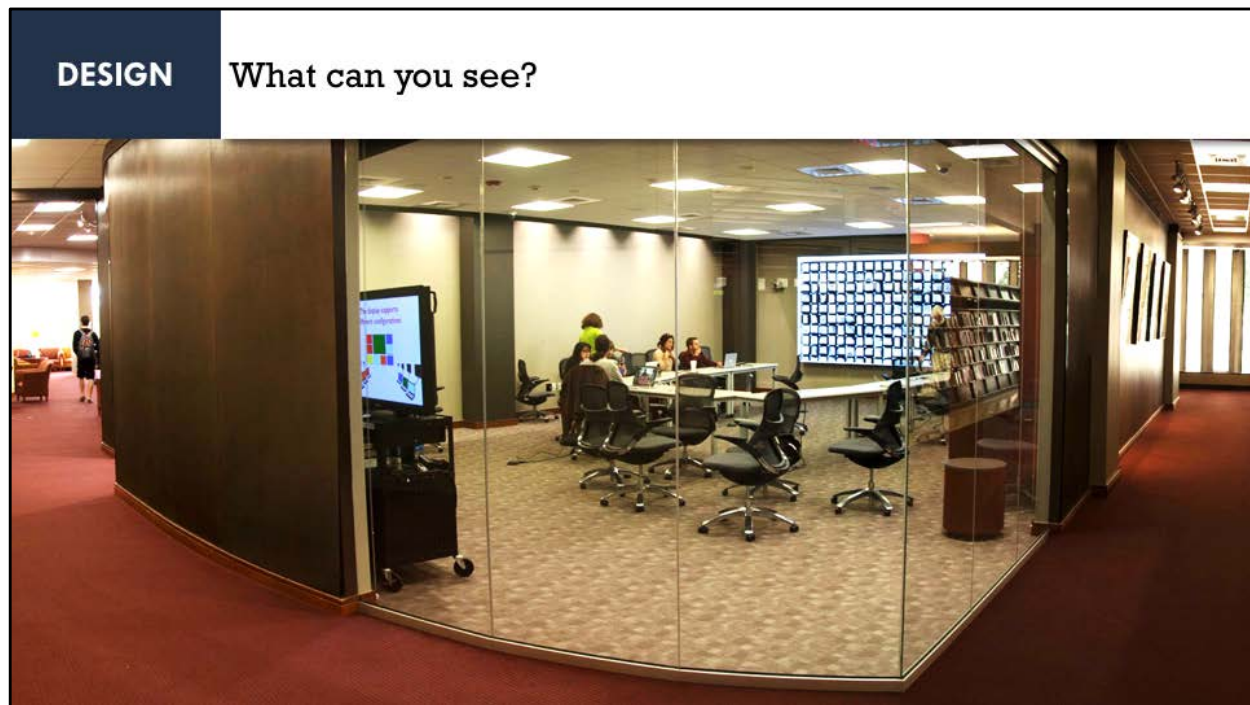
Compare with the DSL, where the furniture is flexible. This is a very different social space ...



... than this ...

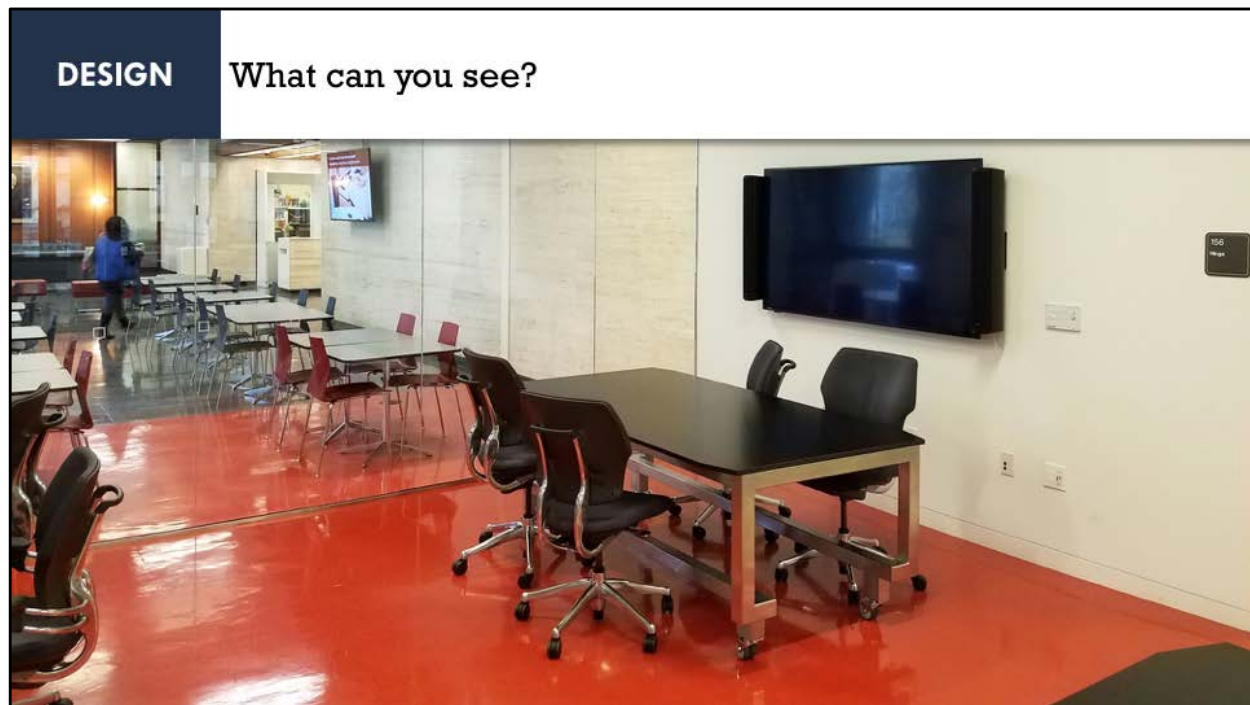


... or this.

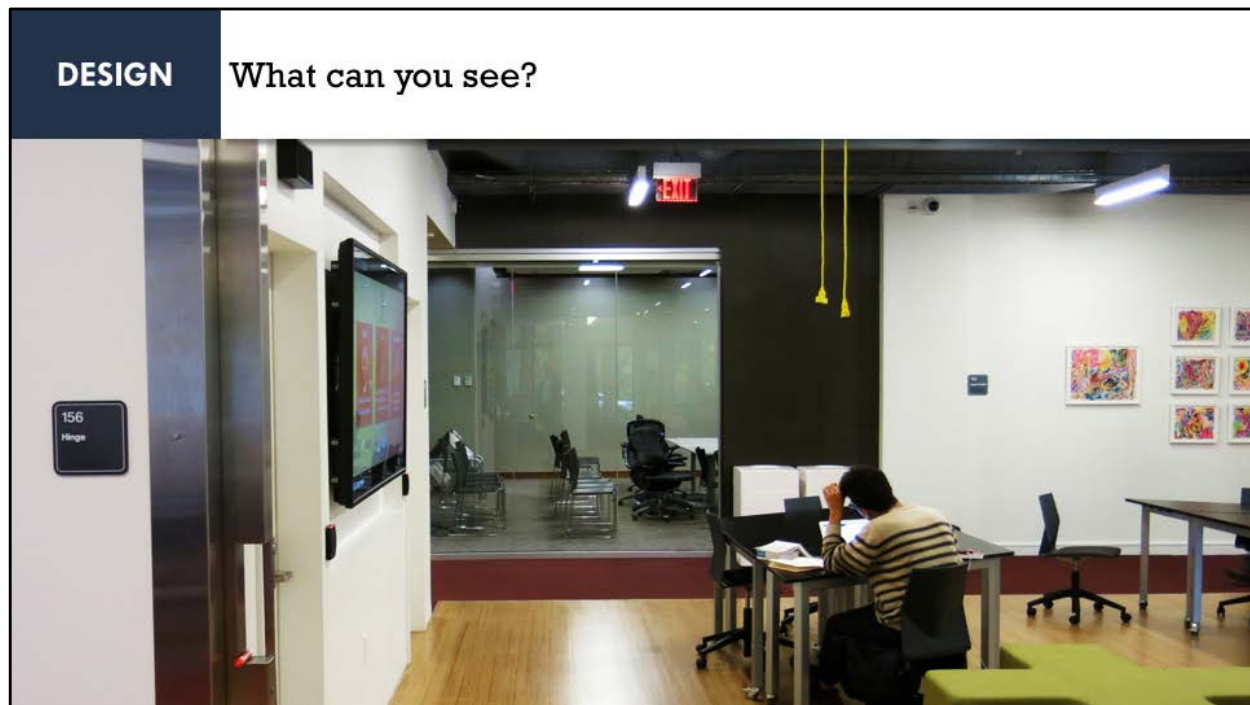


Lines of sight are also important. What can you see from where?

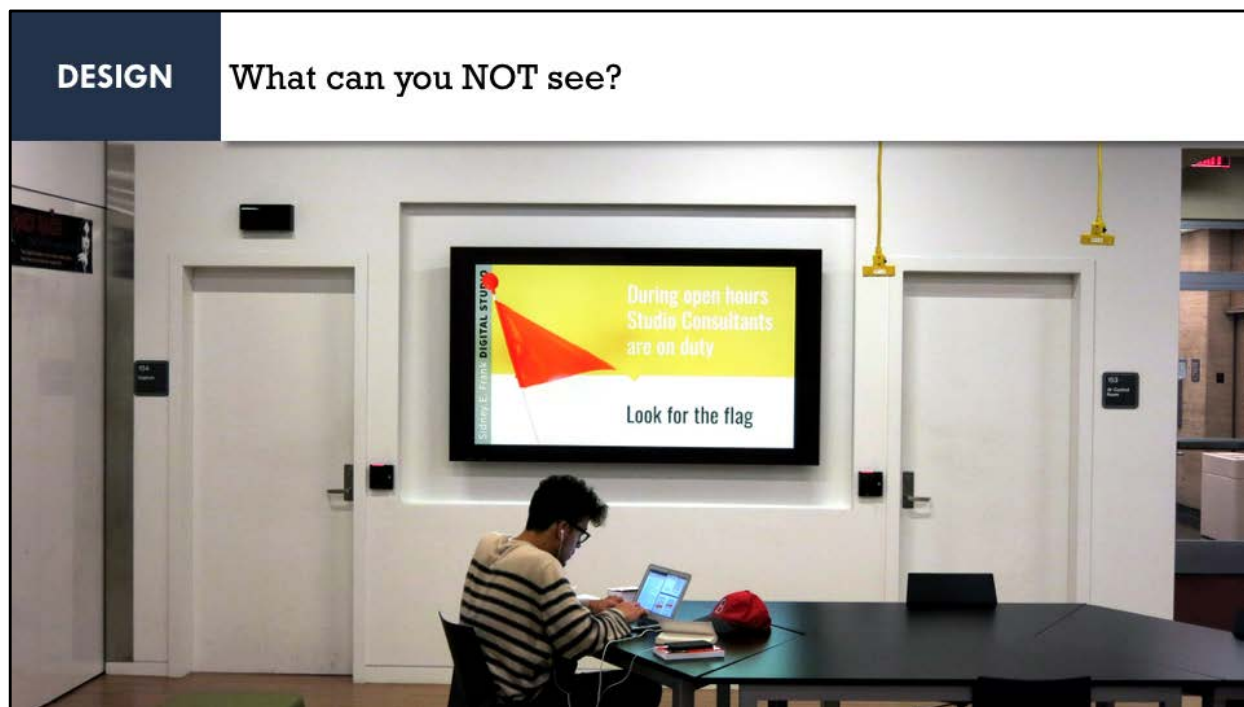
The fact that you can see into the DSL (and out) really changes the nature of how the room is used and perceived.



Similarly, the ability to see out to the main library entrance from the Studio changes the feel.



And these two spaces (DSL and Studio), which are really two aspects of the same place, are unified through a sightline.



Likewise, what you *can't* see is also significant. These doors don't have windows, which hides their contents from passers-by, but they also allow for privacy for people using the recording space.

DISPLAYS

QUESTIONS

What kind of space is created
with the display?

What kind of interaction does it
suggest?

Does the space it creates fit with
the broader context?

DISPLAYS

What kind of interaction does it suggest?



Displays also create very strong social spaces and suggest their own mode of interaction.

The DSL display wall is at eye level, enclosed in a classroom. People can get close (unlike a projection display, there are no shadows).

This allows for this kind of interaction with a display – close examination, highly collaborative, discussion-based.



Position is extremely important. The implied mode of interaction surrounding this large display is completely different.

(Image from NCSU Hunt library website)

DISPLAYS

Does the space it creates fit with the broader context?



There is a dissonance when the interaction context around a display doesn't match the larger context.

These monitors in the Brown library's Sorensen reading room are placed at eye level at project tables. This suggests discussion, collaboration, semi-public work. Their placement within a larger space that implies solitary, silent study is a tension.

The result: these monitors are literally never used.

DISPLAYS

Does the space it creates fit with the broader context?



Monitors of this type are more comfortable in project rooms. Even with see-through glass walls, the enclosure creates a sense of separation and privacy that resonates with the social space created by the monitor. These monitors in the studio are more consistently used.

DISPLAYS

How are single spaces separated?



Even within a larger space, monitors can create a sense of a room-within-a-room. This space is around a corner in the studio, and while it is part of the larger space, the combination of furniture and monitor creates a feeling that this is a smaller, more intimate space.

While sometimes used, this monitor is not used as much as the project room monitors. But even when off, the monitor serves a purpose in shaping space.

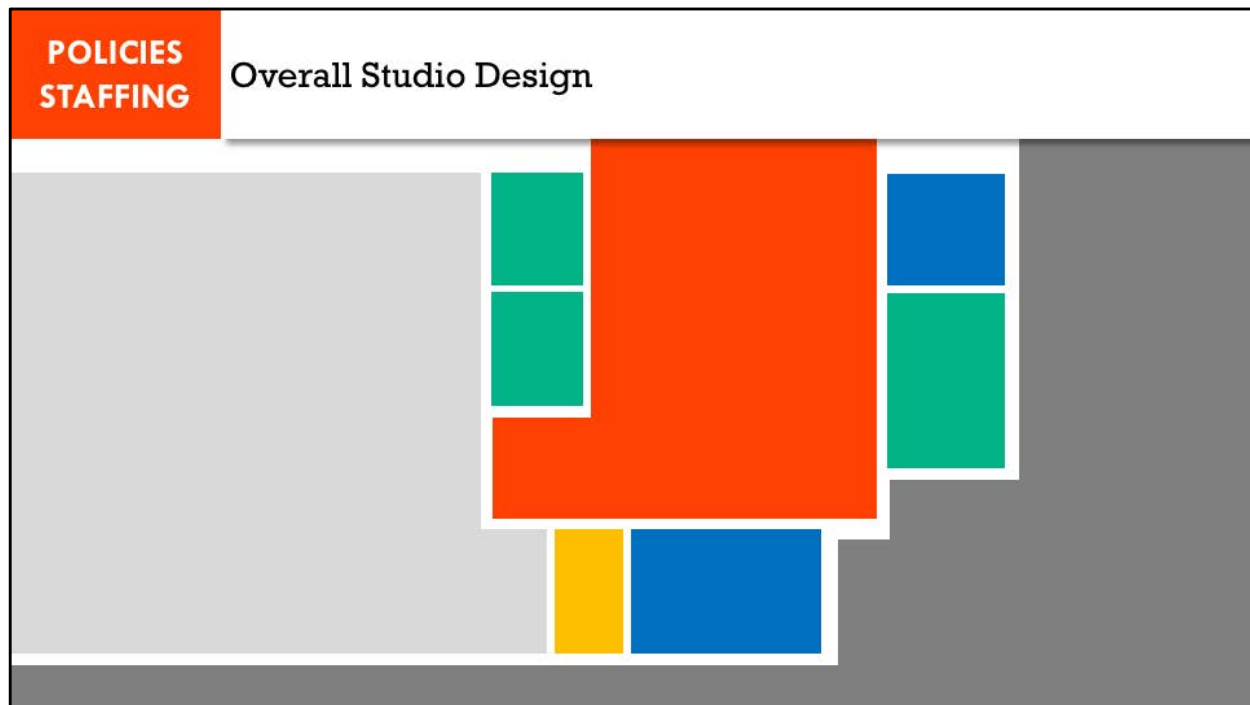
**POLICIES
and
STAFFING**

QUESTIONS

Will the space be supported?
(By whom? To do what? When?)

What are the policies around
access?

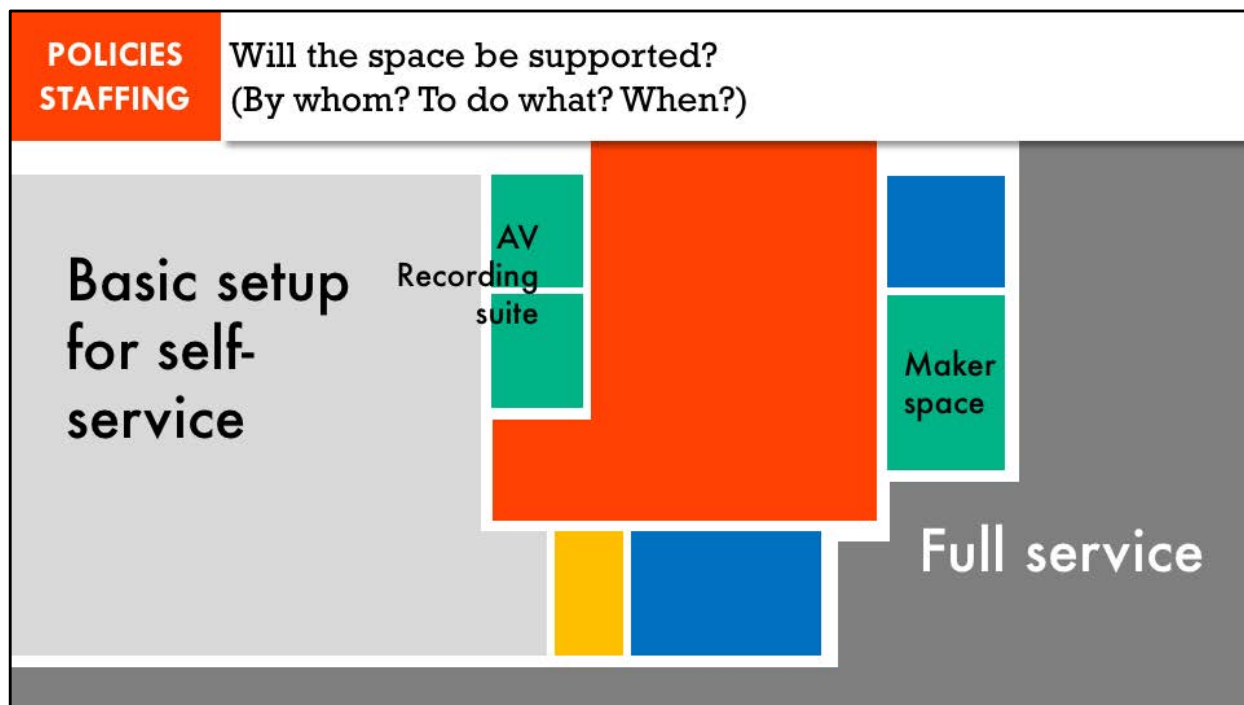
What are the policies around
behaviour?



The staff of CDS do not have office spaces in the Studio, except for one office.



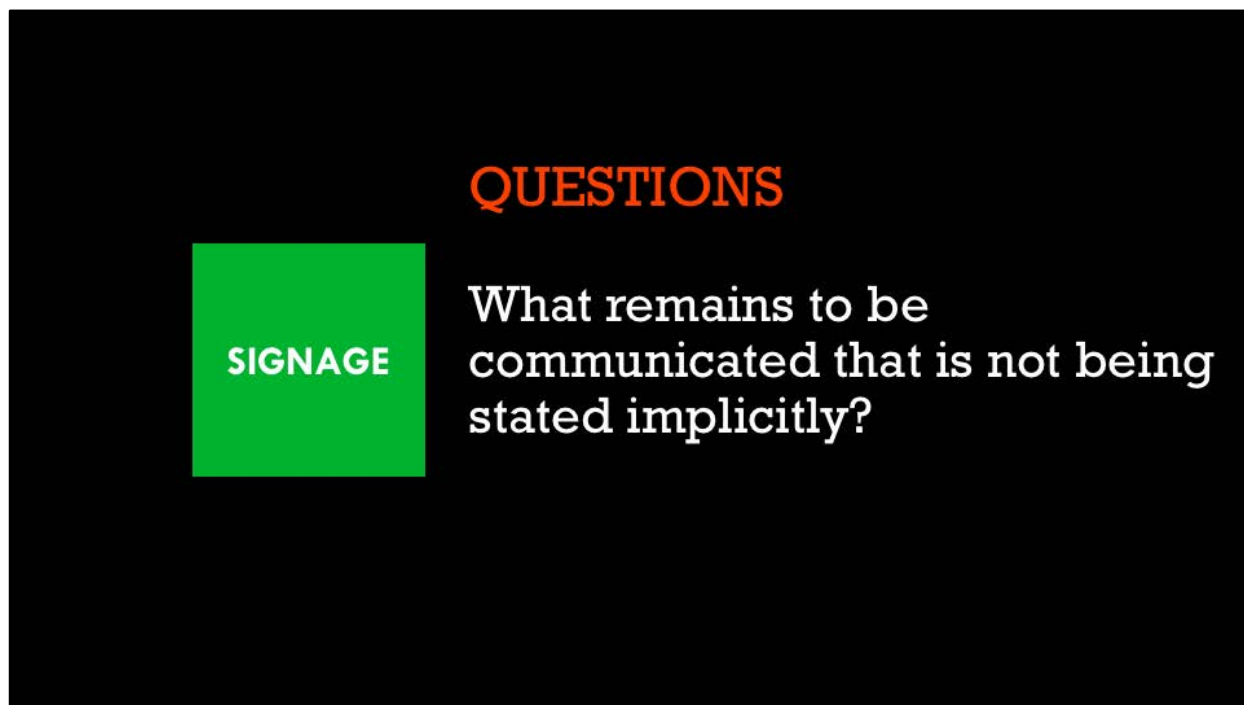
The primary line of support for the Studio is a staff of 11 student employees ("Consultants")



That level of support varies according to services. For the AV recording space, this means basic set up for patrons (the input is registering and recording on the computer). For the Makerspace service (2D/3D printing, etc.) it is more full-service; patrons submit print “jobs” and the print is returned. There are a variety of reasons for this (including health and safety policies).



Policies in general can shape how the space is perceived and used. Our “No mess” policy especially constrains our conception of “makerspace” activity.

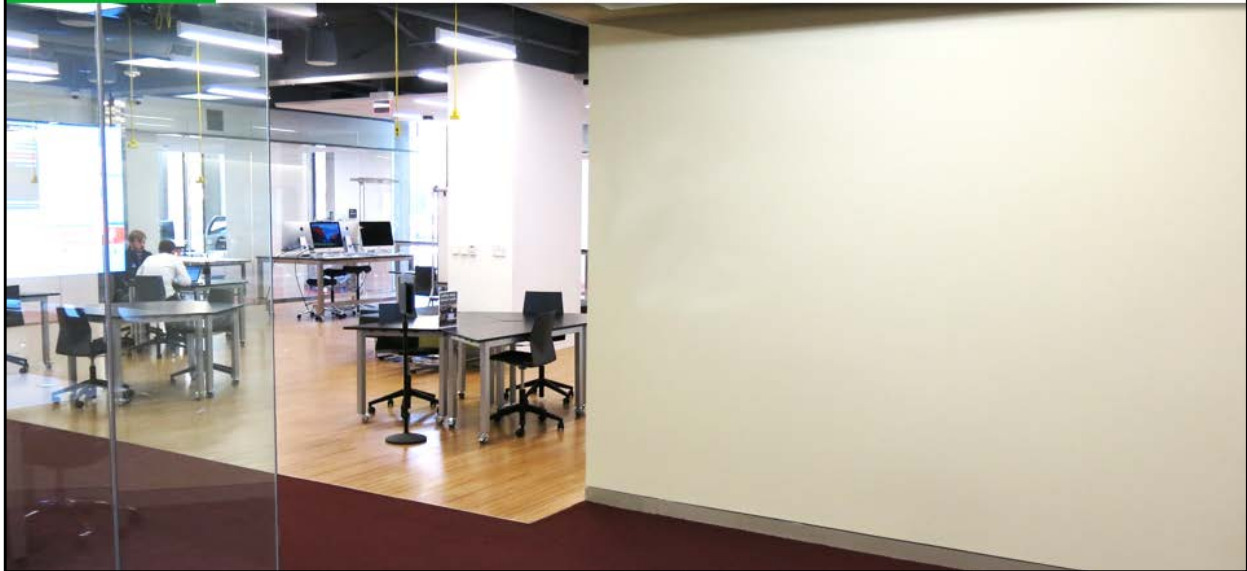


I view signage as last resort to explicitly fill in what the space doesn't imply itself.

Signage is problematic because people often don't read. In many ways, it is the least powerful way of communicating because people have to *choose* to acknowledge it; messages are "imposed" on the consciousness (rather than slipping in unconsciously e.g. through space design).

SIGNAGE

What needs to be explicitly stated?



One problem we have in the Studio is that the space does not announce itself. Walking into the space, we don't know that we have entered something different from the rest of the library.

SIGNAGE

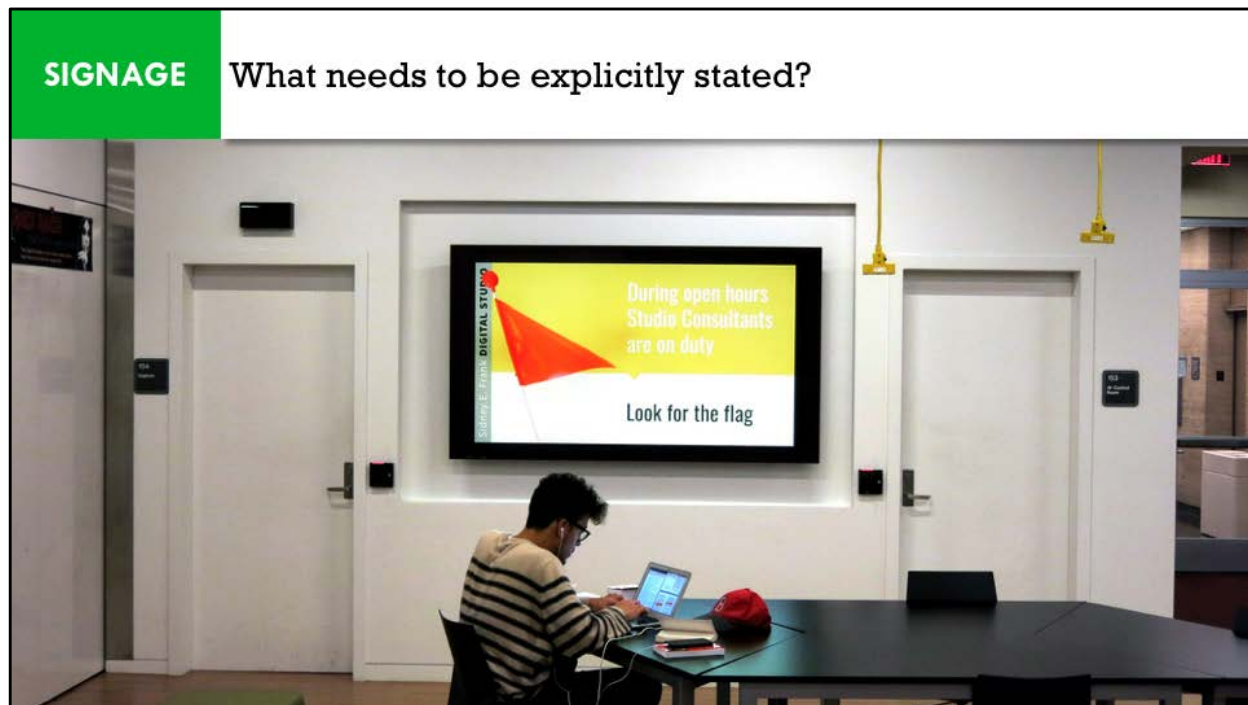
What needs to be explicitly stated?



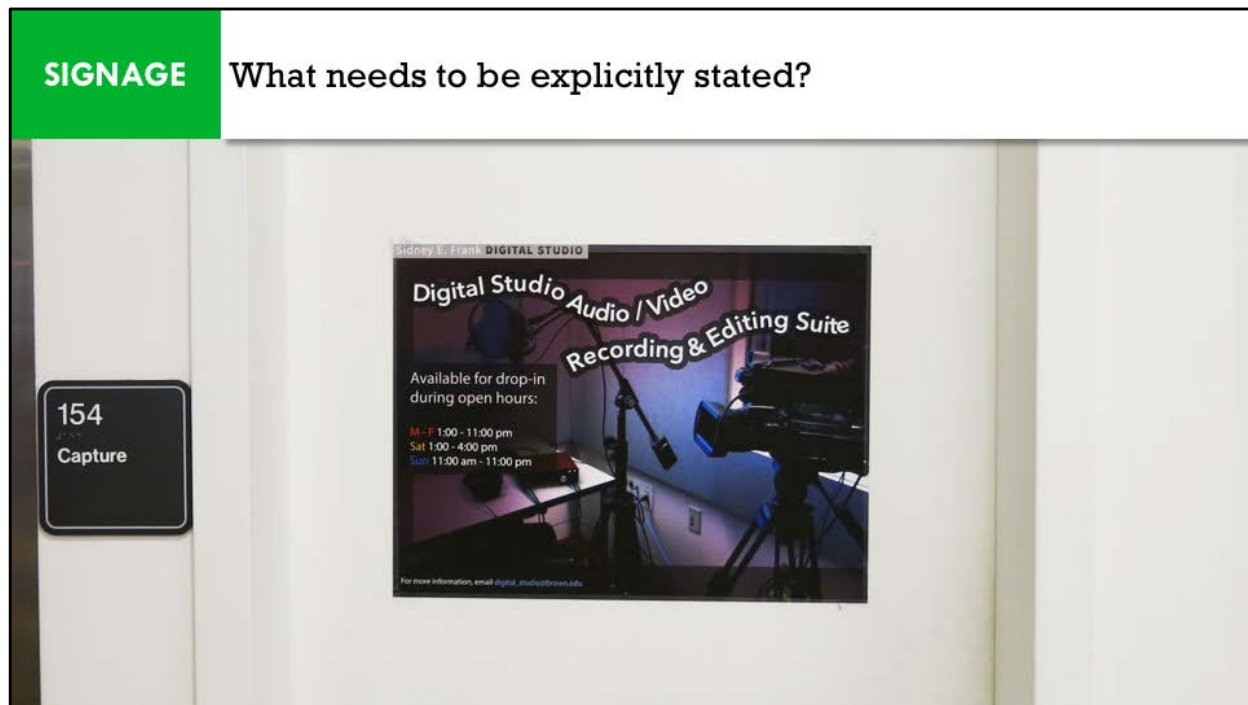
We have been toying with signage to help with this (this is a mockup of one possibility).



The makerspace's 3D printer does not look like a 3D printer. People don't know what it is or what it can do. This small display demonstrates what it possible (and how much it costs).



I mentioned the hidden AV room; people often wonder what's behind the doors.



A sign is posted to help inform them.



ACTIVITY

QUESTIONS

What *happens* in your space?
Will this involve changing
behaviour?
Do you want *traffic* or
community?

This is, ultimately, the most important set of questions.

ACTIVITY

What *happens* in your space?



Spaces suggest a default behaviour – a “library space” implies such things as quiet study. These spaces are already at a premium on campus, so getting people to fill the space is not an issue. We have “traffic.”



But just numbers of people is not enough – we want people to engage in activities that are not typical for libraries. One challenge is to break the expectation of silence or quiet. We've used different strategies for this, including signage and recorded ambient sound.

ACTIVITY

What do you *want* to happen in your space?:
Will this involve changing behaviour?



Sidney E. Frank
DIGITAL STUDIO

Fall 2017 WORKSHOPS
Center for Digital Scholarship
TO SIGN UP, SEE OUR CALENDAR AT library.brown.edu/workshops

OCTOBER

WEEK OF OCTOBER 2
TUESDAY | 1:00 | DSL
Getting Started in Data Visualization
TUESDAY | 3:30 | Hecker
Nvivo: An Introduction to the Software
WEDNESDAY | 1:00 | Sem Rm.
Depositing Data in the BDR
THURSDAY | 12:00 | Sem Rm.
Introduction to LabArchives Electronic Lab Notebook

WEEK OF OCTOBER 9
TUESDAY | 1:00 | DSL
Managing Your Online Identity
WEDNESDAY | 1:00 | Sem Rm.
Using the Open Science Framework
THURSDAY | 12:00 | Sem Rm.
Writing a Data Management Plan for a Grant

NOVEMBER

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 6
TUESDAY | 1:00 | Sem Rm.
Introduction to Scalar
TUESDAY | 3:00 | DSL
Image Georeferencing with ArcMap
WEDNESDAY | 1:00 | Sem Rm.
Using the Open Science Framework
THURSDAY | 12:00 | Sem Rm.
Writing a Data Management Plan for a Grant

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 13
MONDAY | 3:00 | Hecker
Introduction to ESRI StoryMaps
TUESDAY | 1:00 | Sem Rm.
Tableau for Data Visualization
WEDNESDAY | 1:00 | Sem Rm.
Best Practices for Managing and

ALL WORKSHOPS IN THE DIGITAL STUDIO ON THE 1ST FLOOR OF THE ROCKEFELLER LIBRARY
DSL = Rock 137
Sem Rm. = Rock 160

Programming can also help establish a space's character. We run workshops, but need to do more in this area.

ACTIVITY

Do you want *traffic* or *community*?

Ultimately, it's not about just getting people in, but building a *community* of people interested in Digital Scholarship making the Digital Studio their own.

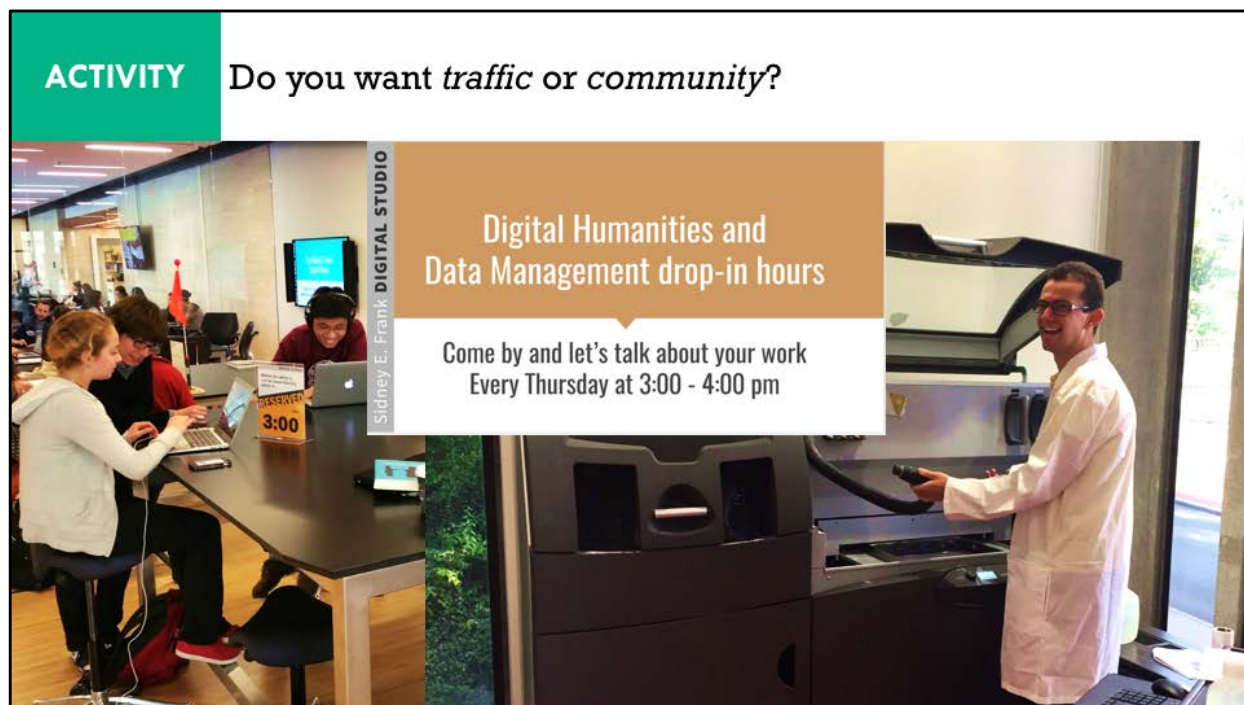
ACTIVITY

Do you want *traffic* or *community*?



CDS doesn't have office spaces in the Studio, but we conduct as much of our meeting time in the Studio as possible.

When we have students engaging in digital scholarship (such as these student employee working on the Inscriptions of Israel/Palestine Project <http://cds.library.brown.edu/projects/Inscriptions/>), we have them work in the Studio.



CDS has “Drop-in hours” where we invite people working on projects to talk with CDS as a whole. This allows the community to not only meet CDS as a whole, but meet each other.

The eleven undergraduate employees also constitute a seed community – they promote the space to their peers and that can help build up the community.

By bringing staff, faculty, students, and others together, we hope to make the Studio not just a space, but a “home” for people engaged in digital scholarship. In this, there is much work to be done, but we are on our way.





Image: <https://i.ytimg.com/vi/KGk4b2bBlp4/maxresdefault.jpg>