

## **Appendix A**

### **Grinnell College Campus Plan Update**

Visit of teaching and library facilities, September 9-12, 2009

#### **Overview and individual reports**

As part of Grinnell College's update of the campus plan, Keith Brouhle, Richard Fyffe, David Harrison, Kathy Kamp, and Marci Sortor visited facilities at Hamilton, Middlebury, and Wellesley Colleges, MIT, and Harvard and Wesleyan Universities September 9-12, 2009. We met with individuals involved in planning for some of these spaces, as well as those who teach in or support teachers in them. This report provides detailed information about the visit and our several conversations. It then concludes with some thoughts that the group had about the planning process and what we could pursue most fruitfully in the next 2 semesters in terms of developing some spaces to experiment with.

Each member of the group came away with his and her own observations. However, there was considerable agreement about a number of issues. These included:

- The need to ensure that sufficient space is allocated in classrooms and elsewhere, to allow teachers to move about easily, for students to gather in different kinds of configurations, and for groups to work together.
- The importance of non-classroom learning spaces that support coursework, and student and faculty research.
- The importance of professional staff and trained student specialists to support the technical elements in the classroom and in various learning labs.
- The importance of getting the right mix of IT-CTS-library services (and location of such services). In general, we must explore the kinds of collaborative adjacencies that we want to encourage.
- Adjacencies can be extremely important in fostering collaboration across different operations (e.g. library and IT, or GIS and academic departments) and for interdisciplinary partnerships (social science departments; International centers at Harvard) but (a) adjacencies alone do not guarantee collaboration and (b) apparently minor elements can be greater obstacles to mixing than one might expect (e.g. vertical separation, lack of a connector between two adjacent buildings).
- How other disciplines and divisions use space, furniture, and technology may directly apply to our own work to improving teaching and learning spaces in the Social Studies and Humanities (e.g. we were all intrigued by the opportunities presented by the MIT TEAL classrooms for introductory physics and by the "kidney tables" used in the lap top classroom in Hamilton's Kirner-Johnson building).
- The important of group study space, majors' research space, and casual study areas.
- The significance of details impacting lines of sight, ability to move around the room, and ability of the room to function as planned. We saw many similar kinds of rooms, some of them quite beautiful, and some of these were far more successful than their counterparts.