“Making it (IT) Work in the New World!”

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June 3, 2011
Central computer labs at UNC Chapel Hill are funded by student fees

Due to budget pressures, we’ve been asked to look at ways we might be able to reduce costs

Nationally, the concept of—and, indeed, even the need for—student computer labs is under review/scrutiny

No one likes to reduce services to students...

So we challenged our lab support team to engage with students about what they would like to see if we “re-imagined” the computer lab concept
Students told us they wanted:

- collaboration space
- ...more of a focus on “learning space”
- multiple study zones
- ...more space to spread out and study
- comfortable seating
- better lighting
- vending machines and coffee!
Proposed Library Partnership

- ITS and Library presently have separate computer installations in two Library facilities
- Opportunity to partner and reduce costs for both
- Proposal:
  - ITS consolidate present 5 computer lab locations to 3—all in Library facilities
  - All following the “re-imagined” layout/format
  - ITS provides the capital funding for computers/furniture
  - Library provides 1st tier support in the Libraries
  - ITS provides 2nd tier support
Traditional—Before
Re-imagining the Computer Lab
After
Caffeine and Snacks!
The Results

- Fall semester, ITS piloted a “re-invention” of the student computer lab concept in SAS-B South
  - Redesigned with a “learning space” focus
  - ...removed 2/3 of the computers
  - ...usage doubled
  - ...a resounding success!

- We anticipate saving $$ two ways
  1. Fewer computers, so lowered capital costs
  2. Partnership with Library, so lowered support costs
Re-imagining the Computer Lab

South Campus Study Commons

**Study**
- Group and individual study space
- Wireless access

**Work**
- Design Lab Assistance
- PCs and Macs

**Refresh**
- Coffee service and Vending