Students are drawn to a setting that allows them to be comfortable, engaged in the class content/activity for the day, and that of which allows them to best work in groups. Overall, they prefer to customize their interior classroom environment to correlate with the current activity taking place, which plays a role in the type of classroom furniture they prefer. Data for this study was obtained using a survey which expanded upon how students perceive the classroom environment, furniture types, and common distractions within the classroom environment. It was concluded that students value the ability to work in groups while still managing a certain degree of personal space. Upon this conclusion, it was determined that high top desks are the most logical and preferred furniture solution for the personal space. Upon this conclusion, it was determined that high top desks are the most logical and preferred furniture solution for the desired learning and working types of the majority of modern-day students within the classroom. Finally, distractions within the classroom can greatly affect the learning and working outcomes of these students.

A survey was created that requested students to answer 17 questions regarding classroom furniture types and other design factors that affect learning. Some of the questions were modeled after a previous study (Harvey & Kenyon, 2013). The survey was distributed via North Dakota State University student email ListServ. Students were required to be 18 years of age or older to participate in this study.

Below is a graph of the most common choices students selected when asked what their favorite furniture option was:

Below is a graph of the most common choices students selected when asked what their least favorite furniture option was:

Many of the challenges students face while in the classroom can be alleviated through good design. The most commonly reported distractions were related to sight lines, furniture layout, and acoustics, which are all important factors for interior designers to consider.

The most popular seating options were high top tables, mobile desks with adjustable tablet arms, and individual desks in groups with mobile chairs. These options were all mobile, and made working as a group easy.

Two of the three least popular options were stationary. These options are what many would consider more traditional classroom seating options. Many of the challenges students face while in the classroom can be alleviated through good design. The most commonly reported distractions were related to sight lines, furniture layout, and acoustics, which are all important factors for interior designers to consider.

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When designing an educational facility, it is important to consider what types of furniture would best support the various styles of learning (Harvey & Kenyon, 2013). Overall, it can be concluded that students prefer mobile furniture so that group work and communication is encouraged along with being able to see the whiteboard when in class (Rands & Gansemer-Topf, 2017). Desks that are stationary and small do not encourage flexibility or collaboration within a classroom. The preferences shown give us as designers great insight into how to design effectively within an educational facility for its users (McArthur, 2015).


