

reputation as tech-savvy multi-taskers and general hunter-gatherers of instantly shareable information. Millennials are plugged into their mobile devices, light-weight laptops, and peripatetic tablets.

This is where collaboration furniture comes in. This furniture – for classrooms especially – is frequently reconfigurable, mobile, and flexible depending on professors' and students' needs. Chairs with affixed desks are usually replaced by light-weight desks on casters arranged in pod formation. Students zoom from pod to task on freestanding chairs with wheels. Wifi presence in the classroom makes research and information sharing easy for the "plugged-in" generation. Collaborative furniture designers must account for clear sight lines and eye contact among group members in each configuration of desks: a natural habit for millennials.

In more traditional classrooms, desks are clunky, uncomfortable, and facing the blackboard. Professors lecture, possibly take questions, and leave. This is a very different approach from collaborative learning facilitators, who often establish context and set guiding questions before engaging students in groups. From there these students have instant access to a myriad of information sources in the form of wikis, blogs, podcasts, scholarly articles, newspapers, and so on.

Collaborative furniture frequently features SMARTboards, where students can present and mark up findings in front of their classmates. When properly designed, furniture is thus capable of fostering innovation and creativity in education. With tablet and laptop accessible



*This classroom space at Gulf Coast State College Advanced Technology Center, Panama City, Florida, has curved walls. SMARTdesks Pi Collaboration Tables, having curved surfaces, were a natural fit. The SMARTdesks Presence AV Podium supports multi-media presentation technology.*



*This open plan classroom at GCSC features SMARTdesks iGroup® tables set in Linear Offset in random strings. Each grouping is headed by SMARTdesks AV Credenzas. SMARTdesks PortaPanels feature clear dry-erase writing surfaces, perfect for team work.*