

University Senate Plenary

December 9, 2022



University Senate

Proposed: December 9, 2022

Adopted: December 9, 2022

PROPOSED AGENDA

University Senate

Friday, December 9, 2022 at 1:15 p.m. via Zoom

[Registration required](#)

After registering you will receive a confirmation email with meeting details.

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Adoption of the minutes of November 18, 2022
3. President's report
4. Executive Committee Chair's report:
 - a. Chair's remarks
 - b. Questions for the Chair
5. New business:
 - a. Committee Reports and updates:
 - i. Student space: Current status and current and future needs (SAC)

MEETING OF NOVEMBER 18, 2022

Executive Committee chair Jeanine D'Armiento (Ten., VP&S) called the Senate to order shortly after 1:15 pm on Zoom. Sixty-three of 101 senators were present during the meeting.

Sen. D'Armiento briefly reviewed the main ground rules for electronic meetings.

Adoption of the agenda. The [agenda](#) was adopted as proposed (*see Plenary Binder for November 18, page 2*).

Adoption of the minutes. The [minutes](#) of October 21 were adopted as proposed (*Binder, 3-9*).

Report of the President. Sen. D'Armiento said President Bollinger would not be joining the Senate meeting. She said that, as usual, senators with questions for him should send them to her.

Report of the Executive Committee chair. Sen. D'Armiento said she had no updates to report. She invited questions.

Sen. Marco Tedesco (Professional Research Officers) asked for an update on the new Research Professor title that the provost would be presenting to the Senate.

Sen. D'Armiento said the provost's office was still working on this. She said all new proposals for Senate action go through her; this proposal will be referred to the Faculty Affairs Committee.

Sen. Freyer, a co-chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee said he had met recently with Public Health professor Jeffrey Shaman, and would be bringing a proposal from Prof. Shaman to the next FAC meeting.

Sen. Daniel Savin (Professional Research Officers) asked to have the Research Professor proposal referred also to the Research Officers Committee, since this new title would be specifically for research officers.

Sen. D'Armiento thanked Sen. Savin for this reminder. She said the proposal would go to both the Faculty Affairs and Research Officers committees.

New

business:

Committee Reports and Updates:

IT Committee Annual Report 2021-22, with an update on the Student Information System upgrade.

IT Committee co-chairs Julia Hirschberg (Ten., SEAS) and Matthew Jones (Ten. A&S/SS) presented the [report](#) (*Binder, 10-12*) which had also been distributed. Sen. Hirschberg shared her

screen, and she and Sen. Jones took turns presenting sections of the report, touching on committee discussions that included CUIT's role in the recovery from the pandemic, emerging technologies, long-overdue upgrades to Wi-Fi networks in all CUIMC buildings, high-performance computing, and a long-range vision for Columbia's research enterprise offered by EVP for Research Jeannette Wing. At their joint annual meeting at the end of the year, the IT, Education and Libraries committees heard from EVP for Arts and Sciences Amy Hungerford about plans under consideration to expand the Columbia's undergraduate student population, and also heard substantial, detailed presentations from VP for Campus Services Scott Wright, University Registrar Barry Kane, and others that gave a sometimes sobering picture of the capacity of the Columbia's classroom and housing and dining infrastructure to support such an expansion. Both co-chairs were relieved to learn that expansion plans would be put on hold.

The co-chairs expressed particular appreciation for the steadfast collaboration through the years of Mr. Kane and CUIT vice president Gaspare LoDuca on both long-term issues and acute short-term problems—a kind of collaboration that Sen. Jones said is not always possible in the Columbia bureaucracy.

Update on Student Information Services upgrade from Barry Kane, University Registrar. Mr. Kane stressed the need to put his presentation in context. He said there was significant preparation for the current upgrade over the past 10 years. When he arrived at Columbia, the only electronic support service that was offered in academic administration to faculty and students was real time registration. During the next decade, his office was able to work collaboratively with CUIT to provide a number of new services. The very first need that teaching faculty expressed to him was for electronic wait lists. In response two different types were developed—autofill and faculty-managed wait lists. All of the requirements for these were set by the faculty. Other additions were electronic generation and ordering of transcripts, electronic permissioning for faculty for add-drop decisions, and electronic changes of grades for students. The last in this series of innovations was Vergil, which was really the precursor to the current SIS replacement project. Based on student needs expressed in focus groups, Vergil was an attempt to bring all of the disparate pieces of information that students need to plan their courses into one place. But all of these new features were built on a mainframe system that is now in its fourth decade, and that Mr. Kane said the University can now finally replace.

He said the SIS replacement program is a four-phase project, now halfway done.

1. The first phase, the course management platform, is a heavily used tool for anyone involved in curricular development at Columbia. It includes the process by which new courses are approved by committees on instruction, and eventually added to the directory of classes.
2. Students records and academic history. This project, involving the collection and storage of all academic data for students across the University into a new system, while keeping it completely accurate, was a heavy lift. Some 100 academic advisors and administrators were now testing the new platform, which Mr. Kane hoped to roll out to students by the start of the new calendar year.
3. The next phase, the critical one for academic functioning, is registration and course enrollment, which will take all of the academic data in the system and use it register and enroll students in new ways. Mr. Kane recognized that this is a subject of concern to students

as well as faculty, so this phase of the SIS upgrade provides an opportunity to address these concerns. Mr. Kane said the challenge here is that he and Mr. LoDuca can't focus only on the future; they also have to maintain the systems students and faculty are currently using. There are always glitches to be addressed. In the previous week, some SIPA students had alerted Mr. Kane to momentary SSOL outages during a registration session. And the problems don't just come up in old systems like Columbia's. On the very first day of senior registration, Barnard's vendor-supplied system crashed for two hours.

Mr. Kane said this is where things stand now. He and Mr. LoDuca were enthusiastic about where their project was going, and confident that a strong foundation had been set.

Mr. LoDuca corroborated Mr. Kane's account. He added his thanks to the IT Committee co-chairs for their leadership and partnership. He said that in the roll-out of the registration and enrollment phase of the SIS project, it was important to take the time to get it right. The code is largely in place. Now is the time for rigorous testing, to eliminate outstanding problems. He addressed the outages that Mr. Kane mentioned, which included a timeout message on some students' browsers that looked to them like a system crash. Under load, such things can happen, Mr. LoDuca said; his team was now working to solve this problem.

Sen. Fouad Habib (Stu., Public Health) said Mr. Kane and Mr. LoDuca seemed to be actively seeking input from faculty, but communicating with students only when they complain. Have there been active efforts to solicit student feedback? He said faculty should certainly be involved since they're teaching the classes, but students are the ones supplying the load on the system.

Sen. Habib said that in the School of Public Health it can take a day or two for a student even to get the link to be able to download an e-transcript. This is not the best way to proceed if someone needs to send out quick applications to several jobs. Finally, he asked if there is a way to centralize the software system further? He recognized that Vergil has a list of classes across all Columbia schools. Different things are going on at different Columbia schools. Would it be possible to have a single system for all schools?

He said it would also be advantageous down the line to provide for cross-registration across all schools. At Public Health and perhaps other schools, this would be an attractive prospect.

Mr. LoDuca said his office had run a number of sessions with its user experience expert to get feedback from more than 50 students from a range of Columbia schools on the registration system. Using this input, CUIT built wireframes for registration websites. Mr. LoDuca said the pandemic hit in the midst of this effort, and CUIT had to drop this initiative. It is only getting back to it now. As for Sen. Habib's second question, about centralization of the system, Mr. LoDuca said the system is centralized now—there is one student information system for the entire university. Everyone's academic history, the course catalog, student accounts—all of those are already centralized. The variations are in the different rules that each school follows in using the system.

Mr. Kane addressed the question about e-transcripts, saying he opted for a vendor-supplied solution, using the Parchment Company to generate and distribute transcripts (both printed and electronic). He reminded senators that any solution built on a mainframe that is now in its fourth decade will

not yield instantaneous results. But he said a system that can produce a transcript and mail it in one day is a vast improvement over the completely manual system he found when he arrived at Columbia.

Sen. Henning Schulzrinne (Ten., SEAS) thanked Mr. Kane and Mr. LoDuca for their modernization effort. He said he had two more forward-looking questions that were perhaps of interest to a smaller set of departments. His own department, Computer Science, runs its own system for managing the progress of its graduate students. Traditionally, the department has imported data for students' courses into a live spreadsheet—a less than ideal approach. He asked if there were plans to allow connections to departmental systems through Application Programming Interfaces (APIs), as opposed to just downloading and manually reimporting material to spreadsheets.

Mr. LoDuca said this was simply a question of data governance, of access to a data set larger than the one that a school or department normal allotment. If Computer Science wanted a larger data set, CUIT would talk to the data owners, who would decide whether to grant the access; the next step would be set up service accounts.

Sen. Schulzrinne asked if the CS team could talk to someone at CUIT about the technical issues—what the right API is, how to connect to it, how to get authorization, etc.

Mr. LoDuca asked to postpone such questions for a month, while the new registration system is getting rolled out. But soon he could connect Sen. Schulzrinne with the lead CUIT development team, which could advise Computer Science about available APIs.

Sen. Schulzrinne said his second question was more general. Has progress been made on low-code/no-code options that local units can use to free faculty from the drudgery of sending around PDF forms by email and signing them?

Mr. LoDuca said he would be happy to tackle that problem, but that effort would have to come somewhat later. He said CUIT's current mission is to eliminate the mainframe. It is beyond its useful life, and it is getting harder to get the right people to support it, as the knowledgeable people retire. But beyond that, the good news is that Columbia now has a completely open, powerful system. It also has DocuSign and its own document management engine, On Base, in which forms can be built, with paperless workflow and routing.

Sen. Gadha Raj Nadupparambil (Stu., SIPA) thanked Mr. Kane and Mr. LoDuca, along with Sen. D'Armiento and Senate staff director Geraldine Mc Allister, for arranging a meeting to listen to student concerns after the SSOL crash that took place during registration the previous week. She wanted to share one of these concerns in this larger group. She said students are asking for a system that would enable them to cross-register in all Columbia schools. Under current conditions, students who want to take a course in a different school find the different timelines and registration processes confusing. Could these procedures be standardized?

Mr. Kane said the new system now under development, Vergil 2, would get rid of a good deal of manual work and paper and running around. He said the provost is well aware of the frustrations that students encounter with cross-registration. He said a deputy provost was working directly with

him on this problem. But he noted that no technology can solve the problems that arise when different schools have different schedules and requirements. That is a challenge that he will be working on. Some promising ideas are now under discussion. But cross-registration presents functional as well as technical challenges. And both types have to be addressed.

Mr. LoDuca thanked Sen. Nadupparambil for speaking up a few days earlier. He wanted to be clear that his team is not working just on the new SIS, but also on issues like the one she raised. He urged all present to report any IT problems they encounter to the CUIT Help Desk. Without Help Desk tickets to guide them, no technicians were aware of this problem.

Sen. Andrew Marks (Ten., VP&S) understood that there are floors in CUIMC that were never wired for Wi-Fi. Has that problem been addressed? Faculty regularly complain about the inadequacy of the Wi-Fi, which is obviously critical for what physicians do. He said he appreciated the work of CUIT and the IT committee. He understood that clinical buildings have gotten first priority for Wi-Fi upgrades. But he asked for a brief questionnaire for the basic science departments to assess Wi-Fi service in their vicinity.

Mr. LoDuca said Chad Neal, chief information officer at the Medical Center, has a website on the progress of the Wi-Fi and current network remediation project. Mr. LoDuca offered to introduce Sen. Marks to Mr. Neal by email.

Sen. D'Armiento said Sen. Marks's audio signal was distorted. He said she was making his point.

She said senators were using the Chat to list locations on both campuses with Wi-Fi problems. She encouraged them to keep going. She thanked the IT Committee as well as Mr. LoDuca and Mr. Kane for their hard work.

Sen. Hirschberg said the IT Committee would invite Mr. Neal to an upcoming meeting.

Reports and updates:

Presidential Advisory Committee on Sexual Assault Annual Report 2021-22 Joseph Defraigne Greenwell, Vice President for Student Affairs and a PACSA member, and Claude Mellins, Professor of Medical Psychology and a PACSA co-chair, presented the [report](#) (*Binder, 13-14*).

When they were finished, Sen. D'Armiento invited questions.

Sen. Schulzrinne, noting that some basic statistics in the report were unclear, asked for a breakdown of the numbers on student sexual misconduct and staff or faculty sexual misconduct.

Mr. Greenwell said the statistics in the report that was shared were concerned entirely with student sexual misconduct. A second report, from the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EOAA) would deal entirely with cases in which a faculty or staff member is the accused.

Sen. Benjamin Orlove (Ten., SIPA) thanked the guests for their report. He addressed the dilemma that PACSA faced in conducting its survey: the committee strove to find out a good deal of information, but that made the survey longer, and thereby reduced the participation rate. He said there was a lot of expertise on campus on these issues in the social sciences that might be helpful.

Prof. Mellins said she spends the bulk of her time on research and surveys, and a wide range of experts (primarily from the medical campus) reviewed the survey in question. But she said Sen. Orlove's point was well taken, and she thanked him. She also invited other suggestions.

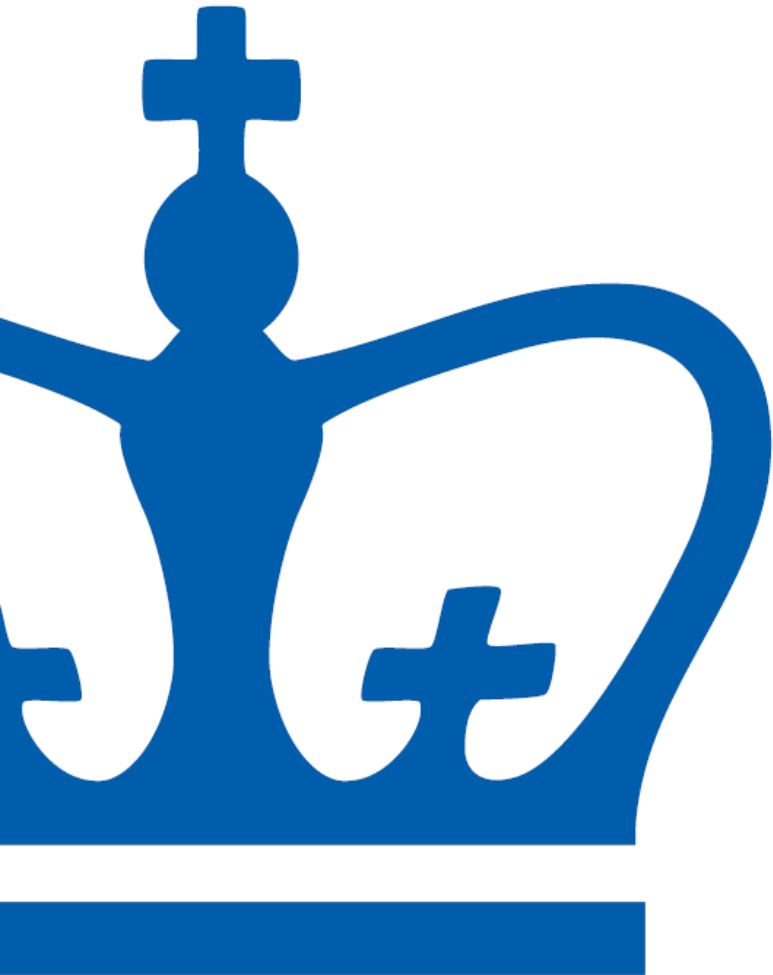
Sen. Orlove said Kenneth Prewitt, the Carnegie Professor of Public Affairs at SIPA and a former head of the U.S. Census Bureau, would be a good person to talk to.

Adjourn. Sen. D'Armiento wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving and, speaking briefly as a physician, she urged senators to get their flu shots and take precautions when traveling. She adjourned the meeting at about 2:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Mathewson, Senate staff

Reimagining Lerner Hall



Student Affairs Committee

February 23, 2018



Building Community

- Columbia should prioritize the creation of an holistic community, spirit and identity
- As a hub of student life, Lerner Hall is the most appropriate physical space in which to build community



Our Vision

Short-term

- Dedicated spaces for LGBTQ+ and students of color
- Student Food Bank:
5th floor of Lerner,
East Hallway

Medium-term

- Central Student Lounge

Long-term

- Creation of a unified health center, freeing space for student use on multiple levels of Lerner
- Relocation of administrative offices, including Chaplain's Office, UEM, Financial Aid

Central Student Lounge (Medium-Term)

- Central area for community building and student interaction
- Spans 200, 300, and 400 levels
- Features lounge space, performance space, and fun amenities
- Removal of mailboxes and physical alterations required

Current 200, 300 and 400 Level Space Arrangements

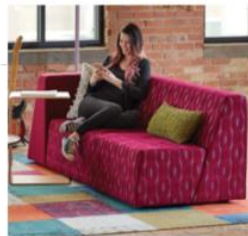
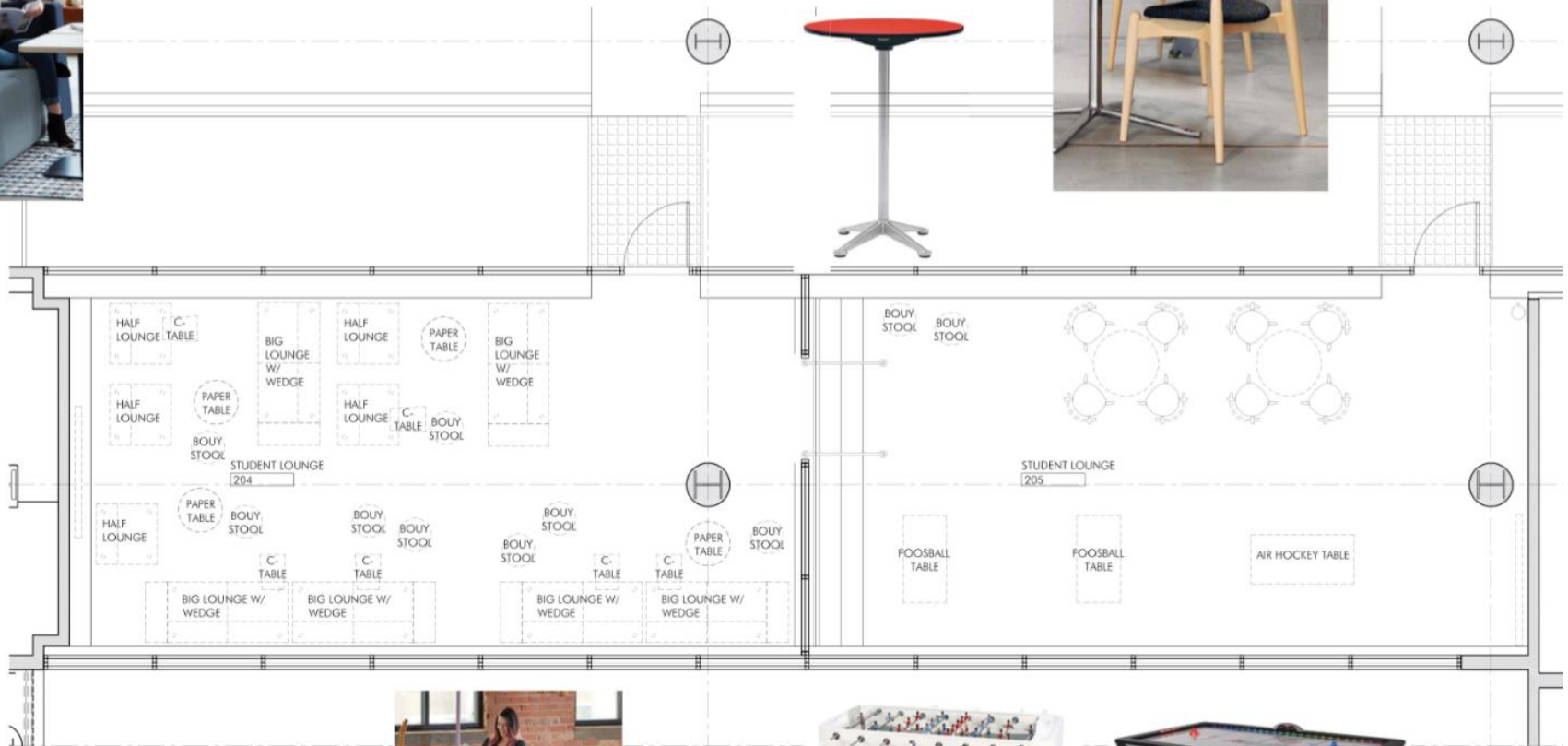
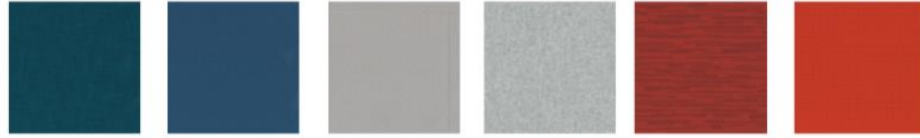


200 Level Ramp Lounges

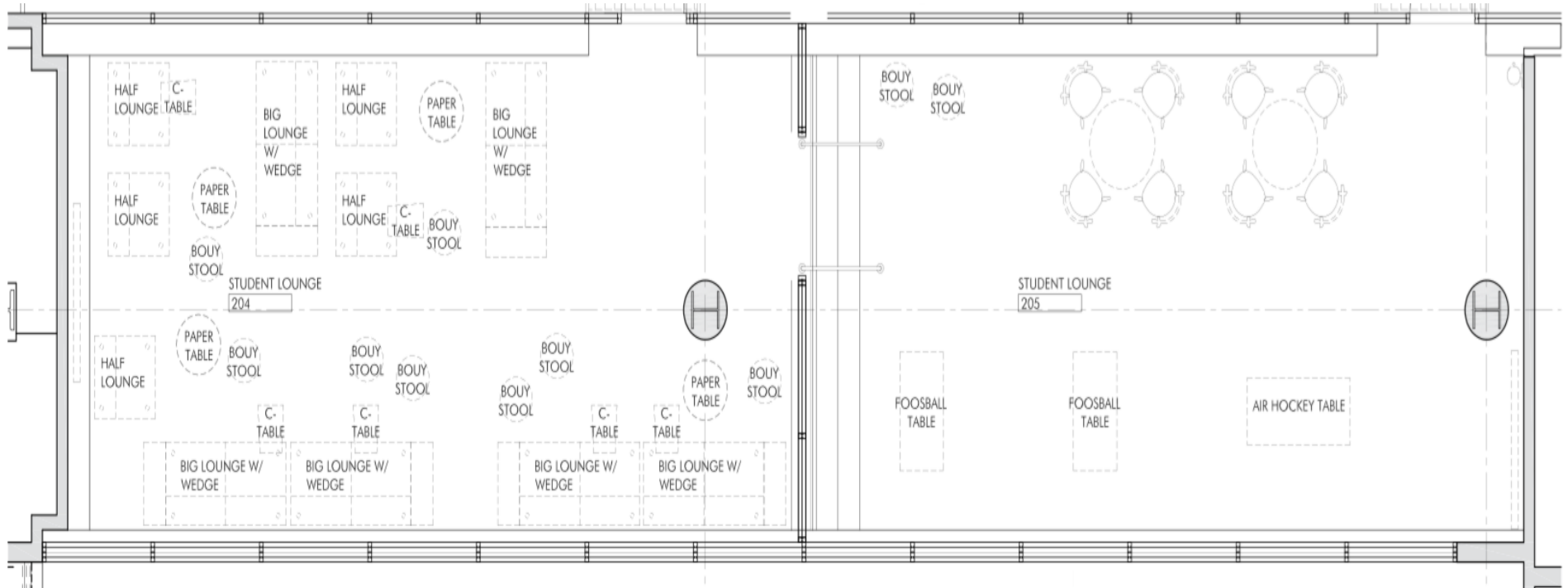


300 and 400 Level Mailboxes

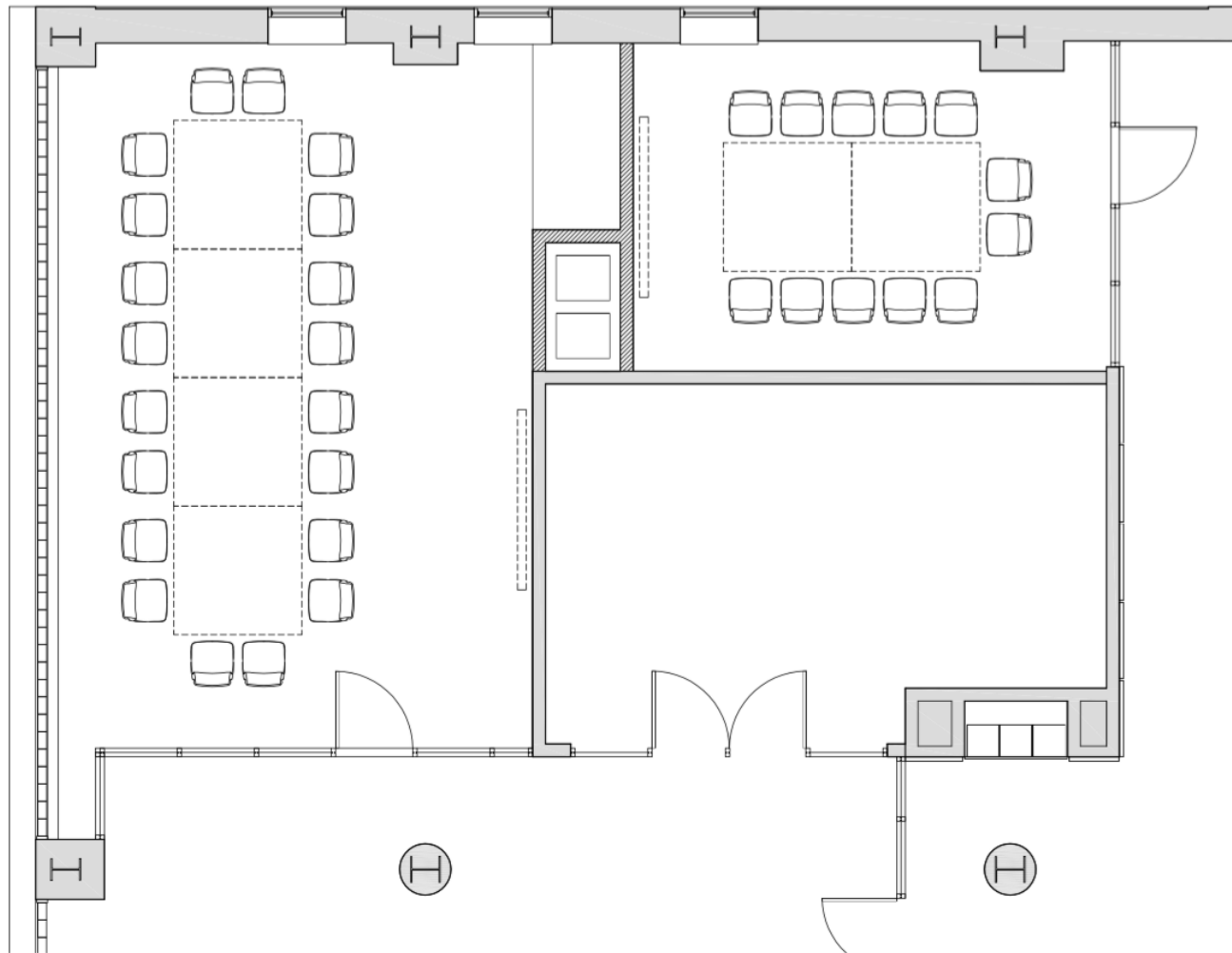
Lerner Hall 200 Level



Lerner Hall 200 Level



Rooms 301A & 301C: Two New Conference Rooms



Room 478 – New Computer Lab

