

# Emory University Student Center

In a cohesive exercise of adaptive reuse design, Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia outfitted its new 117,000 square foot Student Center with an eclectic mix of furniture, forming a space that is contemporary and responds to how students engaged with the space prior.

The Emory University Student Center, completed in 2019, was a combination of renovation and new building construction. Part of an existing building was repurposed as additional square footage for the new facility. With more open space, Emory University looked to increase collaboration and daily interaction between students, faculty and staff; fortify school spirit to help recruit top students; and promote flexibility and reconfigurability. Overall, Emory University sought an open, light-filled space that let students move through their days—studying and meeting with friends, faculty and staff—uninterruptedly.





## Emory First

Specifying products from across the Knoll constellation of brands, Emory University partnered with North Carolina-based architecture firm Duda Paine and Knoll dealer Corporate Environments. To tackle the University's priorities, the team hosted several showroom visits and analyzed multiple surveys to firmly establish the right solution for the new Student Center. Corporate Environments brought in students and had them grade several staged zones that mimicked specific areas in the upcoming Student Center. During each visit, Emory University's Planning, Design and Construction Team favored spending time with physical products, understanding how one piece of furniture can be more versatile than another.

To solidify the new space's presence on campus, the team agreed upon a rich color palette of electric blues and bright yellows—the school's colors—across all three floors. Architectural solutions from FilzFelt, which also help manage acoustics, provided soft touchpoints and material diversity. Complementary KnollTextiles upholstery fabrics on Rockwell Unscripted Club Chairs and the Connect Modular Sofa from Muuto brought the whole space together.

## A Constellation Solution

To better promote spontaneous collaboration, Emory University planned a series of spaces that balance soft, lounge seating with causal meeting tables and side chairs. The Muuto Base Table, recognized for its simple frame and subtle details, was paired with Muuto

Fiber Side Chairs with wood bases. Together, these products are highly functional and unobtrusive, enabling students to pick up where they last left off.


Going one step further with the balance of lounge seating and casual tables, Emory University constructed a series of architectural nooks for individuals and small teams for group work or informal gatherings. Nooks alter from having side chairs and a worksurface to a more lounge-oriented space with Muuto Fiber Lounge Chairs and Around Coffee Tables. The wood accents from Muuto create a more welcoming space and build on the project's material diversity for a hospitality-focused environment.

Throughout the Student Center, storage was combined with varying worksurfaces, allowing students to get up and move around freely without being concerned for personal belongings. In one space, the team combined Interpole with Antenna Storage and MultiGeneration Stools. Students can easily switch from the whiteboard to their computer, without adding unnecessary clutter to the workspace.

## Past to Present

For a space that synthesizes the past with contemporary architecture, Corporate Environments and Duda Paine both agreed that the interior solution had to reflect this relation. The end result ranges from Rockwell Unscripted counter height Tall Tables paired with Bertolia Molded Shell Stool in blue and yellow to a trio of muted gray Womb Chairs with a Saarinen Side Table to Antenna Simple Tables paired with Generation by Knoll.



The Emory University Student Center demonstrates how a heavily mixed planning solution creates an immersive experience that enables students, faculty and staff to do more together, all in a calming and comfortable environment that fosters a sense of community. 

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## Project Overview

**Sector:** Education  
**Completed:** 2019  
**Location:** Atlanta, GA  
**Team:** Duda Paine, Architecture & Interior Design; Corporate Environments, Knoll Dealer

### Scope

- + 117,000 sq.ft.
- + 3 Floors
- + Workstations
- + Primary Seats
- + Secondary Seats
- + Huddle Rooms
- + Break Rooms
- + Conference Room
- + Lounges
- + Cafeterias

### Knoll Products

- + **Systems:** Antenna Workspaces®; Dividends Horizon®; Reff Profiles™
- + **Task & Side Seating:** Generation by Knoll®; ReGeneration by Knoll®; Muuto Fiber Side Chair and Stool; Bertioia Molded Shell Stool and Side Chair; Washington Skeleton Aluminum Side Chair™; Spark® Series Side Chair; Olivares Aluminum Chair
- + **Lounge Seating:** Womb™ Chair; Jehs+Laub Lounge Chair; k.™ lounge; Rockwell Unscripted® High Back Lounge and Club Chair; Muuto Outline Highback Sofa; Muuto Connect Modular Sofa
- + **Tables:** Dividends Horizon® Table; Antenna® Tables and Desks; k. stand™ Height-Adjustable Table; Muuto Around Table; Platner Side Table; Pixel™ Table; Rockwell Unscripted® Library Table; Rockwell Unscripted® Occasional Table
- + **Storage:** Antenna Workspaces® Storage; Calibre®
- + **Technology Support:** Interpole™
- + **Accessories:** Muuto Five Pouf; Toboggan® Pull Up Table; Rockwell Unscripted® Mobile Storage

### Drivers

- + Increase collaboration among students and faculty
- + Promote flexibility with versatile space and easily reconfigurable furniture
- + Attract top students and strengthen school-spirit across campus

### Tactics

- + Planned a series of shared spaces for individual and teams that balance soft, lounge seating with casual meeting tables and side chairs
- + Combined storage with open-plan workstations and counter height stools for a more touch-and-go experience
- + Leveraged Spinneybeck | FilzFelt products to create a rich color palette that also introduced soft touchpoints throughout the space

### Outcomes

- + A Student Center that facilitates collaboration and focused work, whether it be sitting back to read, gathering around a whiteboard or huddling around a table
- + Shared spaces that provide ample storage, allowing students to come and go without having to break focus and worry about personal belongings
- + A space that strengthens and unifies the student body