

The RIT Ergonomic Lab is a good place to sit down and check out the new Steelcase chairs. Get on over to the lab, "sit for a spell" and talk to our resident experts—KateMarshall, senior staff engineer (I) and Tracy Freas, staff engineer. The Ergonomic Lab is located in the Center for Integrated Manufacturing Studies (CIMS) in the Louise Slaughter Building, room 2160. Please call 475-5807 for the lab hours. ■

Not sure what chair to get?

RIT Ergonomic  
Job Highlights  
Steelcase Chairs



The RIT purchasing staff is uniquely qualified to assist you with your purchasing needs. **Marlene Harris**, senior purchasing agent, should be your first point of contact at RIT for questions about furniture purchases. She may be reached at 475-6925 or by e-mail at mab6420@rit.edu. ■

### Need A Little Help?

Log on to the Merkel Donohue/Steelcase web page at <http://merkel.yourensnc.com/rit> (Registration Code: RITshop!) to peruse the furniture and/or place an order on your procurement card. Enter your User ID and password (initial of first name and full last name for both), and "ENTER". From the welcome page you may shop, enter the resource area, search, send e-mail to Merkel Donohue, or view your account. You may also view layouts using the RIT furniture standards. Merkel Donohue representatives John Baker (238-2818) and Diane DeMus (238-2820) can provide assistance with obtaining a quotation, design assistance, ordering, or any questions you may have. ■

### Getting Started - Let's Order Furniture

One of the many advantages of RIT's partnership with Merkel Donohue and Steelcase is the development of a web site exclusively for the use of RIT employees. On this site employees have access to all RIT furniture options and pricing. In addition, if the order is under \$1,500 they may be placed on-line directly from this web site. If the order exceeds the limit, selections can still be made and will include a detailed quote, allowing for easy transfer onto an Oracle requisition. Eventually, Oracle purchases will be accommodated through the web site as well.

### Easy Ordering

# Purchasing BUY LINES

SPECIAL EDITION - JANUARY 2005

## Benefits of Furniture Standards

- Allows better projection of time and cost before installation. ◆
- Manages aesthetics - standardized color schemes will blend campus-wide, reducing the task of managing a variety of finishes and fabrics. ◆
- Reduces cost of ownership, increasing flexibility and interchangeability. ◆
- Extends furniture systems product life. ◆
- Workstations developed objectively to support worker function and need. ◆
- Simplifies administrative procedures for reassigning assets across departments.

## New RIT Furniture Standards

RIT is pleased to announce a new furniture standards program at RIT. Purchasing and Facilities Management have assessed all campus furniture purchasing practices. The evaluation included layout development of RIT workstations, classrooms, offices, and labs. These layouts went to competitive bid, and were sent only to suppliers of "grade A" furniture. By selecting one vendor, RIT is able to lower the overall cost of furniture. Steelcase and local distributor Merkel Donohue, were selected to provide all campus furniture. Selection was



RIT Team: Jim Yarrington, Jim Fisher, Mark Williams, Tina Karol, and Marlene Harris.

based on pricing, local support, installation services, quality, and reusability of furniture. Consistency in quality, style, and flexibility greatly reduces the logistics of employee relocation. While changes and moves are inevitable, it is far more cost-effective to move people without having to move office furniture as well. Steelcase furniture is of high quality and will have a longer lifespan than some lower quality furniture. Overall, the quality of furniture will increase as RIT reduces future expenses. We're sure you'll be as pleased as we are. ■

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FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION



**Merkel Donohue Team:** Front L to R: J. Baker, J. Conrad, B. Toy, Back: D. Demus, N. Mountain, K. Hagen, J. Bott, J. Kuss.

Dear RIT Employees,

On behalf of everyone at Merkel Donohue, thank you for selecting us to partner with Rochester Institute of Technology in the planning, procurement and installation of your office furnishings.

We have built our locally-owned company with a simple premise— quick, reliable, and consistent service is absolutely essential in keep our clients happy. For over 40 years our goal has been to passionately keep our service commitment, and to only represent the highest quality manufacturers. We have been with Steelcase, our prime supplier, since 1965. They have become a world leader in product and services, and are experts in the way people work. It is our hope that this combination will result in high value for RIT resulting in the strongest of relationships.

The only way we can deliver excellent service is by employing absolutely the best people. We are extremely proud of our knowledgeable and committed team, and are confident they will provide outstanding service.

We are very pleased to have had the opportunity to work with RIT over the last decade as we've witnessed the exciting changes within the Institute. We are honored to play a role in supporting the growth and initiatives currently taking place on campus.

Everyone at Merkel Donohue and I wish you the best!

Tom Merkel

## What are Furniture Standards?

Furniture Standards are guidelines that serve as tools for developing the physical components of a work environment. Not every employee has the same job requirement, or work style. Different types of educational settings demand different types of classrooms, and furniture should support work and classroom issues. Standards can facilitate change from one type of environment to another; i.e. from a closed environment to an open one. They also enable organizations to link their strategic goals with effective workplace design.

Ultimately, standards serve as guidelines to maintain a consistent approach to cost, quality, design, and health and safety issues. They allow for variations based on functions performed in the space, and it's geographic location. Guidelines can help faculty, staff, designers, architects, and employees understand the Institute's space planning strategy and provide methods for achieving strategic goals on a site-by-site basis. ■

## Standards Supporting Individual Needs

Standards programs recognize that one size doesn't fit all. Design considers the activity, not entitlement, when planning a space. Issues like personal job functions are included when standards are developed, along with Institute goals. It is important to accommodate people with a wide variety of job functions, and their need for privacy and interaction. Options for maximizing work surface, layout, storage, meeting space, and teaming opportunities can also be provided. Standards aren't meant to be static; they must be flexible, allowing for changes over time. They should be updated periodically, so that they continue to facilitate a consistent quality and character of design. It should reduce both the initial cost and the ongoing operating expenses for the Institute. The need for workplace standards becomes more apparent as RIT grows and changes. Needless

energy and resources are likely spent across campus acquiring workplace furniture. In addition, the long-term complexity of managing thousands of non-interchangeable furniture components is counterproductive. ■

## Workplace Standards Reduce Costs

### 1. Workplace Standards Enable Reutilization of Existing Assets

Campus-wide furniture assets are easily identified, inventoried, and valued, resulting in opportunities to reutilize assets.

### 2. Acquisition Costs Reduced with Workplace Standards

Standardizing with one dealer results in better contract pricing, terms, and delivery.

### 3. Real Estate Costs Reduced with Workplace Standards

Space is designed around defined modules promoting better building utilization. Planners can identify gross space needed in relocation situations, department shifts, etc., and can evaluate user requests effectively.

### 4. Planning Costs Reduced with Workplace Standards

Repetitive evaluation of multiple plans is eliminated. Lower space planning and design costs typically result since responses to certain job functions are generally in place. Less employee time is spent coordinating and managing furniture.

### 5. Workplace Standards Improve Service Delivery

Allows for a stocking program and the potential to inventory service parts to improve response to end user. Standards designed around express delivery programs provide for quick turnaround when needed.

### 6. Workplace Standards Reduce Workman's Compensation Risk Factor

A well designed program can increase productivity and ergonomic comfort by establishing minimum standards for everyone, addressing different levels of ergonomic support for different RIT job functions. ■



**Steelcase Team:** M.J. Foster, L. Dill, E. Czyz;