

## One Year After the Reeves Hall Renovations, What do Students Think?

*By Eric Cho*



Reeves Hall, one of the oldest buildings on Chapman University campus, underwent renovation for the third time in 2017. Since it was first constructed in 1913, Reeves Hall has been a space of education for 100 years. Renovations ended in January 2018 and on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Attallah College of Educational Studies held a ribbon cutting celebration. The renovation was completed with brand new projectors, better Wi-Fi, innovative classrooms, and ADA accessibility improvements.

Classes have been held since the fall semester of 2018, and IES (Integrated Educational Studies) students have been able to enjoy the results of the renovation. Specifically, in Reeves Hall, Rooms 1 and 3 have been spaces for faculty and student engagement. Classes in these rooms utilized the innovative classroom technology such as the Short Throw Projectors which allow lectures from any side of the classroom or the comfortable seating arrangements of furniture in Room 1.

Two semesters of classes have been held in these two rooms; what do students think? Erin Leung, an IES student, is currently taking IES 412 in Room 1 and sees it as an overall beneficial environment for student learning. “It allows students to feel comfortable,” Leung said, “It breaks people out of a more rigid demeanor.” When asked about the benefits of the seating arrangements, she responded, “It allows for people to learn with the position that is the most helpful.” Also, touching on important topics of disabilities in classrooms, she said “It is more inclusive for those who have disabilities.” Appreciating what Room 1 represents, Leung also

said, “It’s like a comfortable living room, and there’s a strong sense of community.” In IES classes, students are involved with many methods of teaching: essentialist, traditional classrooms and progressive, experimental classrooms. Room 1 provides an authentic experience for future educators to test out different classroom arrangements, having the unique chance to plan for the future.

These classrooms, however, are wildly different from a traditional classroom. Alana Caires, another IES student, said, “I prefer taking my notes on paper, so the lack of desks makes that kind of difficult.” Room 1 is strongly geared towards keeping up with the advancements in technology and including innovative seating arrangements. However, at times, as Caires shared, these changes may not be the best for everyone. Still, she appreciated what the open-environment classroom provides for discussion. “On the other hand, I think it is great for discussion-heavy classes like IES and the overall community of students,” she said. Leung and Caires shared their thoughts on how these types of classrooms have the potential to improve the sense of community and closeness for students. Caires’ preference for traditional desks, on the other hand, shows the reality that some students may resist innovation. This fittingly reflects the role that educators play in being aware of what ultimately benefits student learning.