

SBA PROPOSAL: **REDESIGN OF THE LIBRARY STUDENT LOUNGE**

INTRODUCTION

To provide students with another viable option for social and meeting space and to alleviate overcrowding in the Knight Hall student lounge, the SBA submits the following proposal. Presently, the library lounge is designated as a semi-quiet study space where students are permitted to review academic materials, eat, and engage in low levels of conversation. In response to growing student demand for additional social and meeting space on campus, the SBA believes that the library lounge should be converted from a semi-quiet study space into a multi-purpose student lounge. Upgrading furnishings and decorations, changing the layout of the room to encourage additional uses, and adding functional televisions will accomplish the following objectives:

1. Help to reemphasize the library as the focal point of student life, resulting in increased utilization of the entire facility;
2. Further supplement the already popular patio seating, especially during the winter months, and complement recent changes to the interior of the library, and;
3. Better serve the needs of the student body and the entire law school community.

BACKGROUND

When the library was completed in 1996, the lounge, adjoining foyer, and nearby hallway were intended to function as a small student union. As originally conceived, the space included lockers, a pool table, and multiple televisions. However, at the request of some students and the school administration, the space was later converted into semi-quiet study space. As a result of this conversion, the campus was left with only one multi-use student lounge located in Knight Hall.

While one multi-use lounge may have satisfied campus needs ten years ago, the Knight Hall lounge is no longer sufficient to meet the growing demands placed upon it as a location for student interaction and activities including group meetings, social events, and promotional functions. For example, recent attempts to utilize the space to host events such as the presidential debate and NCAA viewings have resulted in overcrowding and other logistical problems. Also, due to the popularity of Knight Lounge during the lunch hour, students and organizations intent on gathering there are routinely forced to go elsewhere due to overcrowding. In short, there is a critical lack of space for students to meet and interact.

PROPOSAL

- Add several couch clusters to the library lounge to offer more comfortable seating options and to create a more conducive setting for social interaction and group meetings (*see sample layouts attached hereto*)

- Maintain a variety of tables and chairs to enable students who wish to eat and study the continued option to do so
- Install several new televisions in order to show news programs (silent, but captioned) on a daily basis as well as the occasional showing of important civic, judicial, and sporting events
- Redecorate to include student trophies as well as historic photos of students, faculty, and prominent leaders who have graduated from the law school

CONCLUSION

By implementing the changes proposed above, the library lounge will more effectively meet the needs of our campus community. Significantly, this proposal is backed by the clear support of the student body as evinced by the recent survey (*see Attachment A*) where students voted in favor of the proposed changes by a ratio of nearly 3 to 1. Similarly, the officers and representatives of the SBA unanimously support this proposal and are willing to consider allocating student funds to help pay for the proposed changes.

As set forth above, these changes will not only return the lounge to its originally intended purpose, but also help alleviate overcrowding of the Knight Hall lounge, enhance use of the library facilities, promote a greater sense of school pride, and partially address a critical lack of common space on our campus.

The SBA hopes that the transformation of the library lounge will be a part of the ongoing effort to maximize the benefits of the immense physical and educational resources located within our library. We look forward to working with the administration and library staff to implement these changes and to explore additional means of improving student life at University of Connecticut School of Law.

Respectfully,

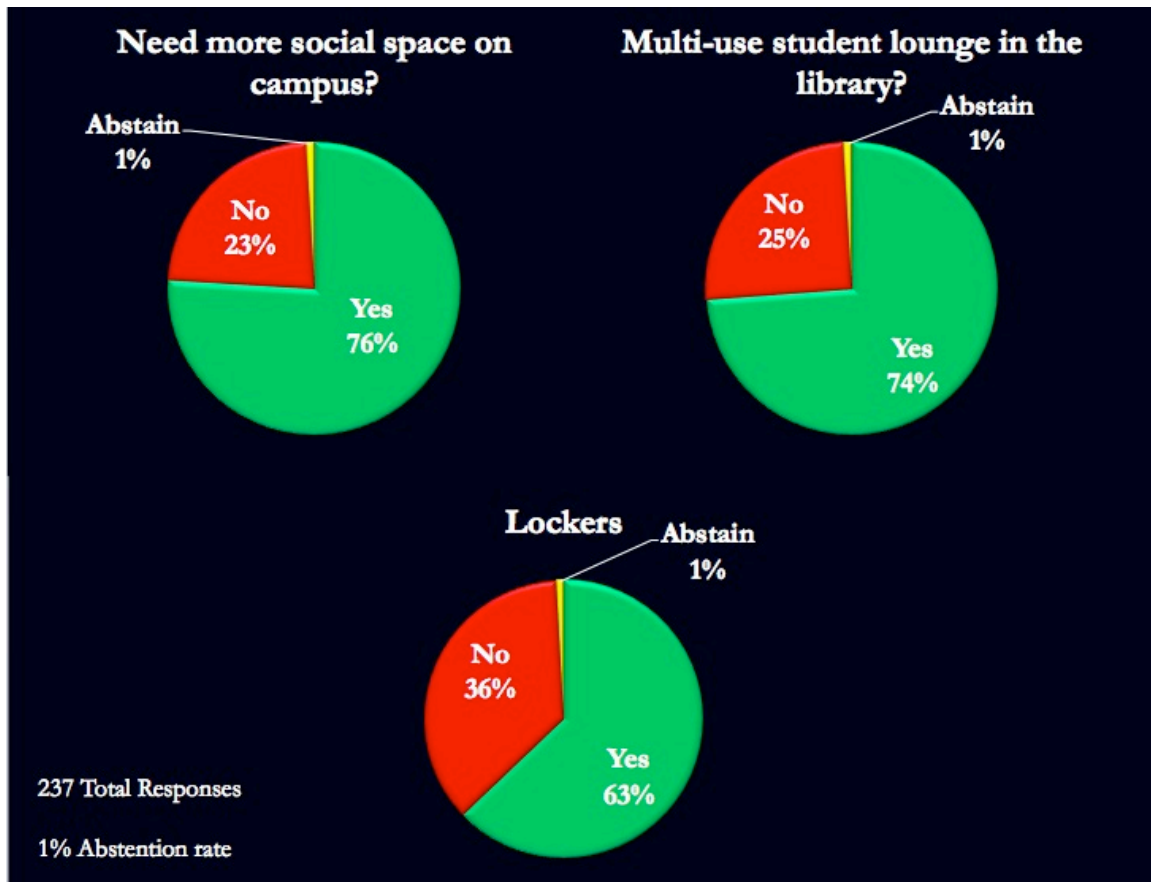
Members of the 2009–2010 Student Bar Association:

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 Marco Allocca, *1LE Rep.*
 Katia Giese, *LLM Rep.*

ATTACHMENT A:
STUDENT SUPPORT – EMPIRICAL DATA

(based on survey of students conducted between 10/21/2009 and 10/26/2009)



SURVEY TEXT:

The Student Bar Association is evaluating various improvements to campus facilities to meet the evolving needs of the law school community. In order to assess interest and help us frame our priorities, we ask that you take a moment to answer the questions below.

On behalf of the entire SBA, thank you for your participation.

1. Do students need more space on campus to socialize, relax between classes, and hold organization meetings?

Yes No

2. Would you like to see the student lounge in the library transformed from a space meant primarily for quiet study to a multi-use room with comfortable couches, chairs, tables for studying, and TVs to better fulfill the uses described in the question above?

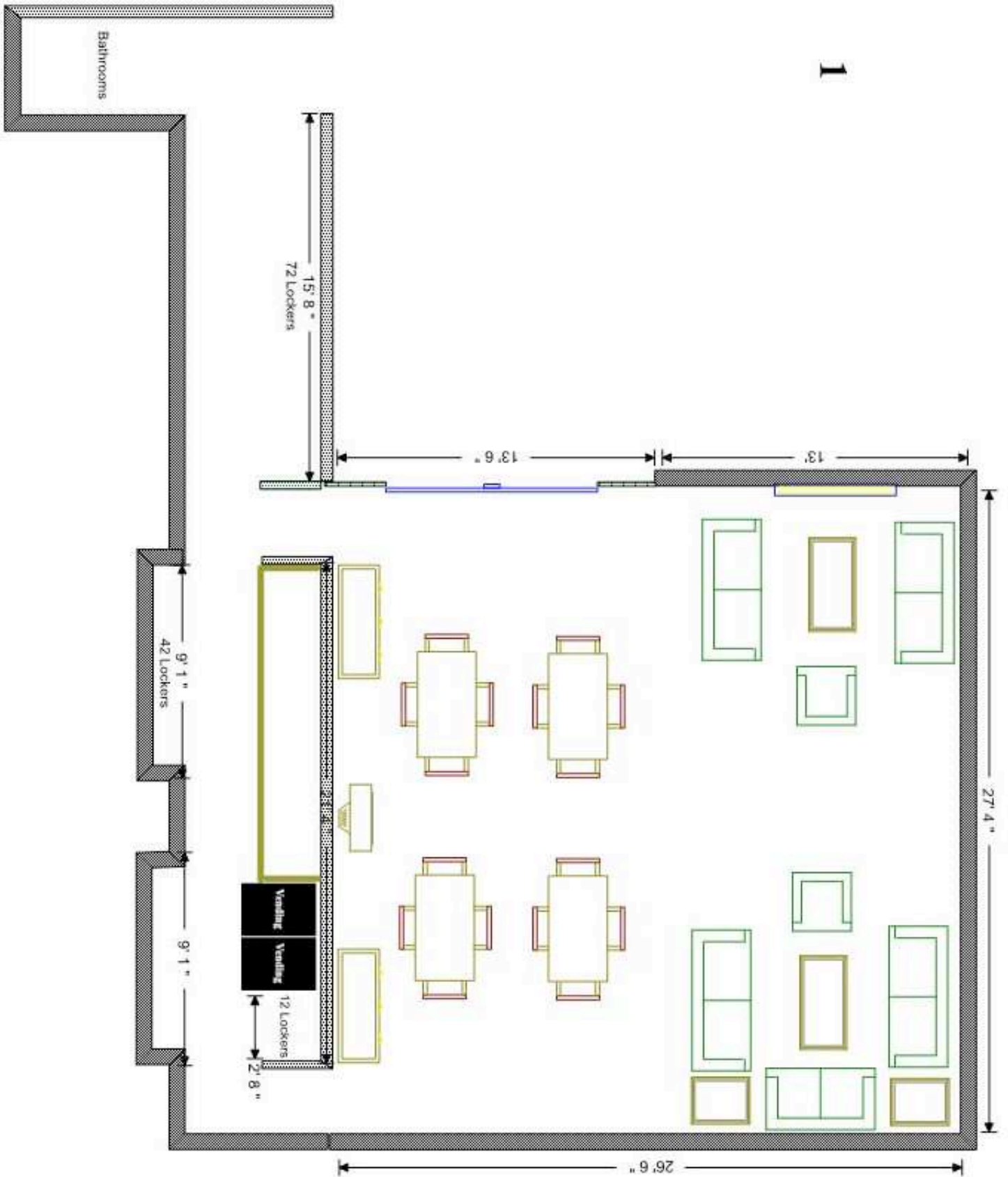
Yes No

3. Would you like access to a locker on campus to store books or other academic materials?

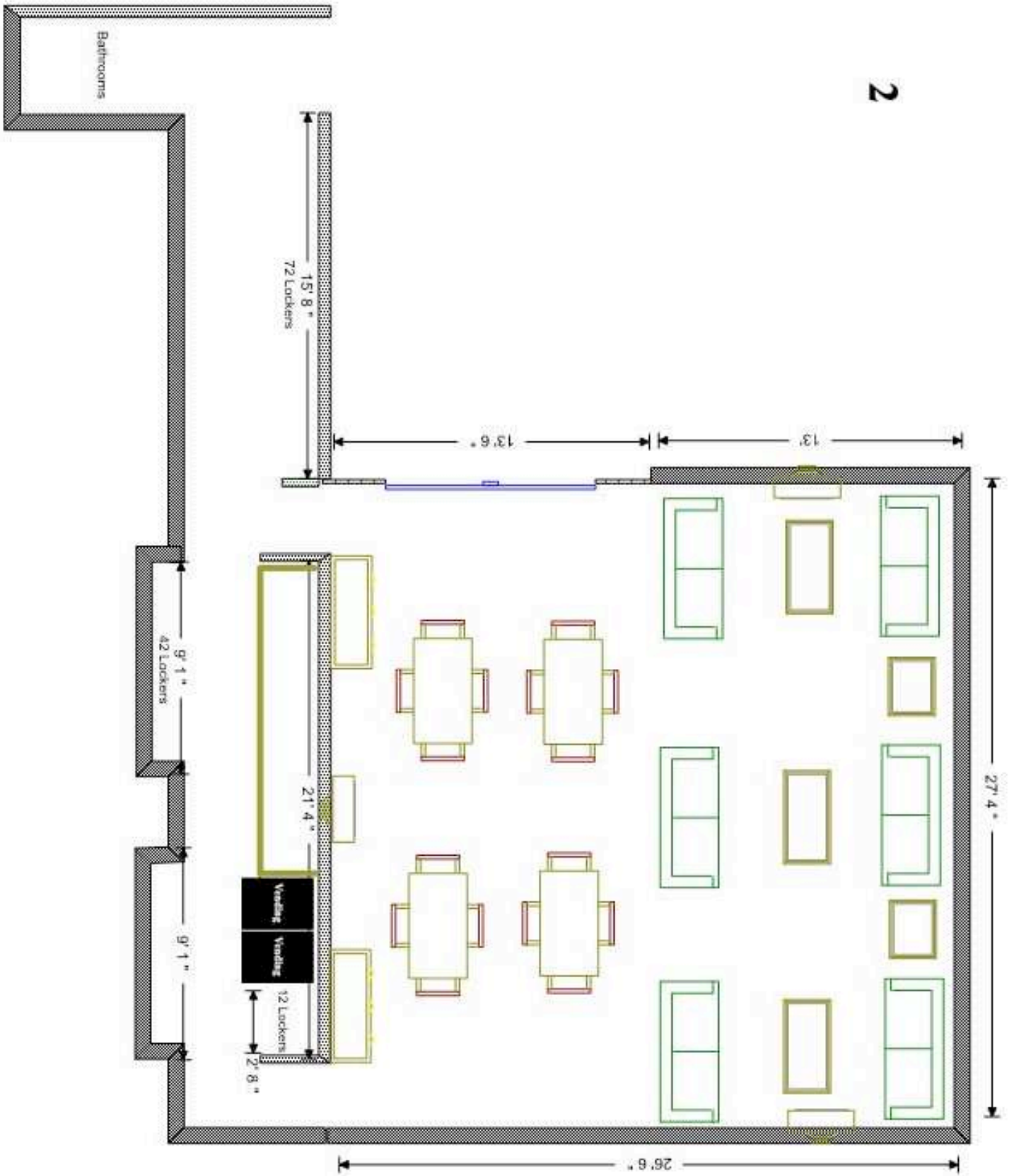
Yes No

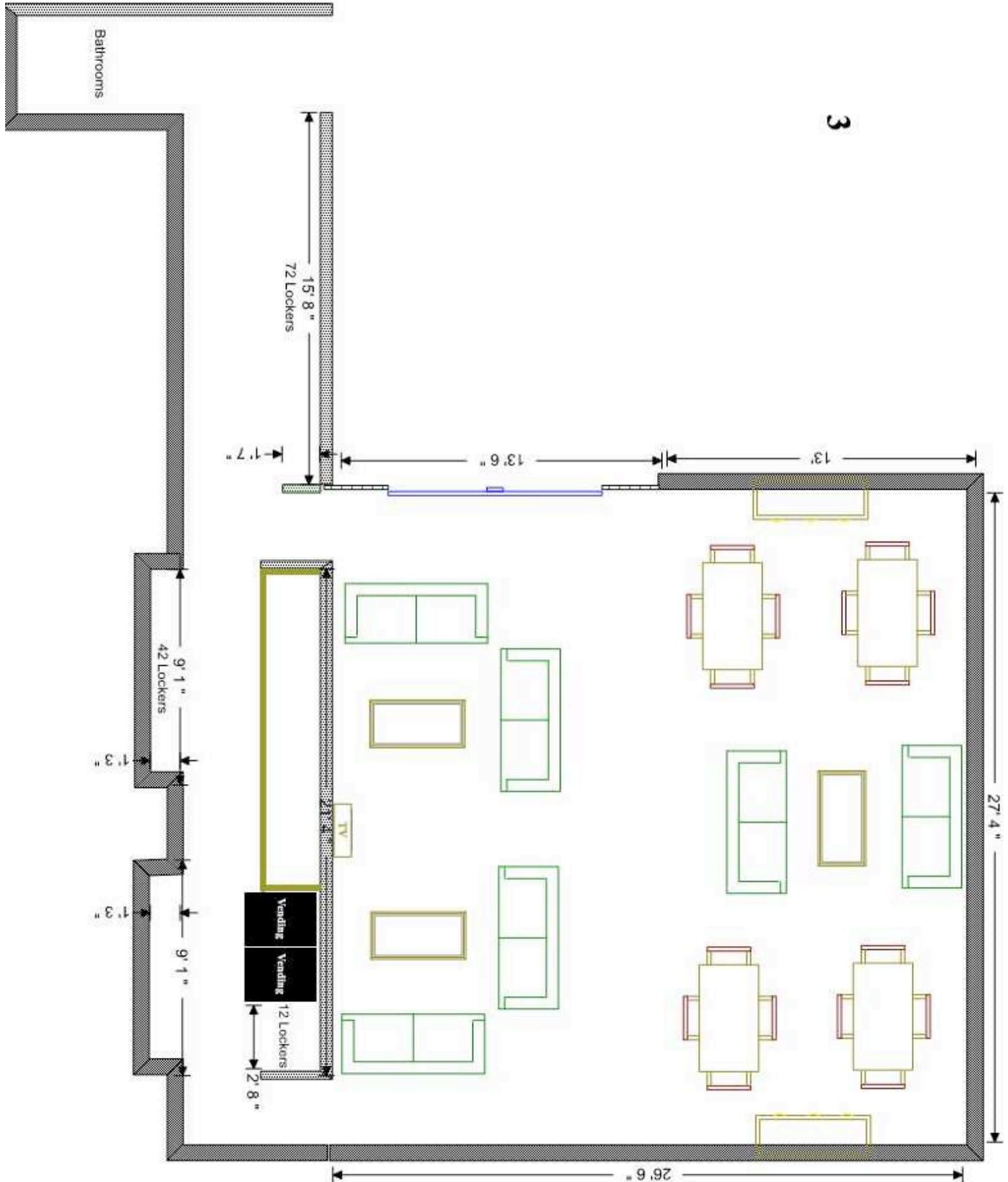
NOTE: Survey parameters restricted participation to presently enrolled students and permitted only one vote per participant.

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