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Reaction Paper 3 – Music and Psychology

Creating an Atmosphere of Accomplishment

Thousands of students, faculty and visitors walk past the computer science building every day, but many overlook the art in and around this building. All the different types of materials and textures set it apart from any other building on campus. Being surrounded by such beautiful art and architecture truly enriches our learning experience in higher education.

When you first arrive at the Gates Computer Science Complex and Dell Hall from the crowded Speedway mall, it seems difficult to focus on just one building. Activity from the surrounding environment creates distractions. However, despite the booming construction, the arching oak trees, or the bustling students getting to class, nothing seems to detract from this unique piece of architecture. The brick grid patterns that line the building compliment Sol LeWitt's uniform structure in the entrance. Metal shades cover the glass windows and tiny bushes line the building. Every time I walk by, I wonder if I should switch to a computer science major for the sole reason of being able to take classes in such a beautiful location. The computer science building creates an environment that encourages success. When I look at this building, I think about how much planning and effort from different disciplines goes into creating such a work of art. It inspires me to want to achieve higher goals because if the university put this much effort into the environment in which we learn, then I can put more effort into my own education. Students like myself feel more inclined to work hard in a beautiful space than a boring one. The computer science building allows for that extra effort to be put in.

Walking inside the building is no disappointment. The impressive atrium extends high with free-standing stairs and high windows. Natural light enters through these windows and

funky furniture allows students to converse and collaborate. The UT Landmarks program pitches into the creative atmosphere with pieces of art from Sol LeWitt and Casey Reas. The colorful, three dimensional cubes created by Sol LeWitt line the walls with inspiring messages. The controlled chaotic lines of Casey Reas', *A Mathetmatical Theory of Communication* relates the complicated code of computer science with an artistic representation. All of this creates an atmosphere that inspires creativity and encourages productivity. Natural light is less harsh on the eye while pieces of art are refreshing to it. When working intently on a difficult school project, one need only look up and take in the inspirational environment.

Field trips like this one always force me to think about things I never have before. After touring the public art around UT, I realize the importance of an interesting environment. I would much rather study for midterms in the great computer science building than my little dorm room. In a boring place like my dorm room, there is not much going on, not much change. In an exciting location like the Gates Computer Science Complex there is always something happening. With the best and brightest bustling in and out of classrooms, one is sure to feel inspired by the innovation going on around. The public art pieces from the UT Landmarks program is a key role in that atmosphere of excitement. Esteemed artists took time to create masterpieces that are on display in our own home turf. It feels special to be able to house such notable pieces. Each has their own rhythm, form, and emphasis (or lack thereof). Each conveys something different and inspires something new for each student. After visiting this building, I know I will be back when my mind needs some inspirational stimulation.

The University of Texas' commitment to creating stimulating environments inspires us to continue to reach for success. Starting here, with this dynamic environment, we can feel more encouraged to change the world.