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The Workshop That Never Sleeps

Idris Lawal

The third-floor maker space now runs its laser cutter in three shifts a day, and the queue to book it still stretches past a week.

When the maker space opened four years ago with a single donated 3D printer, nobody expected the waiting list it has today. The laser cutter arrived eighteen months later, funded by a co-op grant, and usage has climbed every semester since. Booking slots for the coming week now fill within minutes of opening.

> ***"We didn't build this for a hundred people a week. We built it for ten."***

Staff have responded by extending hours rather than rationing them further: the space now opens at 7am and closes at 1am, staffed in three overlapping shifts by student technicians. A fourth shift, covering the small hours for thesis-deadline crunches, is under discussion but not yet funded.

The bottleneck has moved from the tools themselves to training: every new user must complete a 40-minute safety induction before touching the laser cutter, and induction slots are now the tighter queue of the two. A self-paced video induction is being piloted this term to relieve it, with an in-person practical check still required before first use.

Demand shows no sign of levelling off. The next equipment request, submitted to the department last month, asks for a second laser cutter rather than a different machine entirely — the clearest sign yet of where the actual bottleneck sits.

Recycling Bins Move to Every Floor

Priya Chandran

Paper and can recycling bins, previously only in the ground-floor lobby, now sit on every floor of the main building.

The change follows a student petition collecting over 300 signatures last spring, which argued that a single ground-floor bin discouraged recycling from upper-floor offices entirely. Facilities confirmed the rollout completed last week, with a labelled bin pair — paper and mixed recycling — installed beside every floor's existing waste bin.

Early collection figures are promising: the facilities team reports paper recycling volume up 35% building-wide in the first two weeks, though they caution it is too early to rule out a novelty effect. A follow-up measurement is planned for the end of term.

Stop Scheduling Every Meeting for an Hour

Tomas Vidal

Most calendar tools default new meetings to sixty minutes. Almost nothing we discuss actually needs sixty minutes, and defaulting to it is why our weeks feel full when so little gets decided.

Parkinson's observation that work expands to fill the time available applies just as well to meetings as to any other task. A status update that would take fifteen minutes with a hard stop routinely takes fifty when the calendar gives it an hour, because nobody feels pressure to wrap up early.

> *"A meeting with no natural end time will find one anyway — usually the one printed on the invite."*

The fix costs nothing: default new meetings to twenty-five or fifty minutes instead of thirty or sixty, leaving a built-in buffer before the next call. Several teams that tried this report the same result — discussions get sharper, not worse, once the room knows the clock is shorter than it assumed.

None of this requires new software or a policy memo. It requires changing one dropdown the next time you send an invite, and noticing whether the meeting was worse for it. In every case reported here, it wasn't.