QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY

STAUFFER LIBRARY
LEARNING COMMONS

DESIGN BRIEF

Prepared By

Campus Planning and Development
and
Queen's University Libraries

August 2004

Contents

INTRODUCTION

VISION

In response to the impact of electronic information and the need to support scholarly use of information resources at Queen's, Stauffer Library proposes the construction of a Learning Commons for students, staff, faculty, and community.

The Commons provides an infrastructure for information services that supports the delivery of comprehensive and convenient services through expert guidance and reflects the need to consolidate, organize, and access digital resources.

The Commons offers a dedicated space that accommodates the needs of individuals and groups through a variety of work configurations, computer stations, and technologies.

The Commons is an integrated learning environment where use of information technology is enhanced through formal and informal instruction programs and reference assistance. Information literacy is the underlying foundation of this model and will be fostered on many levels.

BACKGROUND

Despite our virtual library world, the need for a physical Learning Commons space emanates from trends in higher education and the impact of new information technologies.

Need for Information Literacy

Information literacy is acknowledged as essential to learning in our information-rich society. The hallmark of a good education was once the understanding of a body of knowledge, but today it is the skills of analysis, evaluation, and synthesis that are critical for sense-making in our vast world of resources. Well-educated people are those who have learned how to learn. They have gone beyond rote learning, or learning that simply responds to assessment requirements. They know how knowledge is organized, how to find and analyze information both new and old, and how to use it in such a way as to create and disseminate knowledge. These abilities will improve the quality of academic work and will optimize future employment opportunities. As the foundation of a Queen's education, information literacy skills will serve personal learning throughout a lifetime from the novice researcher to the skilled investigator in the workforce.

Scope, Number, and Complexity of Research Tools

Information resources at Queen's are extensive and the critical thinking skills needed for their intelligent use are challenging. Few students select and use information tools effectively and consequently they need ongoing development of these skills to meet the requirements of research

assignments. Access to information technology is enhanced when it is partnered with access to instruction in its use.

The number of classes with enrollments of over 100 at Queen's is increasing. Not only is the number of requests for research assistance at the Stauffer Information Desk increasing; the complexity of queries has also grown significantly. It takes library staff more time to answer questions because topics are becoming more interdisciplinary requiring analysis and testing of a broader range of information tools. The number of these tools available to Queen's users is exploding as a result of consortial purchases within Ontario and across Canada. The technologies used to access these tools are many and varied and require practice and insight for successful navigation and retrieval of pertinent citations.

Integration of Student Research within the University Curriculum

With the growing need for lifelong learning in our society, universities are entreated to engage students in research in as many undergraduate courses as possible essentially reinventing the learning process (Boyer Commission, 1998). Queen's University encourages a learning-oriented arts and science curriculum that promotes personal understanding and fosters independent learning skills (Queen's Curriculum Review Working Group, 2000). Intensive learning is achieved through investigation that prompts the development of critical thinking and information literacy. A curriculum that integrates discipline competence with an information literacy component encourages analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information, abilities which are essential to deep learning. Undertaking a single research project does not develop information literacy; it takes years of continual practice within a supportive learning environment to achieve these abilities.

Desire to Foster Learning Communities

A learning community is a group of individuals who, in working towards building knowledge, participate in common practices, depend upon one another, share decision-making, identify themselves as something greater than the sum of their individual relationships, and commit themselves in the long term to their own, one another's, and the group's well-being (Shaffer & Anundsen, 1993). Educators have long recognized that these communities significantly heighten learning experiences and that they mirror the working environment that students will enter on completion of their studies.

Student research teams provide group-work experiences that encourage a research-based and student-oriented learning culture. This scenario is especially suited to large classes of more than 100 students where hundreds of novice researchers undertake similar projects. Stauffer Library is the "research lab" where humanities and social sciences students first tackle in-depth investigations and it is here that they look for ongoing mentorship in the selection and use of information tools. The Learning Commons will provide collaborative learning spaces, computers, resources, and expert help in support of student learning communities.

Need for a Place with Access to Information Technology

Throughout the day, students need a place to complete their assignments where resources and workspaces (individual, adaptive, collaborative) are available within a supportive learning environment. Flexible workspaces need to accommodate users who bring their own laptops and those who require provision of both computers and software. Course materials and information tools need to be well organized and easily accessible whether it is through a virtual technology infrastructure or through use of print materials.

Demand for Digital and Multimedia Collections

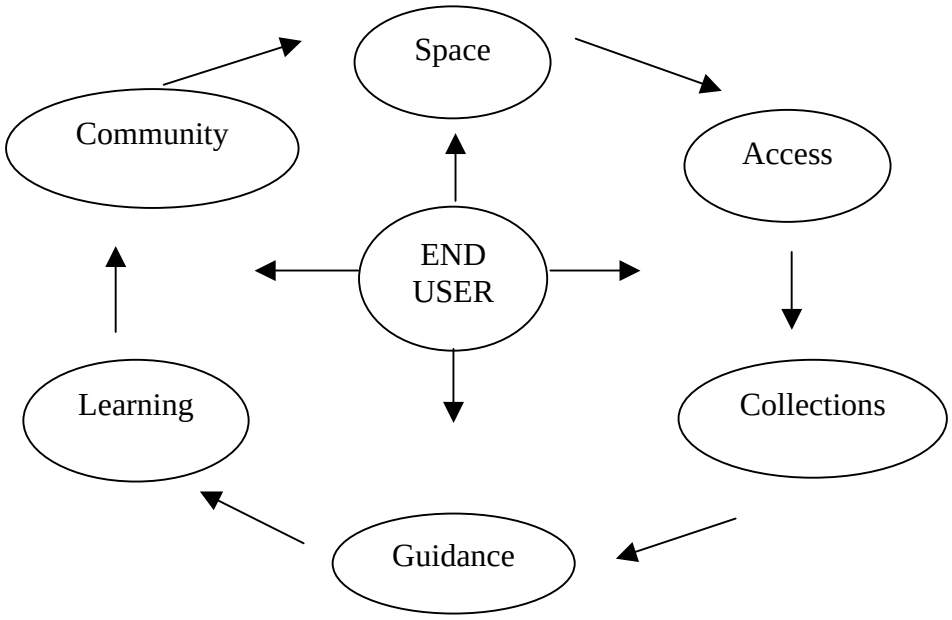
To address the demand for digital resources, Queen's Library will continue to invest in electronic collections through consortial purchasing. Requests from students and faulty for audiovisual materials such as pictures and videos/DVDs to support teaching and learning in their coursework are also increasing. The campus Instructional Development Centre advocates use of visuals to stimulate learning and the Senate Library Committee has suggested that a multimedia collection be developed at Stauffer Library. Copyright-free multimedia collections on the Web, such as audio and video files, photographs, art works, and learning objects, also need to be organized and made accessible to users as part of our library service.

LEARNING COMMONS CONCEPTS

The challenges in supporting academic work translate into six underlying concepts that form the foundation of the Stauffer Learning Commons:

1. Collections of Digital, Print, and Multimedia Materials
2. Access to materials both virtual and physical
3. Space in which to deliver and showcase digital and multimedia resources
4. Guidance in the effective and efficient use of resources
5. Learning of information literacy skills and abilities
6. Community of learners working together on research projects

Underlying Concepts for the Stauffer Learning Commons



GOALS FOR THE LEARNING COMMONS

Collections of Digital, Print, and Multimedia Materials

Goal: Users will access digital, print, and multimedia collections in support of teaching and learning.

- Continue to invest in digital collections.
- Develop video/DVD collection.
- Provide viewing facilities for individuals and groups.
- Organize free multimedia resources available on the Web.
- Create copyright guidelines for use of audiovisual materials in classes.
- Explore relationship of VMP video collection to our AV collection.

Access to materials both virtual and physical

Goal: Users will capture and manage information sources according to their needs.

- Library portal provides access to digital collections.
- Transfer information files to any destination (CD, server, email).
- Access network with portable technology (laptop, PDA).
- Access to software for assignments (e.g. Office); potential for 24 X 7
- Explore viewing microfilm via digital output.
- Explore printing options (double-sided, to a photocopier via account authentication)
- Provide scanning facilities.
- Designated access to networked and stand-alone CD-ROMs (installed and not installed)

Space in which to deliver and showcase digital and multimedia resources

Goal: Users will have a choice of working arrangements to match their learning requirements.

- Individual computer workstations with maximum hours of availability.
- Adaptive workstations and technology lab.
- Group study areas with access to the network.
- Electronic classroom for teaching and lab work with video stream capability and phone line.
- Seminar room with video conferencing capabilities.

Guidance in the effective and efficient use of resources

Goal: Users will have expert help in support of their selection and use of information resources.

- Reference desk service in person and by email.
- In-depth research consultation with a librarian during office hours or by appointment.
- Comprehensive subject, how-to guides, and library assignment handouts on the Web.

- Online tutorials on the research process.
- Patron assistance in the use of microforms.
- Patron assistance in the use of capturing and managing information. (e.g. printing, downloading, and scanning).
- Computing help via the ITS service.

Learning of information literacy skills and abilities

Goal: Users will develop information literacy abilities according to their needs and the requirements of their research assignments.

- Develop liaison role of subject librarians.
- Design online tutorials that foster information literacy development based on ACRL competency standards for IL
- Library-initiated classes for specific assignments and specific tools.
- Individual research help at the reference desk or via office hours.
- Orientation sessions for frosh; part-time, international, and mature students; teacher-librarians; graduate students and teaching assistants; and faculty.

Community of learners working together on research projects

Goal: Students will experience being part of a learning community as they work through group research projects.

- Work with departments with large classes (enrollment over 100 students) to incorporate team-based project work into assignments.

APPROACH TO PLANNING AND DESIGN

The space program should inform the interior plan, developed to meet the functional needs of the user groups. Functional requirements will be the basis of preliminary stacking and blocking options.

Project space must meet both the needs of the user groups and the needs of the University as a whole. Traffic patterns and volume in relation to entries, and exits must facilitate the specific goals of a service-oriented complex within. Both project space and public space within the Stauffer Library must be planned as integral parts of the Commons to achieve functional, attractive and maintainable interior space.

The following is intended to provide an overview of Campus Plan objectives and the expectations of the project. This material complements the principles and strategies of the Campus Plan.

CAMPUS PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Building Codes and Other Regulatory Requirements

The architect must comply with the requirements of applicable codes, legislation and the regulations of jurisdictions having authority, along with applicable Queen's University policies and construction standards and guidelines. These include but are not limited to the following:

- Ontario Building Code
- Ontario Fire Safety Code
- Occupation Health and Safety Act and its regulations
- Ontarians with Disabilities Act
- Queen's University Construction Guide and Building Standards
- Queen's University Campus Plan 2002
- Queen's University Signage Policy
- Queen's University Accessibility Guidelines

Project Design Checklist

The architect is expected to respond to the Project Design Checklist in the 2002 Campus Plan (pp. 114 to 117 and present evidence as to how the criteria specified in the checklist have been addressed at each major step of the design process.

Signage, Public Notices and Displays

Signage should comply with the principles and recommendations set out in Queen's University Signage Policy. A coordinated interior sign system should enhance the circulation and spatial framework and provide the necessary information by identifying the name of the building and the location of services, functions, individuals and emergency services. The types of signs should

include identification, directional, information and orientation (directories), instructional, regulatory and warning, commemorative, and sponsored.

Information centres for posting public notices and displays should be located near major entrances and high use and traffic areas in the building, and should be designed to control graffiti and random posting of notices. The displays may include campus and general information, information controlled by individual units, and specialized or commemorative displays. These centres should be secured and designed to meet individual display requirements. The generic indoor display cases for public notices in place at the Mackintosh-Corry indoor street are the recommended design.

Interior Planning and Design

The interior space must be developed according to the recognized principles and process of facility planning. Options for blocking, stacking, and traffic flow are required for discussion with user groups prior to beginning detailed planning. Program space allocations should work with the architectural characteristics and structural elements of the building to minimize circulation factors and un-assignable areas. Circulation routes in public areas must have good sight lines for personal safety, be easily understood, and lead users conveniently to the intended destination. Access and wayfinding help shape the public's perception of the Commons. Non-public areas should have easily understood and convenient routes through spaces and between groups, with occasional exterior views for orientation while achieving security objectives.

To support functional flexibility of interior space, the use of open office concept is encouraged unless justified by function. Access and orientation to natural light is required for all staff. The heating, ventilation and cooling systems must not be adversely affected by interior separations. Consideration must be given to the height of partitions, the location of private offices and meeting rooms, building orientation, and fenestration.

The majority of existing and recently purchased systems furniture will be re-used (dismantle, move and reassemble) for this project. A complete inventory and assessment of all existing furniture is required. The purchase of new loose furniture, storage units and some systems furniture will be necessary. The complete coordination of all furniture requirements, documentation (including layout of old and new systems) and specifications for all new furniture is required.

Detailed interior coordination in relation to design, finishes and colours of new and existing furniture with the renovated architecture and building finishes is required to achieve a harmonious work environment. Finishes must be sympathetic to the existing architecture and general ambiance of the building. Finishes and colors should be visually pleasing, comfortable, appropriate for the function and image of a quality innovative facility, require low maintenance, durable and age well over time. Subjective interpretation of current aesthetic trends is strongly discouraged.

Barrier-Free Accessibility

Barrier-free accessibility including but not limited to motorized wheelchairs equipped with ventilating units shall be required for all space related to the project. Accessibility will be in

accordance with the Ontario Building Code and Queen's University Accessibility Guidelines. Exceptions must have compelling justification.

Acoustics

Appropriate acoustic consultation and design is required for all public areas especially the Dynamic Learning Environment and Reference areas.

Mechanical and Electrical Rooms

Access to these spaces must be directly off corridors, and not through any assignable space. The location, access to these spaces, and the requirements for venting and buffer zones should not adversely affect the use, maintenance and appearance of the building.

Communication Services

The Commons will be a sophisticated data and telecommunications facility and hence appropriate communication issues will be critical in design and must be given the required emphasis during design development. Security of computers and other electronic equipment is required.

Building Maintenance

The design and product specification should minimize the ongoing maintenance and operating costs to the University.

PROJECT SCOPE AND DELIVERABLES

The project will entail schematic design, design development and construction documents for work approved to proceed to construction, tendering, construction administration and warranty services for the reconfiguration of the lower and ground floors of Stauffer library to accommodate the Learning Commons plus the addition of Technical Services From Macintosh Corry Hall along with the Computer Store and Hardware support from Dupuis Hall.

The total assignable area of the lower floor is 2,590 m^2 with the ground floor adding an additional 2,460 m^2 for a total net assignable area of 5,260 m^2.

Phase 1 is the overall planning phase and involves the preparation of schematic design plans including an agreed upon furniture layout. The consultant will also be responsible for cost estimates and potential implementation phasing strategy.

Phase II involves design development and the preparation of tender documents for a specific area and scope of work to be determined by the University, based on and for implementation of the schematic design from Phase I. The extent of implementation will depend on funding in relation to cost estimates and staging options suggested in Phase I. Also included are tendering, construction administration and warrant services as required.

Deliverables

Project documentation to be provided by the consultants shall include and not limited to the following:

Phase 1

1. Schematic floor plans by floor
2. Recommended colour palette
3. Furniture layout
4. Cost estimate
5. Potential staging options with cost estimate for each stage

Phase 2

1. Specifications and construction drawings at suitable scale in print and CAD formats for tender and construction purposes.
2. Tender documents shall be in compliance with the recommendations of Phase I. Progress construction drawings are subject to interim reviews by the University and revision by the consultant before approval for tender.

Project Review

The project will follow the norm for review through several levels of committees. The consultant is required to attend the meetings of these committees and to provide draft plans and supporting materials to meet the agenda distribution time frames of various committees. Communication between the consultant and the committees shall be through the designated University representative.