

Service Delivery Model Stauffer Library Learning Commons

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PHILOSOPHY

The Learning Commons brings together tools, resources, and support for the learning experience of students in the humanities and social sciences. This dedicated space unites people who help students meet their learning and research needs through individual consultation, workshops, peer mentoring, and collaborative learning. The alignment of complementary services (learning strategies - research skills - writing skills) offers improved support for students in their learning continuum / tasks. The Commons also offers an enriched physical learning environment where students can readily find ongoing assistance as they access and explore digital resources and technology. The Learning Commons is a collaborative learning space where a community of learners can congregate.

KEY COMPONENTS

Help Desk

This desk is the hub of the Commons and is located centrally within clusters of computer workstations. Desk staff provide assistance to individuals and small groups with questions relating to classroom assignments and learning tasks. They also offer referrals to other expert services in the building such as government documents, data, GIS software, maps, art materials, and information technology.

Teaching and Learning

An electronic classroom, group study rooms, and consultation spaces offer a variety of venues for teaching and learning in the Commons. Partnerships among Liaison Librarians, Writing Centre, Learning Strategies Development, Teaching Assistants, Peer Tutors, and Information Technology Services will provide enhanced support for student learning, especially the development of information literacy. The resulting service network will offer a solid foundation for the growth of learning communities.

Dynamic Learning Environment

Additional computer workstations in clusters and configurations suited to both individual and group learning will provide an enriched learning environment. A wireless network will offer flexible and portable workspaces. Students have asked for a comfortable, safe, but socially stimulating workplace that accommodates collaborative study in diverse seating venues and settings. Access to digital information resources and Microsoft Office from all machines will accommodate the demand for library tools during independent and cooperative study. A multimedia collection will address the need for audiovisual learning materials by students and by faculty for in-class use.

Special Readers' Services and Adaptive Technology

Consolidation of services for students with special needs, from the library and Health, Counseling and Disability Services, will bring together both human and physical resources dedicated to students who use adaptive technology.

SERVICES

Help Desk

At this central service hub, student information and research needs will be met by librarians, library technicians, and ITS staff. Examples of interactions with students include:

- Quick information including library catalogue assistance, library web page navigation
- In-depth consultation related to a specific assignment including selection of sources, strategies for searching, and methods for evaluating sources.
- Impromptu teaching of resources and learning strategies with small groups.
- Referral to other library units and campus partners for services not available within the Learning Commons.
- Technical assistance (including roving near equipment) to troubleshoot connectivity, printers, scanners, etc.
- Information Technology Services staff provide assistance with laptop connectivity and configuration; software support; and technical hardware queries. A separate room for working on laptops would support this activity.

Teaching and Learning: Creating a Cycle of Support

Underlying service at the Learning Commons is the goal to help students become independent learners and researchers. Partnerships with campus service providers such as Information Technology Services, Learning Strategies Development, the Writing Centre, and Health Counselling and Disability Services, are central to this mission. Each of these groups assists students at some point in academic life at Queen's. By centralizing elements of these services or programs associated with them, a continuum of support is created.

Services offered by Learning Strategies Development, the Library, and Writing Centre underpin the intellectual endeavour required of student research tasks. Their consolidation can enrich the learning process by providing support for all stages of the research process from beginning to end:

- Receiving and interpreting an assignment.
- Setting time management guidelines given the scope of the project
- Identifying the types of resources needed and how to access them.
- Searching for information.
- Evaluating resources.
- Identifying and recording pertinent information from sources.
- Preparing a project outline and writing the assignment.

Recognizing that each campus partner is committed to providing excellent support for students in their current configuration, it is critical that students experience the easiest transition between and among service providers. With our campus partners, a wide range of programs that support the research needs of students will be offered in the Learning Commons. This is a hub for student learning.

Possible programs and services include:

- Formal instruction classes for specific courses conducted by librarians with faculty or TAs, Learning Strategies Development counselors, Writing Centre instructors and tutors.
- Formal generic instruction classes organized by librarians to feature the stages of the research process and the tools for gathering resources on a topic. An example of this is the Smart Research orientation series offered in the fall and winter terms.

- Impromptu classroom sessions for large, at-risk classes requiring focused help with a particular index or search methodology that addresses a specific assignment.
- Impromptu teaching of clusters of students who arrive at the reference desk and have a common need or goal.
- Peer mentoring for learning strategies development.
- Drop-in consultation with Writing Centre peer tutors.
- Research rovers (organized by QUL/SL) to provide peer support for learning library resources.
- Group study rooms to foster student collaborative learning.
- Individual instruction and help through Special Reader Services for students who require unique or specialized consultation and equipment to meet their research needs.
- Classes offered by ITS on key issues for students such as getting connected, virus protection, wireless security, and software support (e.g. PowerPoint, QLINK, Scanning)
- Classes and interview consultation offered by Career Planning and Development.

Furthermore, the Learning Commons provides a new model for encouraging collaboration between faculty and librarians. Examples of how this connection can enrich the student learning experience include:

- Course-integrated library instruction linked to specific tasks is proven to be the best way to develop information literacy.
- Consultation on assignment design and availability of resources is necessary for large, at-risk introductory courses where hundreds of students compete for resources and services in a fixed time period.
- Workshops taught with teaching assistants provide effective ongoing support for students during their work throughout the year.
- Student research teams offer another support mechanism for group work requiring in-depth investigation.

Dynamic Learning Environment

Workspace with computers, quick-stop stations, audiovisual equipment, collaborative group study rooms, print collections, government documents, maps, data, GIS software, and access to library indexes and databases and technology provides a rich physical study space. A central information desk and roving helpers will support all stages of the investigation process encouraging a vibrant learning community where learners are comfortable in soliciting and receiving assistance as it is needed. Rovers will include peer research mentors who can advise fellow students on how to get started with their research and refer them for in-depth assistance as necessary.

While the Learning Commons is a physical environment, it needs a parallel presence on the Library's website. The creation of a virtual learning commons will mirror the primary goals of the Learning Commons proper and incorporate the following:

- Online tutorials related to research and learning.
- Self-assessment tools to help students understand their level of information literacy.
- Appropriate links to Learning Commons partners.
- Self-help tools on information resources within specific disciplines.

Special Readers' Services and Adaptive Technology

A cooperative venture between Health, Counselling and Disability Services (HCDS) and Special Readers' Services (SRS) within the Library is responsible for supporting the research

and learning needs of students with visual and learning disabilities. The service is supported by staff from HCDS and the Library and is complemented by numerous volunteers.

SRS staff (one part- time coordinator/librarian and one full-time technician) provide alternative print formats for students with print and learning disabilities. The coordinator helps students with research and other needs such as reduced-cost photocopying, scanning and book retrieval. Another integral part of the unit is the Adaptive Technology Labs. Currently there are 2 labs with 6 computer workstations in total. There is currently a lack of space for quiet study and no room to expand.

Moving the SRS unit from Douglas Library to the Learning Commons offers several advantages:

- Consolidation of services currently split between Stauffer and Douglas Libraries.
- Lack of confusion about where support is best obtained.
- Elimination of split positions – staff no longer have dual roles, offices, equipment.
- Relationships are simplified by eliminating one service point.
- Better services for the majority of SRS students who are in the humanities and social sciences.

Service Relationships

Not all services can or will be consolidated within the Learning Commons. The chart below identifies services within the Commons and those that are within the library but outside the Commons.

Services within the Commons	Services within the Library but outside the Commons
Information Desk for research assistance	Government Documents “office hours” for in-depth consultation
Special Readers’ Services and Adaptive Technology Labs	Maps, Data and services and collections associated with Government Documents
Writing Centre Space for bookable one-on-one and group tutoring	Access Services (e.g. loans, patron accounts, cash transactions, photocopying, course reserves, ILL pickup)
Learning Strategies Development Space for bookable one-on-one and group tutoring	Interlibrary Loans
Multimedia collections and viewing facilities	Microform collections
Information Technology Support Centre - what is the configuration?	Canadian Opinion Research Archive (degree of service to be determined)

Resource Relationships

Stauffer houses a variety of collections and resource formats. The chart below identifies those which will remain within the Commons and those which will be on another level of the Library.

Resources within the Commons	Resources outside the Commons
current periodicals	microforms
newspapers	government documents
reference collection	data
multimedia resources	maps and air photos
	GIS software

	bound journals and circulating collection
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SPACE

The main floor of Stauffer Library will be dedicated to the Learning Commons. From the user’s perspective, the Learning Commons will be configured to include:

Space	Description	Dimensions
Component 1: Help Desk		
Central help desk	Designed to suit the needs of the Learning Commons. Will ITS staff work at or near this desk? What is the best layout / location?	To accommodate up to 5 people.
Library Staff	Individual offices and workroom space for all staff supporting the LC.	
ITS Staff	One room for 2 staff members to work privately with walk-in patrons including space for laptop support. One office to accommodate 2 ITS staff offering patron assistance at or near the central help desk.	
Component 2: Teaching & Learning		
Electronic Classroom	Ability to divide the room in two. Potential to keep this room open for student use when not being used for teaching. Space to double-up.	Seating for 50 overall with room for up to 75 with extra chairs.
Writing Centre	Consultation room to accommodate 3 people with workstation.	1 room. Will this be designated or bookable space?
Learning Strategies Development	Requested designated space close to adaptive technology for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peer mentoring with 1-2 students (2 rooms preferred) • office for Peer Mentor and Peer Assistant Coordinators with storage • office for member of professional staff 	2 consultation rooms for 3 people equipped with blackboard, worktable, computer; 1 office with filing cabinets & bookshelves; 1 office with storage
Component 3: Dynamic Learning Environment		
Group study rooms	Collaborative work spaces for small groups	8 rooms to accommodate 6-10 students

Multimedia viewing capability	Bookable room with computer monitor, VCR/DVD player, and amplifier: 4 computers with DVD players, 2 portable DVD players; 2 TVs with cable and VCR/DVD players; electronic classroom to be used for large groups	Use group study rooms; one room to hold up to 15 people
Pods / clusters of computers	Avoiding the appearance of row-upon-row of computers; uniquely identifiable clusters	From 10-15 computers per cluster; 100-150 computers
Student Amenities	A variety of spaces for social interaction, solitary and group study with seating options. A coffee shop in the loggia is a recurring theme. Possible storage space for student laptops?	Comfortable seating and levels of noise.
Printing stations	Grouped near computer pods; printing jobs can be printed at any location	5 printing stations
Scanning facilities	Could be within a computer pod	2 stations.
Component 4: Special Readers' Services		
Special Readers' Services	Integrated lab and office spaces.	Equivalent to 2 existing offices and 2 labs.

TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The following facilities are part of the vision for the Commons:

Technology	Functionality
Electronic Classroom(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One room that can be divided, easily and on demand, into two separate classrooms, each with flexible seating, flexible furniture, and flexible "student" computer stations; room sizes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - open room to accommodate 75 people using additional chairs; - component rooms to accommodate 50 and 25 students • Envision this classroom space also being available as "open computing site" when not booked for classes, etc. • Instructor podiums for each of the 2 component rooms ("fixed" or flexible to be determined), each with overhead projection capability to dual-projection screens (i.e. screens in both right and left corners of the large combined room). • Main instructor podium equipped with/connected to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - VCR/DVD projection with high-end resolution and audio - Cable TV access and projection - External phone line for dial-up connections to remote hosts requiring a telephone connection

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Smart Board - Videostreaming capability - Webcam capability - Wired for presenter microphone - Remote pointer devices • Classroom management software enabling instructor to watch, share or control the screen, keyboard, and mouse of any student workstation • Classroom Performance System Technology (see http://www.einstruction.com/ for description) for active input of student responses to be tabulated on screen • Access to locally networked research databases. • Full suite of Library productivity software (e.g. MS Office, Packman programs, HTML editor, graphics editor, research software, etc.)
Computer Workstations	<p>Up to 150 desktop computers. Configured in pods of 8-10 computers with various seating arrangements ("pods") to facilitate group work and including zones with different noise levels; work surfaces to be of sufficient size to accommodate personal paper notes and reference books around the keyboard. Each station to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to locally networked research databases • Full library productivity software suite (e.g. MS Office, Packman programs, Web and graphics editing software, statistical and other research support software as required, etc.)
Mobile computing (includes group study rooms)	50 laptops for signout from the Stauffer circulation desk (each with the capability of providing Internet access from anywhere inside the Stauffer Library building, as the building will be fully wireless-enabled)
Printing Stations	5 high-capacity printing stations across the pods (at least one of which will provide high-resolution, high-speed colour printing)
Scanning Stations	2 scanner stations with proximity to IT help
Adaptive Technology	<p>Minimum of 6 (but preference is 10) computer stations for students with special needs; located in "safe" zone accessible to and reserved for the use of special needs students only and equipped with ergonomically designed and adjustable furniture, keyboards, monitors and mice. Each computer equipped with head-phones and high-quality external speakers, and with full suite of adaptive software (e.g. Kurzweil reader, character enlarging software, voice input software, screen reading software, Braille output software, etc.) Area also equipped with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networked laser printer • Networked kurzweil printer • Networked high-speed scanner

GOVERNANCE

The Learning Commons is a collaborative venture and requires partnerships from many campus units in a library-lead initiative. The Library's role is to coordinate the efforts of the overall Learning Commons and each Learning Commons partner retains full autonomy over their staff.

A Learning Commons Coordinator is recommended to facilitate the relationships among library units and with Learning Commons partners. Furthermore, the scope of the Learning Commons Coordinator within the Stauffer Library needs careful consideration to avoid unnecessary bureaucracy and hurdles to accomplishing a unified Learning Commons cohort to staff the area.

Essentially the introduction of a Learning Commons offers an opportunity to rethink how services in the building are organized and managed.

STAFFING

The chart below offers ideas for potential staff needed in the operation of the Commons. These recommendations are based on the following assumptions:

- Service hours within the Commons will be longer than present reference desk hours. A starting point could be to extend help hours from 9:00 - 8:00 Monday through Thursday and 10:00 – 5:00 on Saturday and Sunday. This is the minimum increase.

Function	Activity	Current or New Staff
Learning Commons Coordinator	To coordinate activities and services in the Learning Commons and participate in reference services.	New position
Reference Staff	To provide reference help during extended hours from present model; need to double up at peak hours and weekends. Staff with ability to provide patron assistance within the Commons facilities and to work with peer mentors.	Additional librarian and senior library technician positions.
Systems staff	To maintain and troubleshoot hardware and software on an additional 250 plus machines (combined number on floor and in classroom including laptops for loan)	Additional systems support.
Librarian with ILL responsibility	To coordinate RACER operation of all 5 ILL units. Ongoing training and communication responsibilities on a daily basis and especially during software upgrades. Need for RACER bureau administrator training to oversee this work. Integration with SL document delivery in the future.	Can workload be managed in Access Services? .5 FTE supervisory librarian to coordinate document delivery and ILL

ITS staff	To provide help at or near main information desk: answering questions and working with laptops. Would they also help with technical troubleshooting at printers?	Investigate how they operate with shift work at present. How many students provide face-to-face service in the ITSC now.
Peer mentors	Based on the Learning Strategies Development peer-tutor model, 40 students could be trained to offer peer-research on a regular basis throughout the week - possibly afternoons, evenings, and weekends.	40 volunteers; need person to coordinate training, scheduling, and communication
Commissionaires	Is more security required during hours of operation given anticipated volume of students?	Consider doubling up Commissionaires at peak times during the year.

Preparations for the Learning Commons

Renovations and space considerations must be addressed, especially for the Lower Level of Stauffer Library, in preparation for building the Commons on the main floor. These issues are listed in the following chart.

Resource	Description	Discussion/Issues/Questions
Stauffer Library Reference Collection	The reference collection needs to be reduced by 30 - 50% to maximize floor space for Commons facilities.	A weeding project is underway, however, the lack of space in the loggia, stacks, and fourth floor compact shelving requires careful re-direction and analysis of this collection as a whole. Guidelines are needed for the retention and location of print indexes now superceded by electronic formats.
Stauffer Library Microforms Collection	Newspapers, Journals, Early English Books	Collection must be moved from main floor of Stauffer Library to make room for Learning Commons. Lower Level (Documents Unit) has been suggested as a possible location. What are the space requirements of this collection, and possible storage solutions?
Microform staffing	Staff to support Microform Collection	If Microforms are moved to the Lower Level, a combined Microforms/Gov Docs directional service point would be required. What are the staffing/space requirements for this?
Staff space on Lower Level	Unit Head and Technical Services Library Technician are physically distant from other Unit staff (Data Centre & Technical Services Workroom vs Public Services Workroom). Microform staff need to be considered as	If Microforms are moved to the Lower Level, rearrangement of staff offices (Unit Head, Technical Services Library Technician) into closer proximity with other Unit staff would make sense. Must also consider needs of new Map/GIS Librarian position.

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Central Technical Services	Scheduled to move back into Stauffer Library (Lower Level)	What space is Central Technical Services staff moving into? What implication does this have?
ITS Staff	ITS staff occupy space on the Lower Level of Stauffer Library.	Will ITS staff continue to occupy space on the Lower Level of Stauffer Library? If yes, where?
Recruitment	Recruitment will be moving out of Stauffer Library.	How does the departure of Recruitment from the Lower Level impact space considerations? What is the timing of this move?
Canadian Opinion Research Archive (CORA)	CORA is currently housed in the Documents Unit in proximity to the Data Centre.	Keeping CORA in the Library, in proximity to the Data Centre should be a priority. The Archive needs office and work space. Public service is offered primarily by the Documents Unit.